A grammar of Mundabli : a Bantoid (Yemne-Kimbi) language of Cameroon

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CHAPTER 7

Noun modifiers and noun phrase structure

Noun phrases are "syntactic constituents which serve as arguments of the verb" (Dryer 2007b: 151). In Mundabli, they are usually headed by nouns or pronouns, but under certain circumstances, they may lack a head noun and instead be headed by noun modifiers, such as demonstratives, adjectives, numerals or possessive pronouns. Personal pronouns usually represent a minimal noun phrase of their own.

This chapter contains a section on simple noun phrases (§7.1), one on complex noun phrases (§7.2),[1] and one on word order in the noun phrase (§7.3).

7.1 Simple noun phrases

Simple noun phrases contain a noun or a pronoun with or without simple modifiers, such as articles, demonstratives, adjectives or numerals. As pronouns have already been treated in some detail in Chapter 6, the discussion of pronouns in this chapter will be restricted to their role as NP heads and to the modifiers which are attested in noun phrases headed by pronouns.

[1] The distinction between simple and complex noun phrases is based on Dryer (2007b: 151). However, whereas Dryer lists also noun phrases containing relative clauses among the complex noun phrases, these are not included in the current chapter. They are instead dealt with in Chapter 12. Unlike Dryer, I include conjoined NPs among the complex NPs in this chapter.

7.1.1 Lexical Nouns

Lexical nouns consist either of a bare stem or, more rarely, of a stem plus a noun class prefix. Although nouns often lack a prefix, they always belong to a lexical noun class or noun class pairing which triggers agreement on noun modifiers (see §4.2 and §4.3 for more on noun classes and §5.2-§5.4 for more on agreement). A lexical noun can form a noun phrase of its own, as in (113) and (114), or it can head a noun phrase in which it is modified by adjectives, determiners, numerals, etc. (see examples in the following sections). In the examples in this section, the noun is underlined.

(113) bə́ tsú dɔ̄
CL2 contribute(c) CL3a.beans

'They contributed beans.'

(114) bə́ gān mū ʃú kpɛ̀
CL2 go(a) take(a) come(b) CL3.pot

'They went to take the pot.'

A derived noun can also head a noun phrase, as e.g. in (115) and (116), where infinitives[2] form the heads of noun phrases.

(115) *so* bə mɨ̄ yē m-mṵ̀
so IMPERS CONSEC start(a) INF-drink(b).IPFV

'So, people will then start drinking.'

(116) [n-kwō-n nǭ bī kə̀ kwó gān w-ɔ̄ mɨ́ŋ
INF-enter(c)-INF SUBORD 1PL P3 enter(c) go(a) CL1-REL 1SG.PP
gbə̀], wù bú mà kpə̄ ŋgɨ̄ dɨ́ nā
house.LOC CL1 ask(b) QUOT;Q CL1.wife CL1;1SG.POSS be(b) where

'Just as we were entering into my house, she asked where my wife was.'

In (116), the deverbal infinitive noun is modified by a relative clause. The relativizer **wɔ̄** shows Class 2 agreement with the head nominal. The verb 'start', which takes an infinitive as its object in (115), can also take a pronominal object, like e.g. **kɨ́** in the relative clause in (117).

(117) dɨ̌ kì-mān nǭ [à yē kɛ̄ dzɔ̄ŋ k-ɔ́ kɨ́
DS.be(b) CL7-what SUBORD 2SG start(a) return(c) again CL7-REL CL7
ɨ́ tā́n mɨ̄]
LOC there in

'What is it that you are starting again in here?'

[2]Infinitives can be derived from perfective or imperfective verb stems. See §8.4.1 for more on infinitives.

7.1.2 Pronouns in appositive constructions

Pronouns can be followed by an appositive noun phrase, as in (118) and (119).

(118) bə kā́ ɲwán [bī́ ndʒān] lə nǫ́ bɔ̄ *feed*
IMPERS F2 beg(b) 1PL Mundabli DAT SUBORD CL2 feed
tɔ́m swɔ̄m ā́ bī-lō
CL7/8.palm_villages CL7/8.palm ADVLZ CL8-all

'And they will be begging things from us, the Mundabli, because they [the Mundabli] will feed all the people in this Mbanga area.'

(119) kə́ gbɔ̄ w-én dī́ ná ánā́ [bɛ̄n ɲwɔ́m
COND CL3.house CL3-DEM.PROX be(b) as like_that 2PL CL2.children
b-ɔ́], bɛ̄n yɪ́ŋ yə́ t-ɔ́ʔ tʃì t-ɔ́
CL2-DET 2PL build(c) go_up(c) DIST-there up DIST-DET

'As this house is like this, you, the children, you would be building up on top.'[3]

7.1.3 Demonstratives

Mundabli has two demonstrative stems: **-ɛn** 'this'/'these' (near speaker; from here or simply 'this') and **-ɔ** 'that'/'those' (far from speaker, also 'the aforementioned'; from here on 'that'). The demonstrative stems take a consonantal prefix which agrees in noun class with the head noun) see Table 7.1. Table 7.1, is an adapted version of Table 5.5 in §5.2.

gender	'this'/'these' (close to speaker)		'that'/'those' (far from speaker)	
	SG	PL	SG	PL
1/2	**wēn**	**bén**	**wɔ̄**	**bɔ́**
3/10	**wén**	**yén**	**wɔ́**	**yɔ́**
3/7a	**wén**	**kén**	**wɔ́**	**kɔ́**
7/8	**kén**	**bén**	**kɔ́**	**bɔ́**
9/10	**yēn**	**yén**	**yɔ̄**	**yɔ́**
19/18	**fén**	**mén**	**fɔ́**	**mɔ́**
6	**mén**		**mɔ́**	
3a	**wén**		**wɔ́**	
8a	**bén**		**bɔ́**	
9a	**yēn**		**yɔ̄**	
7b	**kén**		**kɔ́**	

Table 7.1: Demonstratives

[3]The speaker is explaining the concept of multiple story buildings.

Mundabli does not have a third 'that' (near hearer) demonstrative (as e.g., Noni (Hyman 1981)). It does not distinguish between different degrees of remoteness in distal demonstratives and it does not have an intensified form of the demonstrative (as has been reported to exist in Bafut (Tamanji 2009: 60ff.)).

Demonstratives can be used to modify a noun, as in (120)-(123) or as demonstrative pronouns, representing the whole noun phrase in the absence of a nominal head, as in (124)-(126). When used as modifiers, demonstratives generally follow the noun.[4] In the examples, noun phrases containing a demonstrative (either as head or modifier) are enclosed in square brackets.

(120) ká à mū ʃú [gɛ̄ w-ɔ́] à mɪ̄
COND 2SG take(a) come(b) CL3/7a.maize CL3-DET 2SG CONSEC
kpè wŭ ŋgī mɪ̄ sɪ́ yí-ʃyé
soak(a) CL3 CL6.water in CL9/10.day CL10-two

'When you take the corn and soak it in water for two days, ...'

(121) wù kə̆ tsé dyá bɔ̀ [tsʊ́ b-ɔ́]
CL1 P3.HAB search(a) see(a)IPFV FRUST CL7/8.banana CL8-DET

'He was searching for the bananas but he couldn't find them.'

(122) [kpé w-ɔ̄] sé dzǽ kpɪ̄
CL1.woman CL1-DET be_hot(c) CL7.mouth very_much

'That woman is very active.'

(123) [dzɔ̄ y-ɛ́n], [kwɛ́ w-ɛ́n] à, ā
CL10.houses CL10-DEM.PROX CL3/7a.home CL3-DEM.PROX Q ADVLZ
wú-lō à, wɛ́ à tá lə mɪ̄ ɛ̄
CL3-whole Q INTERJ P2 VER.FOC do(a) 1SG QUOT.Q

'These houses, this whole compound? Did *I* do it?'

(124) dzɔ̄ yī-dzú y-ɔ́ kə̀ bo̱ m-bo̱,
CL10.houses CL10-other CL10-DET P3 burn(b) INF-burn(b)
[y-ɛ́n] tá kwà dɪ́ ŋ-kwà
CL10-DEM.PROX VER.FOC break(a) be(b) INF-break(a)

'The other houses burnt down, these ones broke.'

[4]For exceptions from the general **N**+**DET** order, see §7.3.

(125) [k-ɛ́n] dɨ́ ŋkɨ́ŋ k-ɔ́, nɨ́ŋ nɔ̰̀
CL7-DEM.PROX be(b) CL7;1SG.POSS CL7-DET CL7.thing SUBORD
ɲ́ = də̀ k-ɔ́ kɨ́
1SG = see(a) CL7-DET CL7

'This is my own, the thing that I see.' (roughly: "This is the way I see it.")

(126) à mɨ̄ tʃyé yɛ̄ [w-ɔ́] gbɔ̄ wān
2SG CONSEC know(c) COMP CL3-DEM.DIST CL3.house CL1.child
w-ā yà
CL1-2SG.POSS EMPH

'And then you know that that [is] your child's house, you hear?'

The range of meanings covered by the distal demonstrative **-ɔ** 'that' includes that of demonstratives and of definite articles in other languages. In narrative texts, the distal demonstrative **-ɔ** is most frequently used for anaphoric reference ('the aforementioned') or to refer to a previously established discourse topic, rather than for deictic reference, see e.g. (120)-(121).

While the demonstrative **-ɔ** 'that' also serves as a definiteness marker, lack of a demonstrative is not always interpreted as marking indefiniteness; see (127). Example (127) is taken from an elicitation session using the picture story "Frog, where are you?" by Mercer Mayer (1980). At the time of utterance, the referent of the frog has already been established so that the translation 'He shook [the jar], [but] he still did not see ANY frog.' would not be appropriate. Although the noun **kwá** 'frog' in (127) refers to a specific frog and is thus a case of definite reference, the definite marker **kɔ́** 'CL7.that' is not used. As Dryer (2007b: 155) points out, it is cross-linguistically typical that demonstratives which are used as definiteness markers are not obligatory.

(127) wù nī, wù dǎ dà wɔ̄ [kwá] lā
CL1 shake_empty(a) CL1 be(b);NEG see(a) NEG CL7/8.frog DAT
'He shook [the jar], [but] he still did not see the frog.'

There is no indefinite article. Instead, indefinite noun phrases generally lack a demonstrative or determiner. Examples (128) and (129) contain indefinite NPs without determiners: **kyà** 'basket, sp.' (128) and **yán ŋgɔ̄m** 'banana leaves' (129). The examples are taken from a recipe for corn beer. In both cases, the noun phrases are introduced for the first time here and do not refer to specific entities.

(128) à mɨ̄ tɛ́n wɨ́ [kyà] mɨ̄
2SG CONSEC drip(c) CL3 CL9/10.basket in

'You then pour it [the corn beer] into a basket [to remove all the water].'

(129) *after*, à mɪ̄ tǎn tʃű [yán ŋgɔ̄m]
afterwards 2SG CONSEC cut(b) come(b) CL3/7a.leaf CL1/2.plantain

'After that, you collect plantain leaves.'

7.1.4 Adjectives

While most of the words that denote what is often called property concepts are grammatically verbs in Mundabli, there is a small and closed class of adjectives. A (non-exhaustive) list of adjectives is provided in Table 7.2. Most of these adjectives belong to one of the four core semantic types which are typically associated with both large and small adjective classes: dimension, age, value and color. This is exactly what one would expect from a small and closed class of adjectives according to Dixon (2010: 73).

adjective	gloss
tsű́ŋ	'big, great, important'
dʒǔ	'short'
dʒɪ̄ŋ	'long', 'tall'
fyű́ŋ	'new'
kű	'old'
dzɔ́ŋ	'good'
bō	'bad'
bā́n	'white', 'clear'
yíl	'black'
wól	'beige'
ŋwā	'multi-coloured'
tsám	'dirty'
ntʃīm	'thick (for fluids)'

Table 7.2: List of adjectives (not exhaustive), repeated from Table 5.7, §5.3.1

Adjectives always take an agreement prefix. The agreement prefix is purely tonal for Class 1 and Class 9 nouns, see e.g. (130), and syllabic for nouns of all other classes, see (131). When an adjective is used attributively, as in (130) or (131), it agrees with the subject, and when it modifies a noun, it agrees with its head nominal. For a detailed treatment of agreement in adjectives, see §5.3.

(130) nsūŋ wū dzé wú lā yɛ̄ wà, à dɪ̌
CL1.friend CL1;3SG.POSS say(b) CL1PP DAT COMP 2SG, 2SG be(b)
[kpé bǒ]
CL1.woman CL1.bad

'Her friend said to her: "You are a bad woman!"'

(131) ŋ́=kà á tʃyé wɔ̄ yɛ̄ ŋwàtɨ̀ dǐ ná, dǐ
1SG=P3 NEG know(c) NEG COMP CL7/8.book be(b) as be(b)
[nɨ́ŋ kə̄-dzɔ́ŋ]
CL7.thing CL7-good

'I did not know back then that reading and writing is like that, [that] it is a good thing.'

Adjectives can form a noun phrase of their own in the absence of a nominal head, as in (132).[5] As when they modify a noun, adjectives in elliptical constructions agree in noun class with the (omitted) head noun.

(132) à mɨ̄ tʃʉ́ fə̄ ndá lā yɛ̄ m=mɨ̄ myé
2SG CONSEC come(b) give(b) 1SG.DAT DAT COMP 1SG=CONSEC lick(c)
[mùn-dzɔ̀ŋ~dzɔ̀ŋ]
CL6-sweet~RED

'[...] and then come and give [it] to me so that I then lick the sweet [soil].'

Example (132) is taken from a story in which the antelope asks the girl to bring her some moist red soil for her to lick. The reduplicated adjective **mùn-dzɔ̀ŋ~dzɔ̀ŋ** 'the sweet one' in the example refers to this soil. Table 7.3 contains adjective agreement prefixes and examples of adjectives for all noun classes.

noun class	prefix	example	gloss
1	**`-**	**ŋkʉ̌ŋ fyɨ̌ŋ**	'a new chief'
2	**bɔ̄-**	**(bə̀)ŋkʉ̌ŋ bɔ̄fyɨ́ŋ**	'new chiefs'
3	**wū-**	**gbɔ̄ wūfyɨ́ŋ**	'a new house'
7a	**kī-**	**dzɔ̄ yīfyɨ́ŋ**	'new houses'
7	**kī-**	**nɨ́ŋ kīfyɨ́ŋ**	'a new thing'
8	**bī-**	**ndʒɔ́m bīfyɨ́ŋ**	'new things'
9	**`-**	**dʒɨ̌ fyɨ̌ŋ**	'a new dog'
10	**yī-**	**dʒɨ́ yīfyɨ́ŋ**	'new dogs'
19	**fī-**	**mwɨ̌n fīfyɨ́ŋ**	'a new cat'
18	**mūN-**	**mwɨ̌n mūmfyɨ́ŋ**	'new cats'
6a	**mūN-**	**ŋgī mūmfyɨ́ŋ**	'new water'
8a	**bī-**	**ɲām bīfyɨ́ŋ**	'new fufu'

Table 7.3: Adjective agreement prefixes

Note that, although in some cases homophonous, agreement prefixes in adjectives differ formally from subject pronouns (see §6.1.1). The same holds

[5]The adjective in (132) is reduplicated. This expresses intensity.

for noun and adjective prefixes. Most nominal prefixes are segmentally identical with the equivalent adjective prefix. However, the two generally have a different tonal structure. Whereas nominal prefixes always have a low tone, the corresponding segmental adjective prefixes have a mid tone. Only the non-segmental Class 1 and 9 adjective prefixes have a low tone.

It has already been mentioned that adjectives can be used predicatively or attributively. Predicative adjectives require the use of a copula, as in (133). While the copula is often omitted, only adjectives can possibly co-occur with a copula. When adjectives are used attributively, they generally follow the noun, as in (134) and in (131) above. There is no special marking strategy; they are simply juxtaposed to the noun they modify.

(133) [gbɔ̄] w-ɔ́ kə̀ dɨ́ [wū-bán]
CL3.house CL3-DET P3 be(b) CL3-white

◇'The house was white'

(134) mɔ̀ nǭ wù kə̀ fə̄ w-ɔ̄ sɨ̀ŋ y-ɔ̄ ɨ́
CL1.man SUBORD CL1 P3 give(b) CL1-REL CL9.knife CL9-DET LOC
ɲùŋfù lā kə̀ dɨ̄ [mɔ̀ kǔ]
N. DAT P3 be(b) CL1.man CL1.old

◇'The man who gave Nyungfu the knife was an old man.'

Adjectives can also be reduplicated, which has the effect of intensification. In this case, the fully reduplicated adjectival root is preceded by the adjective prefix which agrees in noun class with the head noun, see (135)-(137).

(135) n=ʧű̋ ā [kwō dzú kī-bán~bán] kī
1SG=come(b) COM CL7/8.rooster certain CL7-white~RED CL7
kān yɔ̀ kǫ̀
have(c) CL9.voice CL1/2.juju

'I've come with a very white rooster. It has the voice of a juju.'

(136) bɔ̀m tǎn n-tsǫ̀ [dʒī dzɔ́ŋ~dzɔ́ŋ]
CL9.antelope refuse(b) INF-show(a).IPFV CL9.road CL9.good~RED
wú lā
CL1PP DAT

'The antelope refused to show her the right way.'

(137) yɛ̄ gǎn tsē mɨ̄ ā [ntsɔ̃́m mū-ŋ-gɛ̄~ŋ-gɛ̄]
COMP go(a) find(a) 1SG COM CL6.soil CL6-N-be_red~RED

'...: Go and find me some red soil!'

In (136), the reduplicated adjective modifies a Class 9 noun. Based on analogy, I assume that the adjective takes a purely tonal prefix, although the presence of a tonal prefix is not detectable from the tonal shape of the root in this example.

7.1.5 Numerals

Mundabli has a decimal numeral system, i.e. the numeral 10 is used as a base to form higher numbers according to the pattern $xn + y$. Just like English, Mundabli makes use of exponentiation of the base with a special term for 10^2, namely **gbì** 'hundred', as well as one for 10^3, namely **kām** 'thousand'. Both terms are linguistically opaque, i.e. nothing formally relates these exponentials to their base.[6] However, see §7.1.5.3 for more on the etymology of these and other numerals.

Numerals in Mundabli have different morphosyntactic structures. Only the basic numerals from 1 to 10 function as noun modifiers (see §7.1.5.1). The word for 10, as employed in multiples of 10 (different from the numeral 10 itself) and the words for 100 and 1000 are represented by numeral nouns. Complex numerals, i.e. numerals representing two- or multi-digit numbers, in which at least two digits are represented by a number other than zero, are represented by numeral phrases which combine the relevant subparts. Basic and complex numerals are described in turn. Numerals were also discussed in earlier sections with regard to palatalization processes in §3.3.3 and agreement patterns in §5.4.

7.1.5.1 Basic numerals

Basic numerals, i.e. numerals which are morphologically simple,[7] include all numerals from 1 to 10. The numerals 1-9 consist of a numeral stem plus a prefix. Only the numeral **dzōfɨ̄** 'ten' does not take a prefix. Nevertheless, it is analyzed as a numeral rather than a noun because it cannot itself be multiplied. Instead, an alternative nominal form (**mbāŋ**) is used when referring to multiples of ten (see §7.1.5.2). The numeral **dzōfɨ̄** is only used as noun modifier and in counting.

When used for counting or absolute calculations, the numeral stems for 'one', 'two' and 'three' take a low tone nasal prefix which assimilates in place of articulation to the following consonant. The stem **ǹdē** 'four' also starts with a low-toned nasal, however its stem starts with a low-toned nasal anyway, and thus it is not possible to tell whether the nasal prefix is present in the absolute form or not. The numerals 5-10 in their absolute form consist of the bare numeral stems without a prefix. Table 7.4 lists all basic numerals (from 1 to 10) in their absolute form, i.e. the form used in calculating or counting.

[6] Information on the base of the numeral system is based on criteria listed in Comrie (2011).

[7] Some of the basic numerals actually seem to be based on historically complex forms, see §7.1.5.3. However, synchronically the forms are opaque.

number	form
1	**m̀mo̱**
2	**m̀fyé**
3	**ǹtɔ́**
4	**ǹdē**
5	**kpɔ̄n**
6	**tʃītā**
7	**nɔ̆tɔ̄**
8	**nènè**
9	**kpānè**
10	**dzōfɪ̄**

Table 7.4: The numerals 1 to 10 in their absolute form

When they modify a noun, the numerals 1-9 take an agreement prefix which agrees in noun class with the head noun (see Table 7.5 for an illustration of the agreement patterns).

gender	'one'	'two'	'three'	'four'
1/2	**wù-mwɔ̀**	**bɔ̋-fyé**	**bɔ̋-tɔ́**	**bɔ́-ǹdē**
3/10	**wű-mwɔ́**	**yí-ʃyé**	**yí-tsɔ́**	**yí-ǹdē**
3/7a	**wű-mwɔ́**	**kí-fyé**	**kí-tɔ́**	**kí-ǹdē**
7/8	**kí-mó̱**	**bí-fyé**	**bí-tɔ́**	**bí-ǹdē**
9/10	**yì-mwɔ̀**	**yí-ʃyé**	**yí-tsɔ́**	**yí-ǹdē**
19/18	**fí-mwɔ́**	**mű́m-fyé**	**mű́n-tɔ́**	**mű́-ǹdē**

Table 7.5: Agreement in the numerals 1 to 4

Table 7.5 shows noun class agreement in numerals, as exemplified by the numerals 1-4. The numerals 5-9 are not included in the table for reasons of space and because they do not exhibit any irregularities (such as stem changes). They bear the same prefixes as the numerals 2-4, shown in Table 7.5. Note that the Class 2 prefix bears a high tone when it precedes the root **ǹdē** 'four' while it bears a superhigh tone with all the other roots found in the table just like all the other prefixes, except for the Class 1 and 9 prefixes. I have no explanation for this tonal irregularity. shows even more tonal irregularities.

The stem forms of the numerals 1, 2 and 3 in Table 7.5 display some irregularities. The numeral 'one', whose stem generally takes the shape **m(w)ɔ́**, exhibits a stem change when it modifies a noun of Class 7. In this case, the numeral takes the agreement prefix **kí-** and the form of the stem is **mó̱** with a pharyngealized vowel. This vowel change is probably due to the historical loss of a final velar stop which is still pronounced in the neighboring variety Mufu. The change is comparable to vowel alternations in perfective vs.

imperfective verb forms in which the imperfective verb form frequently involves pharyngealization or diphthongization of the stem vowel (see §3.3.5). A different stem change can be observed in the numerals for 2 and 3, here the initial consonant of the numeral root is palatalized after the Class 10 prefix **yǐ-** (but not after other prefixes containing the vowel **i**, such as **kǐ-** or **fǐ-**). Thus, **-fyē** 'two' and **-tɔ̄** 'three' are realized as **-ʃyē** and as **-tsɔ̄**, respectively, when they agree with Class 10.[8] In (138)-(139), the numeral is used attributively.

(138) [sǐ yì-mwò] áná [mbɛ̄ bǎ-tɔ́] bǐ fǐ gàn
CL9.day CL9-one like_that CL2.people CL2-three exit(b) pass(b) go(a)

'On one day, three people die.'

(139) kâ ŋ=kpɨ́ ɲɛ̄ fǐ mbɛ̄ ndʒān
COND 1SG=die(b).IPFV leave(a).IPFV pass(b) CL2.people Mundabli
kán [yɔ̀ yì-mwɔ̀]
have(c) CL9.voice CL9-one

'If I die, the Mundabli people should have one voice.'

7.1.5.2 Complex numerals

All numerals greater than 10 are complex, i.e. they combine at least two numerals by multiplication or addition.

As pointed out earlier, 10 in multiples of 10 from 20 upwards (the numeral 10 itself has a different form which is not related to the noun), 100 and 1000 are represented by the numeral nouns **mbāŋ** 'multiple of ten' (CL10), **gbǐ̂** (CL3) 'hundred', with the plural form **dzǐ̂** (CL10) and **kām** (CL7/8) 'thousand'.

Multiples of 10, 100 and 1000 are formed by multiplication. The numeral noun is followed by the basic numeral between 1 and 9, by which it is multiplied. The latter agrees in noun class with the numeral noun (both in absolute calculations and when the numeral phrase modifies a noun).

Thus, multiples of 10, 100 or 1000 always have the same shape, no matter whether they are used in absolute counting or to modify a noun, and irrespective of the noun class of the modified noun. This can be seen e.g. in (140) where the numeral phrase is the complement of the copula. As of yet, I have no good explanation for the tonal irregularities in the numeral agreement prefixes in Table 7.6.

(140) kpɔ́ wǘ dǐ mɛ̌ [kām bī-kpɔ̄n],
CL3/7.money CL3;3SG.POSS be(b) only CL7/8.thousand CL8-five
bwɛ̄
CL1/2.friend

'Her price is always 5000 francs, my friend.'

[8] As Class 9 contains only singular nouns, the numerals 2 and 3 never modify a Class 9 noun.

number	form
20	**mbāŋ yíʃyɛ́**
30	**mbāŋ yítsɔ́**
40	**mbāŋ yínɗē**
50	**mbāŋ yíkpɔ̄n**
60	**mbāŋ yìtʃītā**
70	**mbāŋ yínɔ̌tɔ̄**
80	**mbāŋ yínènè**
90	**mbāŋ yìkpānè**
100	**gbì wǔmó**
200	**dzì yǐʃyɛ́**
300	**dzì yǐtsɔ́**
400	**dzī yínɗē**
500	**dzī yīkpɔ̄n**
600	**dzī yìtʃītā**
700	**dzī yínɔ̌tɔ̄**
800	**dzī yínènè**
900	**dzī yìkpānè**
1000	**kām (kḯmó̱)**
2000	**kām bífyɛ́**
3000	**kām bítɔ́**
4000	**kām bíɲdē**
5000	**kām bīkpɔ̄n**
etc.	

Table 7.6: Multiples of 10, 100 and 1000, the numeral nouns

More complex numerals combine multiples of thousand, hundred and ten with each other, starting with the highest digit and ending with the lowest. The numeral nouns are followed by basic numerals, and the resulting phrases are connected to each other with the comitative/instrumental preposition **ā** 'with'. The only exception is when the tens digit is 1, i.e. when the numeral phrase ends in 10. In this case, the complex numeral ends in the basic numeral **dzōfɪ̄** 'ten' which is preceded by **ā ntsɔ̀**, just like the single-digits (see below). The examples in Table 7.7 illustrate the described pattern. See Table 7.8 for an example of a numeral combining more than two multiples.

A basic numeral which modifies a numeral noun (e.g., **mbaŋ** 'multiple of ten' (CL9/10), **gbi** 'a hundred' (CL3/10) or **kam** 'a thousand' (CL7/8)) agrees in noun class with the numeral noun and not with the noun modified by the whole numeral phrase. Thus, when a multiple of 10, 100 or 1000 modifies a noun, there is no agreement with the modified noun, see e.g. (141) and (142).

number	form
110	**gbì wŭmwɔ́ ā ntsɔ̀ dzōfɪ̄**
120	**gbì wŭmwɔ́ ā mbāŋ yíʃyɛ̄**
1500	**kām kímǫ́ ā dzī yīkpɔ̄n**
4070	**kām bíǹdē ā mbāŋ yínɔ̌tɔ̄**

Table 7.7: A few examples of complex numerals combining multiples of 10, 100 and 1000

(141) dʒɨ́ mbāŋ yí-kpɔ̄n
CL10.dogs CL10.multiple_of_ten CL10-five

◇'fifty dogs'

(142) kwā mbāŋ yí-kpɔ̄n
CL8.frogs CL10.multiple_of_ten CL10-five

◇'fifty frogs'

When referring to money, the noun **yấn** is used for 100 Francs CFA instead of **gbì** (pl. **dzì**) 'hundred'. While older people use **yấn** only when counting money, younger people sometimes also use it when counting things other than money. While it is possible that the noun **yấn** may develop into a numeral, synchronically it is not a proper numeral, as it is generally restricted to counting money. The noun **yấn** 'a hundred Francs' is probably derived from **yấn** (CL3/7a) 'leaf' (or 'leaves').[9] The use of the word for leaf to refer to 100, 1000 or a million seems common in the area (Good p.c.). Mungbam also uses a word meaning 'leaf' with the meaning 1000 (or possibly 1,000,000 francs when used to refer to a sum of money); see Lovegren (2013: 164).

When a complex numeral ends either in 10 or in a one digit other than zero, the last non-zero digit is usually preceded by **ā ntsɔ̀**. The word **ntsɔ̀** may be dropped, but in most cases it is not. The single-digit numerals (1-9) show noun class agreement with the head noun when the numeral phrase modifies a noun or with the antecedent when the numeral is argument of the copula verb **dɪ́** 'be'. When the complex numeral is used in counting or for absolute calculations, the single-digit numeral has the same form as the basic numeral in counting or for absolute calculations, i.e. 1-3 take a nasal prefix, 4-9 consist of the bare stem (see above). The origin of the word **ntsɔ̀** is unclear. However, the fact that the single-digit numeral agrees with the head noun rather than with **ntsɔ̀** shows that it is not a numeral noun. For more on the etymology of **ntsɔ̀**, see §7.1.5.3.

[9] A semantic connection between the two is conceivable - a bill looks somewhat like a leaf. 100 Franc notes were used in Cameroon until they were replaced by coins in 1971 (Wikipedia 2017)

number	form
11	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ m̀mǫ́**
12	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ m̀fyé**
13	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ ǹtɔ́**
14	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ ǹdē**
15	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ kpɔ̄n**
16	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ tʃītā**
17	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ nɔ̆tɔ̄**
18	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ nènè**
19	**dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ kpānè**
21	**mbāŋ yíʃyé ā ntsɔ̀ m̀mǫ́**
22	**mbāŋ yíʃyé ā ntsɔ̀ m̀fyé**
23	**mbāŋ yíʃyé ā ntsɔ̀ ǹtɔ́**
26	**mbāŋ yíʃyé ā ntsɔ̀ tʃītā**
98	**mbāŋ yikpane ā ntsɔ̀ nènè**
110	**gbì wŭmwɔ́ ā ntsɔ̀ dzōfɨ̄**
108	**gbì wŭmwɔ́ ā ntsɔ̀ nènè**
2008	**kām bífyé ā nènè**
1523	**kām kím̀ǫ́ ā dzī yīkpɔ̄n ā mbāŋ yíʃyé ā ntsɔ̀ ǹtɔ́**

Table 7.8: Complex numerals which combine higher digits with the basic numeral 10, or with a single-digit numeral

The numerals in Table 7.8 are in their absolute form, i.e. the form used for absolute calculations or counting. In the referential form, on the other hand, the single-digit numeral agrees in noun class with the modified noun.

When the complex numeral contains a single-digit numeral preceded by **ā ntsɔ̀** (or simply **ā**), the final simple numeral agrees in noun class with the noun modified by the whole phrase. This shows that **ntsɔ̀** is not a numeral noun, as one might suspect. Examples (143)-(146) show that the single-digit numeral agrees with the noun modified by the complete numeral phrase.

(143) dʒɨ́ dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ yī-kpɔ̄n
CL10.dogs ten COM unit CL10-five

◇‘fifteen dogs’

(144) kwā dzōfɨ̄ ā ntsɔ̀ bī-kpɔ̄n
CL8.frogs ten COM unit CL8-five

◇‘fifteen frogs’

(145) dʒǐ kām kǐ-mǫ́ ā dzī yī-kpɔ̄n
CL10.dogs CL7/8.thousand CL7-one COM CL10.hundred CL10-five
ā mbāŋ yǐ-ʃyɛ́ ā ntsɔ̀ yī-kpɔ̄n
COM CL10.multiple_of_ten CL10-two COM unit CL10-five

◇'one thousand five hundred and twenty-five dogs'

(146) kwā kām kǐ-mǫ́ ā dzī yī-kpɔ̄n
CL7/8.frog(s) CL7/8.thousand CL7-one COM CL10.hundred CL10-five
ā mbāŋ yǐ-ʃyɛ́ ā ntsɔ̀ bī-kpɔ̄n
COM CL10.multiple_of_ten CL10-two COM unit CL8-five

◇'one thousand five hundred and twenty-five frogs'

7.1.5.3 Etymology of numerals

The numerals 6 to 9 appear to be morphologically complex. The root **tʃītā** 'six' involves the numeral 'three', **nɔ̌tɔ̄** 'seven' is composed of 'four' and 'three', **nènè** 'eight' probably comes from a reduplication of **ǹdē** 'four' and **kpānè** 'nine' is composed of **kpɔ̄n** 'five' and **ǹdē** 'four'. Thus, in this domain, the system is not decimal but 5-based.

The form of the numeral **dzōfɪ̄** 'ten' is almost the same as Naki **dzofu** (Jeff Good, p.c.) and similar to the forms used in Noni **yoofə** (Hyman 1981: 28) and in the Mungbam dialects Abar (**dʒūhɛ́**) and Missong (**dʒóhó**). The other three dialects use forms which are not cognate with **dzōfɪ̄**; see Lovegren (2013: 162).

The origin of the word **ntsɔ̀**, which precedes the last numeral in several-digit numbers, is unclear. My best guess is that it could be related to the verb **tsɔ̄** 'show'.[10]

Although **ntsɔ̀** is always preceded by the comitative preposition **ā** 'with', it does not seem to be a noun. Unlike with the numeral nouns, the following numeral (between 1 and 9) does not agree with **ntsɔ̀**, but with the noun modified by the whole numeral phrase.

The etymology of **mbāŋ** 'multiple_of_ten' is unclear. Lexical items which are similar in shape are **báŋ** 'meet' (c), **bā́ŋ** 'lock' (b) and **mbà̀ŋ** 'door'.[11] The numeral noun **gbɪ̀** (pl. **dzɪ̀**) 'hundred', on the other hand, is clearly derived from the noun **gbɪ̀** (pl. **dzɪ̀**) 'rope/string'. A word for 'hundred' derived from

[10] A word similar in form and function has been reported for Ajumbu (Chan 2013), Noni (Hyman 1981: 21)(**ncɔ̀w**) and Bafut (Tamanji 2009: 85): **ntsò**. In Bafut, **ntsò** has been interpreted as a conjunction meaning 'and', although it seems to be restricted to this context. In Bafut, it is the only element connecting the multiple of ten with the single-digit number. The interpretation as a conjunction does not work for Noni where the numeral 10 is completely replaced by **ncɔ̀w** in the numerals between 11 and 19. However, numerals above 20 have the same pattern as Bafut numerals, with only **ncɔ̀w** connecting the multiple of ten and the single digit numbers. In Mundabli, **ntsɔ̀** does not replace the numeral for 10. Furthermore, it is always preceded by the comitative preposition **ā**. It can hardly be interpreted as a noun because the following numeral (between 1 and 9) does not agree with its noun class.

the noun 'rope' has also been reported for other languages in the area, such as Mungbam (Lovegren 2013: 118). Finally, the noun **kām** 'thousand' is identical in form to the noun **kām** 'crab'. It even belongs to the same noun class pairing (Class 7/8). However, this is probably a coincidence. It is more likely that it is related to the word **ŋkə̌m**, which describes a special kind of basket, usually referred to as 'Kenja' in Pidgin (Good, p.c.). Naki also uses the same word for 'thousand' and for some kind of basket. While Bafut also uses a similar form (**ŋkâm**) for 1,000,000, different forms are attested in Mungbam, Noni and Aghem.

7.1.5.4 Borrowing of numerals

Apart from the existing indigenous numerals, numbers are commonly borrowed from Cameroon Pidgin English. Mainly, but not exclusively 'multiples of ten' and 'hundreds' are borrowed. In this process, simple numerals are simply replaced by English numerals, while numeral nouns are replaced by English numerals which are reinterpreted as nouns and trigger agreement in their modifiers. In the elicited examples (147) and (148) borrowed numerals are combined with the indigenous numeral **bəfye** and the numeral noun **gbì** 'hundred' to form complex numeral phrases. The borrowed numerals in the examples are underlined.

(147) gbì wŭ-mwɔ́ ā *ten* bə̋-fyé ā *fai*
CL3.hundred CL3-one COM CL1/2.ten CL2-two COM five

◇'one hundred and twenty-five'

(148) gbì wŭ-mwɔ́ ā *ten*
CL3.hundred CL3-one COM CL1/2.ten

◇'one hundred and ten'

This kind of borrowing is especially common in younger generations but can also be observed among older speakers. It is especially common in counting money, see (149).

(149) tsʉ́ b-ɔ́ kə̀ dɨ̄ *seventy-five*
CL7/8.banana CL8-DET P3 be(b) seventy-five

'The bananas were 75 francs.' (It was bananas for 75 Francs.)

7.1.5.5 Finger counting and signing numbers

There are two methods used in finger counting. The first is used as memory aid when actually counting and the second is used for signing numbers to others using one's fingers.

[11]Note that Noni (Beboid) also uses a similar form (**mbaaŋ**) for multiples of ten, see Hyman (1981: 28).

Counting (up to 10) is done by bending the fingers of one hand, one after the other, starting with the little finger of the left hand, using the index finger of the other. When signing numbers to others, the technique presented in Table 7.9 is used.

number	sign
1	index finger stretched out, the others bent with thumb holding the rest
2	index and middle finger stretched out, the others bent with thumb holding the rest
3	little, ring and middle finger stretched out, the others bent with thumb holding the rest
4	all fingers stretched out, thumb bent
5	all fingertips of one hand joined
6-9	5 + x either signed with both hands simultaneously or in sequence with the same hand
10	all fingertips of both hands joined
11-19	10 + x signed in sequence
20	10 + 10 signed in sequence
30	10 + 10 + 10 signed in sequence
25	10 + 10 + 5 signed in sequence
etc.	

Table 7.9: Signing numbers to others

7.1.6 Adverbials as noun modifiers

Certain adverbials can also modify a noun. Examples include the spatial demonstratives **fɔ́** and **tɔ́** and the spatial adverbials **fán** and **tán**. Like other modifiers, they follow the noun they modify. In (150), the spatial adverbial **tán** modifies the pronoun **bī** 'we'.

(150) yɛ̄ [bī t-án] bī lì ā́ mò̱~mò̱
COMP 1PL DIST-here 1PL be_strong(a) ADVLZ one~RED

'That we here, we are very strong.'

7.2 Complex noun phrases

This section treats complex noun phrases, i.e. noun phrases which contain more complex sorts of modifiers like possessive modifiers or phrasal modifiers, but also conjoined NPs, as the conjunction of NPs results in more complex NPs. Relative clauses also represent complex modifiers. However, they are not included in this chapter, as they are dealt with in detail in Chapter 12.

7.2.1 Associative constructions

Associative constructions consist of a possessor and a possessum. The possessor can be represented by a noun or a pronoun. Associative constructions with nominal and pronominal possessors are treated in turn in 7.2.1.1 and 7.2.1.2. Pronouns have been dealt with in §5.1.2; the focus here is mainly on nominal possessors.

There is no general distinction between alienable and inalienable possession in Mundabli, although certain constructions, such as reversed word order and an unmarked pronoun form in 'my child' (see §7.2.1.3) and constructions involving postpositions derived from body parts (see §10.2.2.1), suggest that the distinction plays a limited role.

7.2.1.1 Associative constructions with nominal possessor

When the possessor is represented by a full noun, possessum and possessor are juxtaposed to each other in the order **Possessum – Possessor** without an intervening segmental marker. Comparative evidence (cf. Meeussen 1967: 106) suggests that there once was a segmental marker. However, synchronically, it is absent and only minor tone changes have been discovered in the associative construction.

Examples (151)-(153) illustrate the structure of the associative construction.

(151) nǐ̋ à tʃǔ bǐ́ f-án [kpɨ̄ pă
CL1.mother.3POSS P2 come(b) exit(b) PROX-here CL9/10.death Pa
Fǎn] ŋgɔ̀
F. upon

'His mother came here for the death of Pa Fan.'[12]

(152) bī ā wʉ́̄ wɔ̄ [ɲɔ̄ nǐ̋]
CL8 NEG hear(b).IPFV NEG CL8a.talk CL1/2.mother

'[...] they will not be hearing their mother's advice.'

(153) ǎyī, bɔ̋́ ā dǐ̋ wɔ̄ ā [dɛ̀ fwɛ̋́n]
no CL2 NEG be(b) NEG COM CL9/10.place clear(b)

'No, they don't have a place to clear.'

There are two cases in which the tone of a noun in a genitive/associative construction differs from its tone in isolation. If the first noun, i.e. the possessum, has a superhigh tone in isolation, this tone changes to a high tone in the associative construction, irrespective of the tonal pattern of the possessor noun; see (154).

[12] 'Pa' is a respectful title for elder men, which is adopted from Pidgin.

(154) wān w-ɔ̄ gān mū ʃú dzə́ŋ́á ā
CL1.child CL1-DET go(a) take(a) come(b) again COM
[kpú tĭ], wú-mbɛ́ w-ɔ́
CL3/7a.wooden_bowl CL1.father CL3-country_fashion CL3-DET

'The child went again to bring its father's traditional wooden bowl.'

The second change also takes place in the first noun (i.e. the possessum). Where a possessum is pronounced with mid-low falling tone in isolation, it is pronounced with a level mid tone within the associative construction where it precedes the possessor; see (155). The noun **gbɔ̄** 'house' is realized with a mid-low falling tone in isolation. In the example though, it bears a mid level tone. This process is not restricted to associative constructions (see §2.1.2).

(155) à mɨ̄ gàn də̀ [gbɔ̄ wān w-ā]
2SG CONSEC go(a) see(a) CL3.house CL1.child CL1-2SG.POSS
sè bā nàn tsə̀ fín
house_front.LOC IMPERS fix/decorate(a) CL7/8.bundle_of_grass there

'You will then go and see that a bundle of grass is fixed [on the door] on the frontside of your child's house,'

Thus, associative constructions in Mundabli are not complicated by tonal associative markers, such as is the case in Fe'fe'-Bamileke (Hyman 1972) and other Grassfields languages.

7.2.1.2 Associative phrase with pronominal possessor

Possessive pronouns were already discussed with regard to noun class agreement in §5.1.2. They are used mainly as noun modifiers. Their use as pronouns, representing a whole noun phrase, is not very frequent in Mundabli. Possessive pronouns inflect for the person and number of the possessor on the one hand, and for the noun class of the possessum on the other. Possessive pronouns generally carry a mid tone when the possessum belongs to Class 1 or 9 and a superhigh tone when it belongs to any of the other noun classes. Only the third person plural possessive pronoun has the invariant form **bə̌** irrespective of the noun class of the possessum. In the first person singular possessive pronoun some of the noun class distinctions are neutralized. The structure of the possessive pronoun itself has been discussed in detail in §5.1.2. The current section therefore focuses on the morphosyntax of the whole phrase, and not on the pronoun itself.

Possessive pronouns occur very frequently as noun modifiers in spontaneous conversation. Like in N + N associative phrases, the order in N + PRO associative phrases is generally Possessum + Possessor, see e.g. (156)-(158). The associative phrase in the examples is enclosed in square brackets.

(156) wù tsē də [wān wū] bɔ̀
CL1 search(a) see(a) CL1.child CL1;3SG.POSS FRUST

'She did not find her child.'

(157) [gbàn ŋgɨ̄] tsú mɨ̄ *sűtéée*
CL1.in-law CL1;1SG.POSS beat(b) 1SG so_much

'My in-law beat me seriously.'

(158) [kɛ́ bǐ] b-ɔ́ ɲā áná dǐ ŋgāŋ
CL7/8.leg CL8;3SG.POSS CL8-DET hurt(a) like_that be(b) CL3/10.hill
y-ɔ́ ō
CL10-DET EMPH

'Her feet are hurting because of those hills.' (lit.: Those her feet hurt like that, [it] is those hills.)

While the tone of the possessive pronoun remains constant (and is determined by the noun class of the possessum, see above) the possessum exhibits the same tone changes as in a N + N associative phrase. Thus, a superhigh possessum is lowered to a high tone, as e.g. in (159) and (160). Both 'name' and 'eyes' are pronounced with a superhigh tone in isolation.

(159) yɛ̄ [mán mű] dǐ tɛ́là mwɔ́m
COMP CL18/19.name CL18;3SG.POSS be(b) T. M.

'[and the daughter said:] "His name is Tela Mwom."'

(160) [yí kǐ] bān bī tʃū mɛ̄ wū
CL3/7a.eye CL7;3SG.POSS clean(b) exit(b) come(b) finish(a) CL1
yɨ́ŋ yə́ gbɔ̄ wű
build(c) go_up(c) CL3.house CL3;3SG.POSS

'Let his eyes clear up, then he will build a house of his own.'[13]

7.2.1.3 Special cases of possessive marking

There are a few cases of possessive marking which deviate from the regular pattern. Among them are the construction **mī wān** 'my child' with its reversed word order and a few relational nouns which have special possessive forms. Derived locative postpositions will also be discussed, as they resemble possessive phrases and may have been derived from them historically.

In the construction **mī wān** 'my child' the order of possessor and possessum is reversed and instead of the expected possessive pronoun, an independent pronoun is used (cf. 161 and 162, with the relevant phrase enclosed in square brackets).

[13]The expression 'let his eyes clear up' means roughly 'wait until he grows up'.

(161) [mɨ̄ wān] kə̀ tʃíā̋ lɛ́
1SG CL1.child P3 long_ago get_lost(a)

'My child got lost long ago.'

(162) wù dzé yɛ̄, wɛ̀ɛ̋ɛ́, n=dɨ́ ná f-án, ŋ=kə̋
CL1 say(b) COMP INTERJ 1SG=be(b) as PROX-here 1SG=HAB
dʒə̣̀ kpɨ̄ [mɨ̄ wān]
mourn(a) CL9/10.death 1SG CL1.child

'She said: Alas! I am here, I am crying for the death of my child.'

In (162), the irregular possessive phrase **mɨ̄ wān** forms the possessor within the bigger possessive phrase **kpɨ̄ mɨ̄ wān**. This construction is also dealt with in §7.3.1.1.

A few nouns mark possession by a stem change. This phenomenon is limited to a few lexical items, namely the relational nouns **nɨ́** 'mother', **tɨ̌** 'father' and **wān nɨ̌** 'sibling'. These nouns have special stem forms which are used when the possessor is in the second person, **nɛ́** 'your mother' and **tyɛ̌** 'your father', or in the first person, **wɛ́** 'my sibling'. Although the special possessive form is more commonly attested without a modifier, as in (163) and (164), it may also co-occur with a possessive pronoun, as in (165).

(163) yɛ̄ gǎn bɔ̄ŋ ʃū wān nɛ̌ w-ɔ̄
COMP go(c) call(a) come(b) CL1.child CL1.mother.2POSS CL1-DET

'[...] Go and call your sister!'

(164) yɛ̄ wɛ́ fə̋ gàn twǒ kpē
COMP CL1/2.sibling.1SG.POSS P1 go(a) carry(b) CL3.pot
tɨ́ wú-mbɛ̋ w-ɔ́
CL1.father.3POSS CL3-twin CL3-DET

'[...] that "my sibling(s) went and carried their father's twin pot"'

(165) n=lyā́ ná f-án, n=dá wú wɔ̄ yɛ̄
1SG=go_to_bush(a).IPFV as PROX-here 1SG=F1;NEG hear(b) NEG COMP
bɛ̄n fə̋ mù ʃǔ kpē tyɛ̌ w-ɛ̄n
2PL P1 take(a) come(b) CL3.pot CL1.father.2POSS CL1-2PL.POSS
w-ɔ́ wú-kwɛ̋ w-ɔ́, yɛ̄ bɛ̄n lə̄ nɨ́ŋ dǫ̣́ tʃín
CL3-DET CL3-home CL3-that COMP 2PL do(a) CL7.thing certain there
mɨ̄
in

'"As I am going to the bush, I don't want to hear [when I get back] that you have taken your father's traditional pot in order to do something inside."'

Finally, postpositional phrases with derived locative postpositions should be discussed here, as they structurally and semantically resemble possessive constructions, and it may be that they were historically derived from the latter.[14] Locative postpositions are derived from body parts, meronyms and, in a few cases, toponyms. The postposition is often formally identical with the original noun and differs in grammatical behavior. When the postposition is modified by a pronoun, the pronoun appears in its independent segmental form but with a special tonal pattern; see (166). When it is modified by a noun, the noun is realized with the same tone pattern as in any non-utterance-final context; see (168). Postpositional phrases resemble possessive phrases in which two nouns are simply juxtaposed to each other because the postposition looks like a noun. However, unlike in a possessive phrase, the order is reversed and the phrase is head-final.

(166) wù tṵ́ fo̱ [wú fɔ̄]
CL1 grow(b) CL7b.hair CL1PP head.LOC

'She let the hair on her head grow.'

(167) wān w-ɔ̄ tsɨ́ bí ʃī dɔ̄ w-ɔ́
CL1.child CL1-DET spit(b) exit(b) go_down(a) CL3a.bean(s) CL3a-DET
[wú dzǽ]
CL1PP mouth.LOC

'The child spit out the bean from her mouth.'

(168) kə́ kə̀ ʃɛ̄ yɛ̄ lɔ̀ bī fwɛ́n w-ɔ́,
COND P3 want(a) COMP go_to_bush(a) 1PL CL3.clearing(b) CL3-DET
m=fwɛ́n [nɨ́ ɲū]
1SG=clear(b) CL1.mother farm.LOC

'When we went to the clearing, I cleared on my mother's field.'

All the postpositions included in these examples are segmentally identical with the nouns included in their locative meaning. It may be that postpositional phrases were originally derived from special inalienable possessive constructions in which the word order was reversed. This would also fit in well with the reversed word order in **mɨ̄ wān** 'my child'. However, synchronically, the two constructions are different. The pronoun in **mɨ̄ wān** does not bear a high tone, as it would if it were part of a postpositional phrase. Derived postpositions are treated in more detail in §10.2.2.1.

7.2.2 Conjunctive coordination of noun phrases

This section deals with different kinds of noun phrase conjunctions, namely conjunctions with **āmɨ̀** (§7.2.2.1) and inclusory conjunctions (§7.2.2.2).

[14] Postpositional phrases involving postpositions derived from body part nouns are analyzed as a special case of possessive phrases in Voll (2014).

When two noun phrases are conjoined, they together form a complex noun phrase. There are two ways in which noun phrases can be conjoined: (a) by use of the conjunctive element **āmɨ̀** 'and' or (b) within a form of inclusory conjunction (cf. Haspelmath 2007: 30). The two strategies are dealt with in §7.2.2.1 and §7.2.2.2.

Various factors play a role in the choice between the two conjunction strategies: (i) whether one of the conjuncts is a pronoun, (ii) the topicality of both referents, (iii) whether one, both or neither of the conjoined noun phrases has a human referent and (iv) the existence or absence of a conceptual connection between the referents of the conjoined noun phrases or of their actions. Agreement patterns for coordinated noun phrases are discussed in §5.6.

7.2.2.1 Conjunctive coordination of noun phrases with āmɨ̀ 'and'

Two noun phrases can be conjoined with the conjunction **āmɨ̀** 'and'. The conjunction **āmɨ̀** is a medial connective, i.e. it stands between the conjoined noun phrases, connecting them. While the medial connective is by far the most prominent option in overt marking of noun phrase conjunction world-wide, in sub-Saharan Africa, the strategy is a minor one, (cf. Stassen 2011).

When two noun phrases are connected with **āmɨ̀**, both **A āmɨ̀ B** and **B āmɨ̀ A** are syntactically equivalent. Of course, discourse factors will be involved in the positioning of the conjuncts, but this is not a syntactic issue. In this regard, the conjunction **āmɨ̀** differs from the preposition **ā** 'with'. The use of the preposition **ā** 'with' implies a certain imbalance, with the main agent modified by the prepositional phrase.

Examples (169)-(171) show instances of noun phrases conjoined with **āmɨ̀** 'and'.

(169) wù dzé ɲɔ̄ ndʒə̀n āmɨ̀ ɲɔ̄ dʒwɛ̄n
CL1 say(b) CL8a.language Mundabli and CL8a.language Missong

◇'She speaks Mundabli and Missong.'

(170) bə̋ kə̀ dɪ̄ bə̋-fyé, wān mɔ̀nɔ̄ wù-mwɔ̀ āmɨ̀ wān
CL2 P3 be(b) CL2-two CL1.child CL1.male CL1-one and CL1.child
kpé wù-mwɔ̀
CL1.woman CL1-one

'There were two of them, a boy and a girl.'

(171) wù dzé ə̋ə̋ə̋, yɛ̄ m=búŋ mfɔ̀ ŋgɪ̄
CL1 say(b) INTERJ COMP 1SG=pick(b) CL1/2.slave CL1;1SG.POSS
kpé āmɨ̀ mfɔ̀ ŋgɪ̄ mɔ̀nɔ̄
CL1.woman and CL1/2.slave CL1;1SG.POSS CL1.male

'She said: Wow! I have picked my slave boy and my slave girl.'

Although conjunctive coordination with **āmɨ̀** is symmetrical, since the order of the coordinands is not fixed and both noun phrases "have the same semantic relations with other surrounding elements" (Haspelmath 2007: 1), the coordinator **āmɨ̀** is prepositive on the second coordinand (cf. Haspelmath 2007: 6). This is illustrated here by cases of discontinuous order, as encountered in (172) and (173), where the whole conjunction is split up and the coordinator **āmɨ̀** aligns with the second coordinand, showing that it forms a constituent with the second coordinand rather than the first (see Haspelmath (2007: 8) for a list of constituency tests which are applicable to Mundabli).

In (172), the first coordinand **wān dzū** 'a certain child' stands alone at the end of the first clause. The rest of the complex noun phrase consisting of conjunctive element **āmɨ̀** and the second coordinand **dʒɨ̌ yī** 'his dog', follows as an afterthought, at the end of the utterance.

(172) tʃí b-ɔ́ ń̃=dà [wān dzū], wù kɔ́
CL7/8.picture CL8-DET 1SG=see CL1.child CL1.certain CL1 hold(b)
kē ŋmgbàŋ kí ŋgɔ̄, [āmɨ̀ dʒɨ̌ yī]
CL9/10.hand CL7.jaw CL7;3SG.POSS upon and CL9.dog CL9;3SG.POSS

'In the picture I see a child - he holds his jaws in his hands - and his dog.'

(173) wù gān də̄ gbɔ̄ wān wū w-ɔ̄ lā ā
CL1 go(a) see(a) CL3.house CL1.child CL1;3SG.POSS CL1-DET DAT COM
[mù-ŋā́m m-ɔ́] gbɔ̄ sɛ̀ [āmɨ̀
CL18-strip_of_cloth CL18-DET CL3.house house_front.LOC and
tsə̀]
CL7/8.bundle_of_grass

'She went in and saw the child's house with the pieces of cloth in front of the door and the traditional grass bundle.'

In most cases, when multiple noun phrases are conjoined, all but the last coordinator are omitted, as shown in the elicited examples (174) and (175).

(174) ŋ̃=kə̀ tāŋ [gɛ̄ tsɔ̄ŋmɨ̄ āmɨ̀ ŋkā́ŋ]
1SG=P3 buy(b) CL3/7a.corn CL7/8.groundnuts and CL6.salt

'I bought corn, groundnuts and salt.'

(175) ŋ̃=kə̀ dă [mbɔ̀ŋ kŭŋàm āmɨ̀ dʒű]
1SG=P3 see(a) CL1/2.cow CL7/8.pig and CL10.goats

'I saw cows, pigs and goats.'

7.2.2.2 Inclusory conjunction

In addition to conjoining of noun phrases with **amɨ** 'and', there is another strategy which is used to conjoin noun phrases, a special type of conjunction referred to as an 'inclusory conjunction' by Haspelmath (2007: 33). Inclusory conjunctions involve a coordination-like pairing of pronouns or nouns or combinations of the two. However, the interpretation of the coordinated pronouns is not strictly additive, since the first pronoun always has an incorporative interpretation. This incorporative reading is characteristic of inclusory conjunctions.[15] While it has been claimed in earlier publications (Good et al. 2011: 128-129) that Mundabli has compound pronouns, I now think that the constructions in question simply form a special case of inclusory conjunction constructions because their structure does not differ from inclusory conjunction constructions involving nouns. The underlying structure of the inclusory conjunction construction is analyzable as **NP^1 PRO^1-ā NP^2**. The first noun phrase (**NP^1**) may represent an inclusory plural pronoun or an inclusory plural noun (referring to the whole conjunct), or it may be a non-inclusory singular noun (referring only to the first conjunct). The conjunctive element **PRO^1-ā** is composed of an inclusory pronoun **PRO^1** whose reference includes both conjuncts, merged with the preposition **ā** 'with'.[16] The second noun phrase (NP^2) refers to the (second) conjunct and may be represented by a pronoun or by a noun.

I will start off by describing inclusory conjunction constructions involving two pronouns and combinations of pronouns and nouns, as these seem to be typologically more common patterns, and then treat the typologically more unusual case of inclusory conjunction constructions involving two full noun phrases.

In inclusory conjunction constructions conjoining two pronouns, **NP^1** is represented by an inclusory plural pronoun identical with **PRO^1**. Thus, their structure is analyzable as **PRO^1 PRO^1-*ā* PRO^2**, where **PRO^1** is an inclusory plural pronoun, phonologically merged with the preposition **ā** 'with' in the conjoining element, and **PRO^2** represents the second conjunct, as in (176).

(176) bī by-ā wù lɔ̀
1PL 1PL-COM CL1 go_to_bush(a)

'He and I went to the bush.'

Table 7.10 shows all combinations of pronouns attested in inclusory conjunction constructions. These data are based on elicitation and should be taken with a grain of salt. Furthermore, they were only elicited in preverbal position. Thus, it is unclear whether the equivalent non-preverbal forms differ in tone or not.

[15] It is also characteristic of compound pronouns (Cysouw 2003: 171).

[16] While the merged form is transparent in most cases, the form that results when **PRO^1** is represented by the second person plural pronoun **bēn**, namely **bɛ̄**, is not transparently composed of **bēn** and **ā**.

pronoun	gloss	interpretation	gloss
bī byā wà	'1PL 1PL.with 2SG'	1SG + 2SG	'me and you (SG)'
bī byā bēn	'1PL 1PL.with 2PL'	1SG/PL + 2PL	'me/us and you (PL)'
bī byā wù	'1PL 1PL.with 3SG'	1SG + 3SG	'me and him'
bī byā bɔ̌	'1PL 1PL.with 3PL'	1SG/PL + 3PL	'me/us and them'
bēn bē wù	'2PL 2PL.with 3SG'	2SG + 3SG	'you (SG) and him'
bēn bē bɔ̌	'2PL 2PL.with 3PL'	2SG/PL + 3PL	'you (SG/PL) and them'
bɔ́ báā wù	'3PL 3PL.with 3SG'	3SG + 3SG	'him$_i$ and him$_j$'
bɔ́ báā mɪ̄	'3PL 3PL.with 1SG'	3SG + 1SG	'him and me'
bɔ́ báā wà	'3PL 3PL.with 2SG'	3SG + 2SG	'him and you (SG)'

Table 7.10: Inclusory conjunction of pronouns

The underlying structure of the forms in Table 7.10 may be analyzable as PRO^1 PRO^1-*with* PRO^2, where the first part is a full plural pronoun, the second part consists of a repetition of the initial pronoun phonologically fused with the preposition **ā** 'with', and the last part is the second pronoun. However, if we adopt such an interpretation, it is somewhat obscure why the fusion of **bēn** and **ā** should result in the second person plural "intervening" form **bē**.

Inclusory conjunction of pronouns in Mundabli seems to contradict attested universals of inclusory conjunction structure. According to Haspelmath (2007: 34), the inclusory pronoun in inclusory conjunction is always higher on the person hierarchy (given the following scale: $1>2>3$) than the final pronoun which represents the second coordinand. The forms in Table 7.10 which start in **bī** 'we' and **bēn** 'you (pl)' confirm this claim. However, in the forms below the dashed line in Table 7.10, the final (non-inclusory) pronouns **mɪ̄** 'I' and **wà** 'you' are higher on the person hierarchy than the inclusory pronoun **bɔ́** 'they'. These two forms are also paradigmatically "redundant" since their semantics overlap with some of the forms above the dashed line in Table 7.10.

It remains to be verified whether Mundabli really contradicts the established universal tendencies for inclusory conjunction, or whether the collected data are insufficient. The data are only based on elicitation. In fact, inclusory conjunction of pronouns is hardly attested at all in non-elicited texts. The only spontaneous example of a compound pronoun is in (177). There, the compound pronoun is added as an apposition, in order to add more detail to a simple pronoun already present in the phrase. In this example, the compound pronoun is enclosed in brackets and the co-referent simple pronoun **bī** is underlined.

(177) wù dzé yɛ̄ wù nɨ́ŋ mɨ̄ gbɔ́ yɛ̄ n=ʃī
CL1 say(b) COMP CL1 want(c) 1SG house.LOC COMP 1SG=go_down(a)
ʃū yɛ̄ bī kán té, [bī by-ā wù]
come(b) COMP 1PL hold(c) CL??.discussion 1PL 1PL-COM CL1

'She said that she wants me in the house, that I should come down, that we should have a talk, her and me.'

While there is neither a dual form nor an inclusive/exclusive distinction in Mundabli, it is possible in some cases to express an inclusive/exclusive distinction or dual meaning by the use of an inclusory conjunction construction. The first pronoun in **bī byā wà** has an inclusive dual reading as in 'us including you (SG)', meaning 'the two of us'.

Inclusory conjunction constructions involving a noun and a pronoun have the following structure: **PRO[1] PRO[1]-ā NP[2]**. It is almost identical with inclusory conjunctions of pronouns with an inclusory pronoun representing **PRO[1]**, the only difference being that the second conjunct **NP[2]** is represented by a full noun phrase, instead of a pronoun, see e.g. (178).

(178) bī by-ā mbɛ̌ fə̋ lɔ̀ ɲū
1PL 1PL-COM M. P1 go_to_bush(a) CL3.field

'Me and Mbeh went to the field (earlier today).'

When two full noun phrases are conjoined by an inclusory conjunction, the structure is **NP[1] PRO[1]-ā NP[2]**. Just like in the constructions discussed so far (i.e. inclusory conjunction of two pronouns or of a pronoun and a noun), **PRO[1]** is represented by a plural inclusory pronoun, phonologically merged with the preposition **ā** and **NP[2]** is represented by the second coordinand, which is a noun in this case. It differs from an inclusory conjunction only by **NP[1]** being represented by a noun instead of a pronoun, and in that this noun may be either an inclusory plural noun (see (179)), or a singular noun representing the first conjunct (see (180)). In the other constructions, where **NP[1]** is represented by a pronoun, it is always the plural inclusory pronoun, i.e. the same as **PRO[1]**.

(179) ɲwám b-ɔ́ dzé, ǎy, [bə̀-tǐ bɔ́-ā nǐ́] fə̋
CL2.children CL2-DET say(b) no CL2-father CL2-COM CL1.mother P1
dzə́ yɛ̄ kə́ mɔ̀ tʃú f-án ǐ́
say(b) COMP COND CL1.person come(b) PROX-here LOC
nsɔ̄lā wù ɲwǎn nɨ́ŋ dǫ́ bí lā yɛ̄, bī
CL1/2.afternoon CL1 beg(b) CL7.thing some 1PL.PP DAT COMP 1PL
ʃā́ fə̄
PROHIB give(b)

'The children said: No. Our fathers and mothers said if anybody comes here in the afternoon, we should not give [them anything].'

(180) [ŋgàʃǎ bɔ́-ā/báā ɲùŋfù] à lyà ɲú
N. CL2-COM N. P2 go_to_bush(a).IPFV CL3.farm

◇‘Ngasha and Nyungfu went to the farm.’

The use of inclusory conjunctions seems to be restricted to human referents. When two (human) nouns are conjoined by an inclusory conjunction, the inclusory pronoun **PRO[1]** is a Class 2 pronoun.

When the first noun phrase is singular, the second noun phrase is obviously not included in its reference. In this respect, inclusory conjunctions of nouns differ from inclusory conjunctions in which at least the first coordinand is a pronoun. In the latter, the first (pronominal) conjunct is always inclusory (i.e. it includes the referent of the second noun phrase) and thus always plural.

Inclusory conjunction constructions do not always form a single constituent since the two conjuncts may also be split up. In this case, the conjunctive element **ā** ‘with’ aligns syntactically with the second coordinand with which it forms a single ‘phonological word’. This can be seen in (181)-(185), where the inclusory conjunction is split up and the conjunctive element aligns with the second coordinand. Examples (181)-(184) contain inclusory conjunctions of two nouns; in (185), a pronoun and a noun are conjoined. In all given examples where two nouns are coordinated, the first is a singular noun and represents the first coordinand.

(181) ɲwám b-ɔ́ dzé ǎy, [nǐ́] bǒ ʃɛ̄ wù
CL2.children CL2-DET say(b) no CL1.mother 3PL.POSS want(a) CL1
lɔ [bɔ́-ā tǐ] bɔ̋ mɨ̄ dzě yɛ̄ ká
go_to_bush(a) CL2-COM CL1.father CL2 CONSEC say(b) COMP COND
mɔ̀ tʃú f-án nsɔ̄lā yɛ̄ bī ʃá
CL1.person come(b) PROX-here CL1/2.afternoon COMP 1PL PROHIB
fə̄ nɨ́ŋ dǫ́ ǐ́ wú lā
give(b) CL7.thing some LOC CL1PP DAT

‘The children said: No, before our mother and father left for the bush, they told us that, if anybody comes here in the afternoon, we should not give him anything!’

(182) wān w-ɔ̄ dzé [nǐ́] lā yɛ̄ [bɔ́-ā tǐ]
CL1.child CL1-DET say(b) CL1.mother DAT COMP CL2-COM CL1.father
lā yɛ̄ mɔ̀ fə̄ tʃú f-án nsɔ̄lā
DAT COMP CL1.person P1 come(b) PROX-here CL1/2.afternoon

‘The child said to her mother and father: “A man came here in the afternoon.”’

(183) wān w-ɔ̄ dzé [nǐ́] lā [bɔ́-ā tǐ]
CL1.child CL1-DET say(b) CL1.mother DAT CL2-COM CL1.father
mɛ̀ bɛ̄n də yɛ̄
NCS.QUOT.Q 2PL see(a) QUOT.Q

'The child said to her mother and father: Do you see?'

(184) f-án f-ín dǐ́ nā [wān w-ɔ̄] gbū kwō
PROX-here PROX-here be(b) as CL1.child CL1-DET fall(a) enter(c)
ʃī f-ɔ́ dʒwó mɪ̄ gbū kwō ʃī
go_down(a) LOC-REL CL1.stream in fall(a) enter(c) go_down(a)
dʒwó [bɔ́-ā dʒǐ́ yī y-ɔ̄]
CL1.stream CL2-COM CL9.dog CL9;3.SG.POSS CL9-DET

'This is where the child fell into the stream, the child and his dog.'

(185) [bɔ̋] kə̌ té, [bɔ́ ā tʃɔ̄m yī]
CL2 P3.HAB discuss(c) CL2 COM CL9.co-wife CL9;3SG.POSS

'They discussed, she and her co-wife.'

Inclusory conjunctions in Mundabli are unusual regarding both areal and universal patterns. The Mundabli structure pattern has not been reported to exist in any other language. Inclusory conjunction of pronouns, as attested in Mundabli, may at first sight be mistaken for an instance of compound pronouns, a (semi-)grammaticalized form of inclusory conjunction of pronouns (Cysouw 2003: 340), which are "a clearly areal phenomenon" of "central-western Cameroon" (Cysouw 2003: 167,171). However, inclusory conjunctions in Mundabli differ from compound pronouns in several regards. This concerns, first of all, the structure of the inclusory conjunction construction. When two pronouns are conjoined within an inclusory conjunction construction, the structure is analyzable as **PRO^{1} PRO^{1}-ā PRO^{2}**, with the inclusory pronoun repeated and the second instance contracted with the following preposition **ā** 'with'. In all languages in which compound pronouns have been claimed to exist, they are analyzable as something along the lines of **PRO^{1} (with) PRO^{2}**, where the first pronoun is an inclusory plural pronoun.[17] While the use of a conjoining element **a** is common in Bantoid compound pronouns (Cysouw 2003: 181), the repetition of the first pronoun, as attested in Mundabli, is unusual. Only in Mundabli, does seem to be possible to use the same construction to conjoin a pronoun with a noun or even two nouns with each other. Of course, it is possible that such cases exist in other languages, but simply have not been reported in the literature. This remains an interesting topic for further research. However, for now I assume that comparable constructions do

[17] See e.g., Aghem (Hyman 1979: 52-55), Noni (Hyman 1981: 17-18), Limbum (Fransen 1995), Bafut (Tamanji 2009) for selected examples and Cysouw (2003: 330-337) for an overview of Bantoid compound pronouns.

not exist in other languages with compound pronouns. The fact that pronouns are conjoined using the same inclusory conjunction construction as used when conjoining nouns suggests that what may be mistaken for compound pronouns is just an instance of inclusory conjunction. While the apparent violation of the person hierarchy (see Table 7.10) also argues against a compound pronoun analysis,[18] it does not support an inclusory conjunction analysis, as the universality of the person hierarchy has been claimed for inclusory conjunction (Haspelmath 2007: 34). Overall, although the forms associated with this construction are functionally comparable to compound pronouns in nearby languages, they show salient formal and functional differences.

There is an interesting parallel between the structure of inclusory conjunction constructions in Mundabli, with the inclusory pronoun repeated, and reported cases of pronominal inclusory conjunctions used for conjoining two full noun phrases. Haspelmath (2007: 35) reports that "[s]ome languages (apparently especially in Polynesia) use pronominal inclusory conjunction also for conjoining two [full] NPs. The first conjunct precedes the inclusory pronoun, which is then followed by the other included conjunct(s) in the usual way". Thus, inclusory conjunction of two full noun phrases in those Polynesian languages, has exactly the same structure as inclusory conjunction in Mundabli, namely **NP[1] PRO[1]-ā NP[2]**, see example (186) from Samoan (taken from Mosel and Hovdhaugen (1992: 680), as cited in Haspelmath (2007: 35)).

(186) Peni laua ma Ruta
Peni they.DU with Ruta

'Peni and Ruta'

Haspelmath (2007) cites examples from Samoan (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992: 680) and Maori (Bauer et al. 1993: 128). As I have shown above, Mundabli, just like Samoan and Maori, uses pronominal inclusory conjunctions not only to conjoin pronouns but also to conjoin two full noun phrases. This strategy is quite rare cross-lingustically and its existence in Mundabli is remarkable as, to the best of my knowledge, it has not been reported to exist anywhere else in Africa. This may mean either that Mundabli is a unique case, or that researchers describing African languages have simply overlooked these constructions and more research would be needed to uncover them.

Thus, the formal strategy which Mundabli employs to use pronominal inclusory conjunction in order to conjoin two full noun phrases is actually exactly the same as in the Polynesian cases described by Haspelmath (2007: 35). What is unusual about Mundabli is that this strategy seems to have been generalized, so that even when the first conjunct is an inclusory pronoun (as in inclusory conjunction of a pronoun and a full noun phrase or of two full noun phrases), it is followed by a second (identical) instance of the same pronoun.

[18] In other reported cases of compound pronouns in the area, the first pronoun is never lower in the person hierarchy than the second pronoun (Cysouw 2003: 166–184).

7.2.3 Comitative phrases with the preposition ā 'with' as noun modifiers

A comitative phrase headed by the preposition **ā** 'with' may modify a nominal, "indicating some kind of material accompaniment or adornment", as Lovegren (2013: 293) puts it; see (187).

(187) wù gān də [gbɔ̄ wān wū w-ɔ̄] lā [ā
CL1 go(a) see(a) CL3.house CL1.child CL1;3SG.POSS CL1-DET DAT COM
mù-ɲə́m m-ɔ́ gbɔ̄ sɛ̀ āmɨ̀
CL18-strip_of_cloth CL18-DET CL3.house house_front.LOC and
tsə̀]
CL7/8.bundle_of_grass

'She went in and saw the child's house with the pieces of cloth in front of the door and the traditional grass bundle.'

Example (187) is complicated by the fact that the postposition **lā** breaks up the noun phrase, thus dividing the prepositional phrase (the second within square brackets) from the noun phrase it modifies (the first within square brackets). However, it is the only example I have of such an adornment construction. The same is the case for all examples Lovegren (2013: 293-294) provides for Mungbam. Here, the modifier of the comitative preposition is itself also modified by a locative phrase referring back to the affected part of the head nominal of the whole construction.

While the preposition **ā** 'with' covers both comitative and instrumental functions, only in its function as a comitative marker, can it modify a noun. A more comprehensive description of the use of **ā** 'with' (also including its instrumental function) can be found in §10.2.1.1.

7.2.4 Postpositional phrases with ŋgɔ̄ 'upon' can modify nouns

This section deals with the postposition **ŋgɔ̄** 'upon' only as the head of a noun-modifying postpositional phrase. For more on the postposition **ŋgɔ̄**, see §10.2.2.

When a postpositional phrase headed by the postposition **ŋgɔ̄** 'upon' modifies a noun, it always follows the head noun. The use of a postpositional phrase with **ŋgɔ̄** shows accompaniment, but is restricted to food.[19]

[19]The use of the postposition **ŋgɔ̄** 'upon' strongly reminds me of prepositions used in an unusual sense in German, but only in connection with Haute cuisine, as in "Pfifferling-Steinpilzrisotto an Salat" which literally means 'chanterelle-porcini-risotto **at** salad' instead of "Pfifferling-Steinpilzrisotto mit Salat", literally 'chanterelle-porcini-risotto **with** salad', which would be the more common thing to say. Nevertheless, Mundabli only allows **ŋgɔ̄** 'upon' only to be used in this context.

The first noun phrase, i.e. the head of the complex NP which refers to the main dish or food item is followed by its modifier, a postpositional phrase consisting of a noun phrase referring to the side dish or supplement, headed by the postposition **ŋgɔ** 'upon' as shown in the elicited examples (188) and (189) and in example (190) which is taken from a narrative.

(188) wù fə́ yí̋ ɲām b-ɔ́ [tswān ŋgɔ̀]
CL1 P1 eat(b) CL8a.fufu CL8a-DET CL3a.bitter_leaves upon

◇'He ate the fufu with bitter leaves.'

(189) wù fə́ yí̋ ɲām b-ɔ́ [mán ŋgɔ̀]
CL1 P1 eat(b) CL8a.fufu CL8a-DET what upon

◇'He ate the fufu with what?'

(190) kpé w-ɔ̄ mū wù mū wù mū wù mū
CL1.woman CL1-DET drink(b) CL1 drink(b) CL1 drink(b) CL1 drink(b)
wù mū ɲām b-ɔ́ [ŋgī m-ɔ́ ŋgɔ̀]
CL1 drink(b) CL8a.fufu CL8a-DET CL6.water CL6-DET upon

'The woman drank and drank and drank; she drank the fufu with the water.'[20]

7.2.5 Locative postpositional phrases headed by derived postpositions as noun modifiers

A postpositional phrase headed by a derived postposition (see §10.2.2.1 for details) may also modify a nominal, as in (191) and (192).

(191) kə́ à gān, à mī yá sɛ́, à mī nɨ̀m
COND 2SG go(a) 2SG CONSEC go_up(c) CL3/7a.attic 2SG CONSEC sit(a)
ʃì bə́ dɛ̀ nā bɔ̄ kpā f-ɔ́
go_down(a) exactly CL9/10.place SUBORD CL2 light_fire(a) LOC-REL
gù, ā [fì-ŋgī wá kə̀n]
CL3/7a.fire COM CL19-CL6.water 2SG hands.LOC

'When you go, you will go up to the attic. Then (you will) sit down exactly where they make fire, with a bit of water in your hand.'

[20]Fufu dissolved in water is probably the simplest dish and is consumed when other food is either not available or just not practical, as e.g., during the lunch break when working in the fields.

(192) wù gān də̄ gbɔ̄ wān wū w-ɔ̄ lā ā
CL1 go(a) see(a) CL3.house CL1.child CL1;3SG.POSS CL1-DET DAT COM
[mù-ɲə́m m-ɔ́ gbɔ̄ sɛ̀ āmɨ̀
CL18-strip_of_cloth CL18-DET CL3.house house_front.LOC and
tsə̀]
CL7/8.bundle_of_grass

'She went in and saw the child's house with the pieces of cloth in front of the door and the traditional grass bundle.'

7.3 Word order in the noun phrase

Modifiers within the noun phrase normally occur in a fixed order. Noun modifiers generally follow the head noun, except for a few exceptional cases which will be discussed in §7.3.1. If one considers the most common noun modifiers, the word order within the noun phrase is as shown in (193).

(193) **Noun + Possessive Pronoun/Possessor noun + Demonstrative + Adjective + Determiner + Numeral + Relative clause**

Examples which contain more than two or three modifiers are only attested in elicitation; see (194).

(194) a. dzɔ̄ ŋgə́ɨ́ y-ɛ́n yī-fyíŋ y-ɔ́
CL10.house CL10;1SG.POSS CL10-DEM.PROX CL10-new CL10-DET
yí-tsɔ̄
CL10-three

◇'these three new houses of mine'

b. dzɔ̄ y-ɔ́ yí-tsɔ̄ nǭ bī kə̀ yɨ́ŋ
CL10.house CL10-DET CL10-three SUBORD 1PL P3 build(c)
y-ɔ́ yɨ́
CL10-REL CL10

◇'these three new houses of mine which we built'

The determiner occurs toward the end of the noun phrase, following the adjective but preceding any numeral and/or relative clause. The relative clause generally stands at the end of the noun phrase.

7.3.1 Non-canonical word order

In at least three constructions, the word order deviates from the pattern described above. Such exceptions may be lexically motivated (see §7.3.1.1), they may have semantic effects, changing the semantics of the whole noun phrase (see §7.3.1.2), or they may have pragmatic effects (see §7.3.1.3).

7.3.1.1 Possessor + possessed order in possessive constructions

An exception from the given word order can be observed in certain possessive constructions, such as the possessive construction combining the relational noun **wan** 'child' with a 1SG possessor, as in **mɨ̄ wān** 'my child'. In this construction, the order of possessor and possessee is reversed and the possessor is represented by the independent 1SG pronoun **mɨ̄** rather than by the possessive pronoun **ŋgɨ̄**. For a more detailed discussion of this case, see §7.2.1.3.

Derived locative postpositions constitute a similar phenomenon. In postpositional phrases headed by locative postpositions derived from nouns, the postposition is preceded by an NP representing the whole within a part-whole relationship, e.g. the possessor of a body part. Some of these derived postpositions coexist with a noun of the same shape. In this case in particular, the postpositional phrase strongly looks like a possessive construction, only that the order between possessum and possessor is inverted, just as in **mɨ̄ wān** 'my child'. For details, see §7.2.1.3 and §10.2.2.1.

7.3.1.2 Determiner + noun order with distributive reading

Rather than occurring in its canonical position, the determiner can also precede the noun so that it occurs at the beginning of the noun phrase. In the case of a singular noun phrase, this may result in a distributive reading; see e.g. (195) (the noun phrases with determiner + noun order are enclosed in square brackets).

(195) bə́ dʒyē mɛ̄, [w-ɔ̄ wān] bɨ̌ wù gān mù
CL2 cook(a) finish(a) CL1-DET CL1.child exit(b) CL1 go(a) take(a)
ʃŭ kpű bɔ̌ gbə̀
come(b) CL3/7a.wooden_pot CL2.PP house.LOC

'They finished cooking. Each child went out and brought a wooden pot from their home.'

As Lovegren (2013: 182) points out for Mungbam, the relative rareness of the determiner + noun construction may be due to the existence of a comparable construction involving the loan *any*. The same holds for Mundabli, cf. (196)-(198).

(196) [*any* nɨ́ŋ] nə̄ kpé w-ɔ̄ là k-ɔ́ gbə̄,
any CL7.thing SUBORD CL1.woman CL1-DET do(a) CL7-REL house.LOC

'Anything the woman does in the house', [...]

(197) *any* nɨ́ŋ [bī nɨ́ŋ k-ɔ́ kɨ́], bī ká kán kɨ́
any CL7.thing 1PL want(c) CL7-REL CL7 1PL F2 have(c) CL7

'Anything we want, we will have.'

(198) *any* wān, wù dzě, nǐ́ dzé wú lə̄ yɛ̄ ká
any CL1.child CL1 say(b) CL1.mother say(b) CL1.PP DAT COMP COND
mɔ̀ tʃú f-án ǐ́ nsɔ̄lā yɛ̄ wù ɲwán
CL1.person come(b) PROX-here LOC CL1/2.afternoon COMP CL1 beg(b)
bɛ̄n ʃá fə̄
2PL PROHIB give(b)

'The mother told each child: if anyone comes here in the afternoon to beg, you should not give [them anything].'

The loan modifier *any* also precedes the noun. Semantically, the two constructions are roughly equivalent. The loan 'any' is translated into English as 'any', see e.g. (196) and (197), or as 'each, every', as in (198).

7.3.1.3 Numerals detached from the rest of the noun phrase

Numerals, which usually occur close to the end of the noun phrase following determiners and preceding relative clauses, may occur outside the NP in post-verbal position,[21] when they are focused, such as e.g., in (199) (the rest of the NP is enclosed in square brackets, the detached numeral is underlined). Further investigations are required in order to determine whether other noun modifiers can also occur in post-verbal position, detached from the rest of the noun phrase.

(199) [dɔ̄] gbū bí ʃī wű́-mwó
CL3a.beans fall(a) exit(b) go_down(a) CL3a-one

'One of the beans fell down.'

[21] The post-verbal position is an inherent focus position; see §14.2.2.1 for details.