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CHAPTER 10

Other word classes

This chapter deals with all those word classes which have not been dealt with in the preceding chapters: adverbs (§10.1), adpositions (§10.2), temporal deictics (§10.3), spatial deictics (§10.4), ideophones (§10.5), the interjections ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (§10.6) and other interjections (§10.7).

10.1 Adverbs

This section deals exclusively with clause-final manner adverbs which are introduced by the adverbial marker ā. In certain cases, manner can also be expressed by serial verb constructions (§9.1.4). Furthermore, there is a second type of adverbs called verbal adverbs. They are dealt with in §9.4. Finally, ideophones may also fulfill the function of manner adverbs. Ideophones are treated in §10.5.

Manner adverbs modify the meaning of the verb (cf. Givón (1984: 77, 78)). They always occur in clause-final position, introduced by the particle ā which is glossed ‘ADVlz’ and may also introduce adverbial phrases. Clause-final manner adverbs are usually derived. They may be based on adjectives or they may be based on reduplicated monosyllabic stems, mostly of unclear origin, as in (395). The tonal pattern of manner adverbs with reduplicated stems is always Low - Low.
10.2. Adpositions

Monosyllabic adverbials may be repeated several times for emphasis, as in (396). The repetition in this case is not to be confused with the reduplication found in other adverbs. This is confirmed by the fact that the tone here is not low, as in the latter (see above). The adverbial dzú in this example is probably related to the postposition dzó ‘under’.

(396) ǹ=kwómm gân á dzú dzú dzú, jì
1SG=creep(c) go(a) ADVLZ down down down CL3/7a.storm
k-ʒ kọ jú mǐ á kē əká
CL7a-DET catch(b).IPFV come(b).IPFV 1SG COM CL9/10.hand like
kó mbé
catch(b).IPFV CL2.person

‘I crept [going] down [very low]. The storm was catching me with its hands as if it were people catching [me].’

The adverb mò~mò ‘very much’ (397) could be derived from the numeral mò ‘one’, however, its synchronic meaning is not related to the numeral.

(397) wù sé dzé á mò–mò
CL1 be_hot(c) CL7.mouth ADVLZ one—RED

‘She is very active!’ (Lit.: She is very hot in her mouth.)

10.2. Adpositions

Mundabli has prepositions and postpositions. However, postpositions far outnumber prepositions. Prepositions are discussed in §10.2.1 and postpositions in §10.2.2.

10.2.1 Prepositions

There are only two prepositions: á ‘COM’, which unites comitative and instrumental function and is roughly equivalent to English ‘with’ and the general locative preposition f, which is usually optional and which always co-occurs in combination with a more specific locative or benefactive postposition within a circumpositional construction. In the examples, pre- and postpositions are underlined and their NP complement is enclosed in square brackets. The prepositions and their glosses and meanings are shown in Table 10.1. In the examples
in this section, pre- and postpositions are underlined and their NP complement is enclosed in square brackets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>preposition</th>
<th>gloss (meaning)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ā</td>
<td>‘COM’ (‘with’, comitative or instrumental)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɪ̋</td>
<td>‘LOC’ (general locative marker)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.1: The two prepositions with glosses and meanings

10.2.1.1 **The comitative/instrumental preposition ā ‘with’**

The preposition ā with heads a prepositional phrase and may have comitative or instrumental function. Class pronouns for noun classes other than Class 1 and 9, which normally bear a superhigh tone in non-preverbal position, are realized with a LH rising tone when they are the object of the comitative preposition, as in §6.1.3.

The comitative phrase usually stands at the end of a clause, as in (398) and (399), but exceptions are possible; see (400).

(398) wù tjú ā [mbf], b5 mú
cl1 come(b) com cl6.palm_wine cl2 drink(b)

‘He came with wine [and] they drank.’

(399) mɔ̀ w-ɔ̄ ndʒɔ̆mɲytɕ ŋi̋ ā
cl1.man cl1-det eat(b) cl8.food com cl10.fingers cl10;3sg.poss

‘The man eats the food with his hand.’

(400) ŋi̋ =lɔ̀ ā [mbŋ mŋ] yïŋ
1sg =go_to_bush(a) com cl1/2.cow(s) cl2;1sg.poss cl1/2.bush

‘I am going to the bush with my cows.’

In (400), the comitative phrase directly follows the verb, preceding the locative adjunct yïŋ ‘bush’.

The preposition ā also occurs in a certain construction with a transitive verb. Here, the direct object represents the benefactor of the action and the preposition ā introduces the undergoer in the form of an oblique argument, as in (401).

(401) yē gǎn tsē mē ā [nts5m mũ-ŋ-ŋɛ-ŋ-ŋɛ]
comp go(a) find(a) 1sg com cl6a-soil cl6a-N-be_red-red

‘...: Go and find me some red soil!’
The same may be expressed by a different construction in which the undergoer is the direct object and directly follows the verb while the recipient is embedded in a circumpositional construction with the general locative preposition ḱ preceding it and the dative postposition lā following it. For more on this construction, which is characteristic for the verb 'give', see §11.1.2.

10.2. Adpositions

10.2.1.2 The locative preposition ḱ

The general locative preposition ḱ is always part of a circumpositional construction in which it co-occurs with a semantically more specific postposition. The postpositions with locative semantics which co-occur with the preposition ḱ include wɔ́ 'on' in (402) and mɨ́ 'in', and even derived postpositions, such as sê 'house_front.LOC' and the benefactive postposition lā 'for'; see (404) and (405). Its use is generally optional.

(402) ká ḱ kgp fi án bēn ká mū ḱ jì ḱ
COND 1SG = COND die(b) PROX-here 2PL COND take(a) come(b) COM
dʒám, bēn ká mī dʒi jì ḱ
cl7/8.calabash.plant 2PL COND CONSEC put(a) go_down(a) LOC
[dzàm ḱngi] wɔ̄
cl9/10.grave cl9:1sg.poss on

‘If I die here, you will bring a calabash seed, and then you will plant [it] on my grave.’

(403) wù dā bō kà gí tē ḱ [gbɔ̀]
cl1 see(a) IMPERS P3 put(b) cl7/8.walking.stick LOC cl3.house
sè front.LOC

‘She saw that someone had put a walking stick in front of the house.’

(404) kpé włów dʒyè ndʒɔ́myiŋ ḱ [mɔ̀ w-ɔ́]
lā
cl1:woman cl1:det cook(a) cl8:food LOC cl1:man cl1:det dat

‘The woman cooks food for the man.’

(405) njwàm wān wù dzé ḱ [gbàn]
wù lā yè
cl1:husband cl1:child cl1:3sg.poss say(b) LOC cl1/2.in-law

‘Her child’s husband said to his in-law: ...’

Certain speakers sometimes pronounce the locative preposition ḱ rather than ḱ. This may be due to contact influence from Missong, where the general locative preposition has the form ḱ (Lovegren 2013: 279ff.).
10.2.2 Postpositions

All postpositions are monosyllabic. Postpositions are often historically derived from nouns and in many cases, they are segmentally identical with the latter (see §10.2.2.1). Table 10.2 provides a list of all known postpositions and their glosses. A comparison of postpositions and cognate nouns is found in §10.2.2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>postposition</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʃī</td>
<td>‘in front of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzə̄m</td>
<td>‘behind’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gyɨ́ŋ</td>
<td>‘next to’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzō</td>
<td>‘under’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wɔ̄</td>
<td>‘on’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mɨ̄</td>
<td>‘in’, ‘inside’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yə</td>
<td>‘in’ (rare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋgɔ̄</td>
<td>‘upon, at, on, by’, ‘with’ (instrumental, comitative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yū</td>
<td>‘behind’ (following someone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sām</td>
<td>‘in the middle of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbó</td>
<td>‘in house’, ‘at home’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sē</td>
<td>‘in front of’ (only with dwelling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kǔŋ</td>
<td>‘behind’ (only with dwelling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kǔ</td>
<td>‘in home village’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kān</td>
<td>‘in hands’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fɔ̄</td>
<td>‘on head’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzæ̋</td>
<td>‘in mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wúŋ</td>
<td>‘in nose’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kǔŋ</td>
<td>‘around neck’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bān</td>
<td>‘around waist’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lā</td>
<td>‘for’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.2: comprehensive list of postpositions with glosses

Postpositions head postpositional phrases. They directly follow the noun phrase they head and they usually encode spatial location, as in (406)-(407).

(406) sèsǎŋ dā kwō wū yō kwō [bwē] yā
      cl9.spider braid(a) climb(c) enter(c) cl1 enter(c) cl3a.sky in

‘The spider braided [the bridge] until it reached heaven.’

(407) bikɔ́ kpɔ̋ kwū-dʒwē dër ná, wū dër ā
      because cl3/7a.money cl3-much/many be(b) as cl3 be(b) COM
      sātàn [wū] yū ā mō—mō
      cl1/2.satan cl3.pf behind advlz one—red

‘Because a lot of money always has many devils behind it.’
All postpositions may co-occur with the optional locative marker ᵇ, as in (408); see §10.2.1.2.

(408) ｗù ɲeⁿ kwô ᵇ [dzé] dzô  
cl1 hide(a) enter(c) loc cl3/7a.rock under  

‘He hid under a rock.’ (lit.: He hid entered rock under.)

Most postpositions have static spatial semantics. They express location relative to their complement NP. Direction of movement is not encoded by adpositions, but instead by verbs like ‘come’/‘go’, ‘ascend’/‘descend’, ‘enter’/‘exit’ etc., which form part of serial verb constructions (see Chapter 9 for more on serial verb constructions).

The postposition ḳàn ‘hands Loc’ can be used in a metaphorical sense, as exemplified in (409) and in (410). In (409), ḳàn is translated as ‘away from’. A better translation would probably be ‘from the clutches of’. Recall that direction is never marked on the locative phrase. Thus ‘from the hands’ is no different from ‘in the hands’.

(409) ｗù ｙó ｔí ｋǔ ｙ-3 ḳàn  
cl1 run(c) surprisingly cl9.ratmole cl9-det hands.loc  

‘He ran away from the rat mole!’

(410) ｋɔ̀ ｋà ｙó ｔjǔ  [dz₃m] ḳàn ｂš ｍǐ  
Koshin p³ run(c) come(b) cl9/10.war hands.loc cl2 consec  
tjǔ kwô kòŋ bʃ yó  
head(c) enter(c) hunt(c) go_out(b) go_up(c)  

‘The Koshin people ran away from war. They then came in[to this area] and chased away [the Nshwen].’

Only two postpositions are also used in a non-spatial sense: the postposition ḥgɔ and the postposition ḥa. The former may be used in a spatial sense, as in (411), or in a temporal sense, as in (412).

(411) ｗē ｗ-3 ｂán  mì ḥgɔ ｆ ｋà-li  
cl3a.sun cl3a-det shine(b) 1sg.pp upon advlz nmlz-strong  

‘The sun is shining on me strongly.’

(412) ｍò ｗù ｋà dzé ｗ-3 ｄzû ｇbâm  [tō  
cl1.man cl1 p³ say(b) cl1-rel cl3/7a.word cl7b.God cl7/8.day  
k-3] ḥgɔ ｋà ɗi  pà ɗtà ｋyà  
cl7-dem.dist upon p³ be(b) Pa P. K.  

‘The person who was preaching on that day was Pa Peter Kia.’
It may also mark an instrumental noun phrase, as in (413). Example (413) is complicated by the fact that the postposition is part of a relative clause and its object NP is omitted, so that the postposition is stranded. When the object of the postposition ki is realized, the postposition bears its usual mid-low falling tone. When it is absent, as in (413), the high tone of the omitted object is realized on the postposition, replacing the tone of the postposition itself.

(413) dï [siŋ mwān y-5] ã lë y-5 ng₃ be(b) cl9.knife cl9.which cl9-det 2sg do(a).ippf vy cl9-rel upon

◊ ‘Which knife do you use?’ (lit.: It is which knife that you do with?)

The non-spatial postposition lā ‘for’ marks the recipient of an action, i.e. a dative/benefactive argument, as in (414). This construction is discussed in more detail in Chapter 11.

(414) kpé w-₃ dʒyè ndʒmyin ꞏ ꞏ ꞏ mò w-₃ lā cl1.woman cl1-det cook(a) cl8.food loc cl1.man cl1-det dat

◊ ‘The woman cooks food for the man.’

10.2.2.1 Postpositions vs. nouns

Many, perhaps all, postpositions in Mundabli are historically derived from nouns. Often, the origin nouns refer to body parts or other meronyms. Such postpositions may coexist with a noun of identical segmental shape or with a noun similar in shape. Table 10.3 compares postpositions with the nouns they are derived from.

While postpositions are derived from nouns and are in some cases even segmentally identical with them, they differ from the latter in several regards. Specifically, they differ in syntactic behavior, and the tonal pattern of a postposition is often different from that of the corresponding noun, as in kūŋ ‘around neck’ vs. kūŋ ‘neck’. The syntactic behavior of postpositions is different from that of nouns. This is illustrated with the noun yū ‘buttocks’ in (415) and the postposition yū ‘behind’ in (416) which are formally identical, but differ in syntactic behavior.

(415) yū yī cl9/10.buttocks cl10;3sg.poss

◊ ‘his buttocks’

(416) wù bāŋ [kwā kî k-₃] yū cl11 follow(b) cl7.frog cl7;3sg.poss cl7-det behind

‘He followed his frog.’
10.3 Temporal deictics


dzə̄m ‘behind’
dzə̄m ‘back’
yā ‘in’
yā ‘intestines’
yū ‘behind’
yū ‘buttock’
sē ‘in front of (dwelling)’
sē ‘front side of dwelling’
kūŋ ‘behind (dwelling)’
kūŋ ‘back side of dwelling’
gbô ‘in house, at home’
gbô ‘house’
kú ‘in home village’
kwé ‘home’
fô ‘on/at head’
fô ‘head’
kân ‘in hands’
kân ‘hold’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>postposition</th>
<th>postposition gloss</th>
<th>noun</th>
<th>noun gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dzə̄m</td>
<td>‘behind’</td>
<td>dzə̄m</td>
<td>‘back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yā</td>
<td>‘in’</td>
<td>yā</td>
<td>‘intestines’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yū</td>
<td>‘behind’</td>
<td>yū</td>
<td>‘buttock’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sē</td>
<td>‘in front of (dwelling)’</td>
<td>sē</td>
<td>‘front side of dwelling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kūŋ</td>
<td>‘behind (dwelling)’</td>
<td>kūŋ</td>
<td>‘back side of dwelling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gbô</td>
<td>‘in house, at home’</td>
<td>gbô</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kú</td>
<td>‘in home village’</td>
<td>kwé</td>
<td>‘home’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fô</td>
<td>‘on/at head’</td>
<td>fô</td>
<td>‘head’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kân</td>
<td>‘in hands’</td>
<td>kân</td>
<td>‘hold’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzæ̋</td>
<td>‘in mouth’</td>
<td>dzæ̋</td>
<td>‘mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wūŋ</td>
<td>‘in nose’</td>
<td>wūŋ</td>
<td>‘nose’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kūŋ</td>
<td>‘around neck’</td>
<td>kūŋ</td>
<td>‘neck’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bān</td>
<td>‘around waist’</td>
<td>bān</td>
<td>‘waist’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.3: Comparison of postpositions and cognate nouns

When a noun is modified by another NP in a possessive construction, the resulting noun phrase is head-initial, i.e. the possessor precedes the possessor, as in (415) where the noun yū ‘buttocks’ is followed by a possessive pronoun. A postpositional phrase, on the other hand, is head-final, i.e. the noun phrase precedes the postposition, as in (416), where the postposition yū ‘behind’ is preceded by the dependent noun phrase kwāki̋k-ɔ́ ‘that his frog’.

Finally, postpositions have a specific tonal effect on dependent pronouns. Pronouns which are the object of a postposition always bear a high tone. Their segmental shape is the same as that of independent pronouns (see §6.1 for details).

While there is a clear case for postpositions to be considered a different word class from nouns, grammaticalization is clearly underway with some postpositions.

10.3 Temporal deictics

Temporal deictics allow the speaker to specify the time of an event more precisely than grammatical tense. They are adjuncts, and their position within the sentence is relatively flexible. Table 10.4 contains a few selected temporal deictics.

Examples of temporal deictics are given in (417)-(422). They usually occur at the end of the clause, as in (417), but not necessarily so, see e.g., (419) where njwɛ́n ‘now, today’ is followed by a manner adverb. The temporal deictic in each example is underlined.
### Temporal deictics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>temporal deictic</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ṉwén</td>
<td>‘now, today’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṉántɔ̄</td>
<td>‘yesterday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṇgwé</td>
<td>‘tomorrow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tywóm</td>
<td>‘long time away, past or future’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.4: Selected temporal deictics

(417) mọ̀  w-5  tánh  tsú  b-5 Ṉwén
cl1.person  cl1-det  buy(b)  cl8.banana  cl8-det  now

‘The man bought the banana now.’

(418) wù  fó  ā  gàn  w5  dʒwó  Ṉwén
cl1  p1  neg  go(a)  neg  cl1/2.stream  today

‘She did not go to the stream today.’

(419) yǔ  y-5  bò  Ṉwén  ā  kë-li̊
cl9/10.buttock  cl9-det  be_bad(a)  now  advlz  nmlz-be_strong(a)
(e)  interj

‘Sex is very dangerous these days.’

(420) wù  à  t$jû$  Ṉántɔ̄
cl1  p2  come(b)  yesterday

‘He arrived yesterday.’

(421) wù  kâ  jí  Ṇgwé
cl1  p2  spend_day(b)  tomorrow

‘He will spend the day at home tomorrow.’

(422) só  ñi=tjyé  yē  mì  wân  kà  kpî  tywóm
so  1sg = know(c)  comp sg  cl1.child  p3  die(b)  long_ago

‘So I know that my child died long ago.’

### 10.4 Spatial deictics

Spatial deictics have not been elicited in detail. However, some of them occur commonly in natural speech. These include tʃin, fɔ and tɔ, all of which translate roughly as ‘there’. The deictics are given here without tones because their tones may vary. Historically, fɔ and tɔ must have functioned as deictic
demonstratives, with the demonstrative root -ɔ́ and the agreement prefixes f- (PB class 16) and t- (PB class 17). However, synchronically, they do not modify nouns. Instead, they are adjuncts.

Historically the difference was probably one between closeness (fɔ́) and distance (tɔ́). Examples (423)-(426) contain instances of fɔ, tɔ and tʃɪ̃. The deictic in the examples is underlined.

(423) kwó gân t-ɔ́ mɨ̄
enter(c) go(a) DIST-DET in

‘Go in there!’

(424) wān w-ɔ́ yám mɛ̌ t-ɔ́ gbɔ́ kúŋ
cl1.child cl1-DET sing(c) only DIST-DET cl3.house behind_house.LOC

‘The child continued to sing behind the house.’

(425) tɔ́ mɨ̄ wɛ̀ ʃĩ tĩ (e),
c7/8.day consec dawn(b).ipfv go_down(a).ipfv surprisingly interj
wù kṹ nim f-ɔ́ gbɔ́, (o)
c11.cry(a) sit(a) prox-there house.LOC interj

‘When day has broken, she is there in the house crying.’

(426) ŋkwīn nɔ́ bɔ́ nɨ́m w-ɔ́ wù/tʃɪ̃ w5
cl1.hill subord cl2 live(a) cl1-rel cl1-pf/there on

‘the hill on which they live’

fɔ̃nì and tɔ̃nì are two other forms used as spatial deictics and derived from fɔ and tɔ, see e.g. (427)-(429). Unlike fɔ and tɔ, which function as nominal modifiers or represent a whole NP, the locative adverbials fɔ̃nì and tɔ̃nì (also fɔnì and tɔnì) are adverbials and generally occur in clause-final position. They often co-occur with prenominal fɔ tɔ, fấn or tấn, as in (428)\(^1\) and (429).

(427) bì mí nîm fấnì (ē), bī dzé nîm tì mέ́
1p1.consec sit(a) here interj 1p1.speak(b) sit(a) surprisingly only
yɛ̀, lùŋ bó dɛ́ tà́ mέ́ yɛ̀n là́, bì
comp cl8.suffering cl8-det be(b) specifically only Y. dat cl8
kwó fùbɔ́ bì ɔ̀g3
enter(c) also 1p1.upon

‘And we are sitting here, saying that only Yain is suffering, but the suffering has also attacked some of us.’

\(^1\)The italics on mɔ́sɪ́ ‘must’ show that the word is a borrowing. Obligation is usually expressed by a different construction.
Other word classes

(428) Dyå kò dzë tʃǐn, ñ-kò dë ná tʃǐn t-ʒ
D. pʒ say(b) there 1SG = pʒ be(b) as there DIST-there
ŋkwǐn wɔ tɔnì, yɛ, kò wǔ tɔ mɛ
Cl.1/2.mountain on there COMP COMP Cond Cl.1 Irr grow_up(b) finish(a)
tʃū wù tā lá kɔ wǔ sām, wù dí māsí
come(b) Cl.1 VER.POS NEG do(a) ?? NEG Cl.1. play Cl.1 f1 must
yín gbɔ́ ánà nìf tʃū ním
build(c) Cl.3. house like that mother.3 POSS come(b) live(a)

‘Dya said on that hill when I was there, that when he will have grown up fully, he will not play, he must build a house and bring down his mother.’

(429) kwě b-ën nà tān sè tānì,
Cl.7/8.rat Cl.8-DEM.PROX boast(a) there Cl.3/7.a. attic there
n = dí lá kpí mɛ kwě b-ën tān
1SG.PVB = f1 make(a) die(b) finish(a) Cl.7/8.rat Cl.8-DEM.PROX there sè ō
Cl.3/7.a. attic EMPH

‘These rats which are showing off in this attic - I will kill all of them!’

While fɔ and tɔ seem to be widely interchangeable, in some contexts only one of them renders a grammatical construction. An example is the use of fɔ in relative clauses. The spatial deictic fɔ is used as obligatory postverbal demonstrative in relative clauses which relativize on a locative expression. In this case, the spatial deictic fɔ occurs immediately after the verb of the relative clause, forming part of a paradigm with relativizers in the form of distal demonstratives which occupy this slot and which agree with the head of the relative clause in noun class, as in (430) and (431). The use of tɔ in this context is not attested. For more on relative clauses, see Chapter 12 and Lovegren and Voll (2017).

(430) ñ = tʃyé dë nō [wù ñ f-ʒ]
1SG = know(c) Cl.9. place SUBORD Cl.1 pass(b) PROX-REL

‘I know the place which she had passed (through).’ (lit.: ...where she had passed.)
10.5 Ideophones

Ideophones are used frequently in narratives and in spontaneous conversations. However, speakers differ in the quantity of ideophones they use, with a tendency for old people to use them more frequently than younger people. Ideophones are often accompanied by specific gestures. Some examples of ideophones are given in (432)-(435). In (432) and (433), the ideophones follow the adverbial pro-form ãná ‘like that’, which links them with the rest of the sentence.

(432) n = dō mē pé kà kwō gbō ãná mwàŋ
1SG = see(a) only P. ṽ3 enter(c) house.LOC like that IDEO

‘I just saw Pe entering the house like that: “mwàŋ”.’

(433) pé kà wē fīn ãná fyāfyā
P. ṽ3 breath(a) there like that IDEO

‘Pe was breathing there like this: “fyafya”.’

The ideophone mwàŋ as in (432), often with a drawn out nasal coda mwàŋŋŋŋ, depicts speed. The ideophone fyāfyā in (433) imitates the sound of heavy breathing, as after physical strain. In examples (434) (which contains two ideophones) and (435), the ideophones are simply attached to the end of the clause; the adverbial pro-form ãná is not used.

(434) pé dʒī jī mbī m-ō, ā the very
P. put(a) descend(a) CL6.palm_wine CL6-DET ADVLZ the very
mbī ngō m-ō ngō tīntūn, byē-ā-nī mū jū CL6.palm_wine upon CL6-DET upon IDEO B.-COM-N. take(a) come(b)
kpāʔ, wū mū IDEO CL1 drink(b)

‘Pe put in the wine, still the very wine, the same one, exactly. Bie-a-Ntie grabbed it, “kpaʔ”, and she drank.’
(435) wēee, ndʒóm tān mé t-̣ bān t-̣
INTERJ CL8.things fly(a) only DIST-there CL1/2.outside DIST-DET
wāawāaa
IDEO

‘Alas, things were flying outside there, “waaawaaa”.’

The ideophones in (434) and (435) tɨ̀ŋtɨ̀ŋ are very specific ideophones expressing strong resemblance (tɨ̀ŋtɨ̀ŋ) and grabbing (kpàʔ) or imitating the sound of the storm (wāawāaa). Most ideophones consist either of a single open or closed syllable or of two or more repetitions of a single syllable. Note that ideophones may end in an obstruent, as in kpàʔ (434) or kāt̚. This is an exception from the general phonotactics of Mundabli. Normally, a syllable can end only in a nasal or in the liquid l, see §2.4. The ideophone kāt̚ illustrates that something is completely destroyed.² Vowels and final nasals in ideophones may be drawn out for intensity, such as in mwān in (432) or wāawāaa in (435) with multiple a and n representing single segments with an exceptionally long duration.

Ideophones can be subdivided according to semantic criteria into expressions of visible impressions, temperature impressions, smell and taste impressions and audible impressions, as done in the first column of Table 10.5. The second column contains ideophones either isolated or in context. Here, the ideophones are written in bold letters. The third column contains descriptions of their use.

²The ideophone kāt̚ is usually followed by the following gesture: lips are pursed and the index finger of the right hand is bent and moved over the pouches lips from right to left.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>semantic criteria</th>
<th>ideophone</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>visible</td>
<td>bûbûbûbû</td>
<td>‘pure white’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fiïïi</td>
<td>‘pure black’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>njâŋŋŋŋ</td>
<td>‘burning down of sun; bright red’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tiŋtiŋtiŋ</td>
<td>‘strong resemblance’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>audible</td>
<td>wùùùùùùùùùùùù</td>
<td>‘light storm or strong wind blowing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wààààààààààààà</td>
<td>‘light storm or strong wind blowing’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                   | njëŋŋŋŋŋŋŋŋ‰ŋŋŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ňŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ŋ‰ňŋ‰ŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ňŋ‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ň‰ń

Table 10.5: Ideophones, partly in context, with descriptions, sorted according to semantic criteria
10.6 ‘Yes’ and ‘No’

The words for ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (see Table 10.6) can serve as one-word answers to polar questions, can introduce more elaborate answers to polar questions, or can serve as general markers of agreement or disagreement, either on their own or followed by a more elaborate explanation. They thus have an ambiguous status between formulaic expressions and interjections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variants</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hm̀, ɛ̀ɛ, ɛ̀hɛ̌</td>
<td>‘yes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɱgάŋ, áy—áyi, ?m̌ʔm̌—ʔm̌ʔm̌</td>
<td>‘no’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.6: Variants of ‘yes’ and ‘no’

The form hm̀ is used to express agreement or confirmation; the interjection ɛ̀ɛ ‘yes’ is more commonly used to signal interest and to encourage another speaker to continue, e.g. when reporting an event. The word ɱgάŋ ‘no’ is hardly ever used in spontaneous speech, except sometimes for emphasis. Among the other forms, áyí expresses more emphasis than áy. Both áyí and áy are stronger than the nasal forms (ʔm̌ʔm̌—ʔm̌ʔm̌—hm̀ʔm̀). In (436)-(439), hm̀ ‘yes’ is used to express agreement, accompanied by a complete sentence.

(436) hm̀, wù dì kā-fjī
      INTERJ CL1 be(b) ABIL-descend(a)
‘Yes, she can come down.’

(437) hm̀, wù kà dē f-ān
      INTERJ CL1 P3 be(b) PROX-here
‘Yes, she was here.’

(438) hm̀, wù kà tʃū tû jī fān
      INTERJ CL1 P3 come(b) pluck(a) CL9/10.fowl there
‘Yes, she came and plucked feathers here.’

(439) ?m̌hṁʔm̌, bō kān dē yīŋ lā gbō
      YES INTERJ CL2 lack(b) CL9.place build(c) DAT CL3.house
‘Yes. They don’t even have space to build houses.’

In (440)-(443), áy—áyi is used to mark disagreement. In all these examples, it is accompanied by a complete sentence.

3What is written here as <h> is phonetically a voiceless bilabial nasal.
10.7 Interjections

In this section, I describe a few very salient interjections, in order to provide an impression of interjections in Mundabli. Interjections are used frequently in conversation, e.g., in order to express one’s feelings or one’s attitude or to express agreement or disagreement. Interjections expressing agreement or disagreement were already discussed in §10.6 and will not be repeated here. Many of the common interjections in Mundabli also exist in the regional variety of Cameroon Pidgin and probably in other languages in the area. Among these are \(\texttt{wɛ́} (444)\) which expresses dismay and \(\texttt{a̋ʔa̋} (445)\) which expresses amazement and disbelief with negative connotations. The interjection \(\texttt{ò} (444)\), which expresses emphasis and occurs at the end of a sentence, is also attested in Cameroon Pidgin.

\[
\begin{align*}
(440) & \texttt{ày, yē } \eta = \text{gī} \quad \text{kā yē } \eta = \text{kā } dō \quad \text{kē, nō}\n & \text{no } \text{COMP } 1\text{SG} = \text{put(b) at? } \text{COMP } 1\text{SG} = f2 \text{ see(a) ?? } \text{no} \\
& \text{‘No! That I should allow it so that I will see, right?!’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(441) & \texttt{ày, á } \eta = \text{dzē} \quad \text{kō } wǒ \quad yē \quad dē \quad \text{dzē } l₃ \text{–} l₅ \\
& \text{no } \text{NEG } 1\text{SG} = \text{say(b) catch(b) NEG } \text{COMP } 2\text{SG} \text{ say(b) empty—RED} \\
& \text{bā, } n = \text{dzē} \quad yē \quad \text{à } \text{dzē } ā \quad \text{ntʃī} \\
& \text{CL2.pp;DAT } 1\text{SG} = \text{say(b) COMP } 2\text{SG say(b) ADVLZ CL1.truth} \\
& \text{‘No, I have not said that you are telling a lie (to them). I said that you are telling the truth.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(442) & \texttt{àyī, wū } \text{dzē } yē \quad \text{t-ānī } \text{wū } \quad \text{nā} \\
& \text{no } \text{CL1 } \text{say(b) COMP } \text{DIST} \text{-there } \text{CL1;3SG.POSS hurt(a)} \\
& \text{‘No, she said that this part hurts.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(443) & \texttt{àyī, bō } \text{ā } \text{dī } wō \quad \text{ā } \text{dē } \text{fwēn} \\
& \text{no } \text{CL2 NEG be(b) NEG } \text{COMP CL9.place clear(b)} \\
& \text{‘No, they don’t have a place to clear.’}
\end{align*}
\]

My data also contain instances of ingressive fricatives, used to indicate agreement. The ingressive fricative may be articulated in different ways. The tokens I have found in my recordings are all from a particular speaker who is around 40 years old. An ingressive sound with assertive function has also been reported by Lovegren (2013: 274-275) to exist in Mungbam.

10.7 Interjections

In this section, I describe a few very salient interjections, in order to provide an impression of interjections in Mundabli. Interjections are used frequently in conversation, e.g., in order to express one’s feelings or one’s attitude or to express agreement or disagreement. Interjections expressing agreement or disagreement were already discussed in §10.6 and will not be repeated here. Many of the common interjections in Mundabli also exist in the regional variety of Cameroon Pidgin and probably in other languages in the area. Among these are \(\texttt{wɛ́} (444)\) which expresses dismay and \(\texttt{a̋ʔa̋} (445)\) which expresses amazement and disbelief with negative connotations. The interjection \(\texttt{ò} (444)\), which expresses emphasis and occurs at the end of a sentence, is also attested in Cameroon Pidgin.

\[
\begin{align*}
(444) & \texttt{wē, wū } \text{ā } \text{dī } wō \quad \text{gbō } \quad \text{kūŋ} \\
& \text{INTERJ CL1 NEG be(b) NEG CL3.house house_backside.LOC } \text{interj} \\
& \text{‘Alas! She is not behind the house!’}
\end{align*}
\]
(yɛ̄ wù kwọ gbà, wù dā bā kà
comp cl1 enter(c) cl3.house.loc cl3;3sg.poss see(a) imper. p3
jyā tō gbā wū, ʔāʔā, wū bū yɛ
sweep(a) away(c) house cl3.cl.1.poss interj cl1 ask(b) comp
mè, ā n=dī wī ā nī ā n=dī
ncs.quot.q neg 1sg =be(b) neg com cl1.mother neg 1sg =be(b)
wō ā tū ā n=dī wī ā wè ā
neg com cl1.father neg 1sg =be(b) neg com cl1.sibling neg
n =dī wō ā mō dzū, mīŋ gbā
1sg =be(b) neg com cl1.person cl1.certain 1sg house.loc
jyā ĝī ndē yɛ
sweep(a) put(a) who quot.q

‘When she was about to enter the house, she saw that someone had swept her house. Huh! She asked [herself]: I am [here] without a mother, without a father, without a sibling, without anyone. Who has swept my house?’

Examples (444) and (445) are taken from the same narrative. Example (444) contains two interjections, wɛ’ and ń. The first interjection wɛ’ expresses dismay at the fact that the sister is not behind the house as expected but has instead gone missing. The sentence-final interjection ń emphasizes the statement and gives it more weight. Example (445) contains the interjection ʔàʔá expressing consternation and disbelief by the main character of the story at the fact that someone must have entered and swept her house while she was on the farm. Dismay or disbelief may also be expressed by ululation, which is widespread in the area. The interjection ‘Wonderful!’ [wândàfùl], adopted from Pidgin and translatable as ‘amazing, incredible’ is more neutral and without necessarily having a negative or a positive connotation. Finally, an interjection which, to the best of my knowledge, does not exist in Pidgin or in related languages is ńōō, cf. (446) and (447). It expresses ignorance or lack of knowledge.

(nm, bā kā nīm ā wān w-5, tʃyē bō
yes imper. p3;hab sit(a); ppv com cl1.child cl1-det know(c) cl2
kā fān yi wù ē, ńōō
p3 sell(a) eat(b) cl1 interj interj

‘Yes. They kept the child [of the gorilla]; whether they sold [it] and [someone] ate it? I don’t know!’

(tʃyē bō kā yī ē, ńōō, ā n=dī wī
know(c) imper. p3 eat(b) interj interj neg 1sg =be(b) neg
kā-tʃyē
abl.know(c)

‘Whether they ate [it]? I don’t know! I cannot know.’
The interjection ôôô is equivalent to saying ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I have no idea’ or shrugging one’s shoulders. There are also volitive interjections which are conventionally used to chase away different animals or even people. The sound jjj is used to chase away fowl. Goats and sheep are chased away with the interjection tsì, and in order to chase away dogs or people (mostly children), the imperative form bi ‘Go out!’ is used.