

## 1. Background Information

This group of people named Mboi refer claimed that the original initial indigenous name was Mei People. "Mboi Language got the name from the onset at the Tower of Babel (The Biblical historical place which nursed a belief that it was the first place of Language variations creation)" Abi (2021:7) According to him the name was from the two words *mei (mey)* meaning "I say that..." and *boi* sometimes addressed as *aboi* meaning "brother or fellow" (as of male). These were the keywords that gave signals to the first group of people to identify themselves as "people of the same language". These terminologies were used between them until the time that other languages identified them with the regular use of *boi, mei...* "Brother, I say that..." Although linguistically, the word "**mboi**" is seldom used among Mboi people to refer to as an interrogative sentence (what is the reason?). Therefore, by the frequent use of the terms *boi, aboi, mei* and **mboi**, it became a day-to-day words in the hearing of most of the people around them and were continued to be addressed as "The People of Mboi" and they themselves proudly agreed with the name given unto them since it was an acceptable and remarkable word being used among them.

**1.0. Location:** Based on Joshua project (2001-2005), Mboi people are located mostly in Song Local Government Area the central part of Adamawa, in the North-East of part of Nigeria.

Their settlement is at neighbouring with Gombi Local Government Area from the North, Shelleng from West, Fufore from East and Girei from the South. All these are the LGAs in Adamawa State of Nigeria. They are from the language family.

### 1.02. Neighbouring language Groups:

The people as a language group and a community as well has a large place occupied by them as monolingual, although, mixed with a few number of other different language speakers and surrounded by a few groups of others as Bənah-Yungur, Ga'anda, Gudu, Lala, Hausa, Fulfulde and Bwatiye communities.

### 1.03. Population Estimate

Mboi Language is a group of people that has a population of about 19,000 as of Nigerian Population Census 1992. Also, about 37,000 speakers according to **Joshua project** (2001-2005). Similarly, in Mboi District where almost all the people in the covered area are Mboi by tribe is massively occupied with settlements scattered among the mountainous and hilly land. The tarred Federal road passes through the settlement thereby dividing the district into two. The right hand settlements is only 30% and are living by the road side but the left hand side communities extended into plateau areas of Mboi which is rich with mineral resources. Almost 70% of those by the left are far away from the road and the LGA Headquarter.

**1.04. Dialects:** Dialect according to Andrian, refers to a form of language that is regarded as "substandard," "incorrect," or "corrupt," as opposed to the "standard," "correct," or "pure" form of a

language. He says that, it is a technical term in linguistics, carries no such value judgment and simply refers to a distinct form of a language.

Therefore, to Andrian, “it is notoriously difficult, however, to define precisely what a dialect is, and in fact the term has come to be used in various ways. The classic example of a dialect is the *regional* dialect: the distinct form of a language spoken in a certain geographical area”. (1995:260) whereas, we can also speak of a *social* dialect: the distinct form of a language spoken by members of a specific socioeconomic class, such as working-class, dialects in England or the ghetto languages in the United States. But for the reason of the Mboi language dialectal differentiation, we are considering *ethnic* dialect.

In the dialectical comparison of Mboi Language, although Blench (2019) says that the language has three dialects (Mboi, Handa and Banga). According to him, Handa seemed to be another language. But based on Abi’s research and being close to the language group for at least 20 years for observation, and also the proof given by the language stakeholders, the language has only two dialects. Therefore, Mboi is a name of the language and it represent a dialect also, then Handa which involves Banga as well, although with a little sub-variation under Mboi named ‘wambəta’ but the ‘wambəta’ has no independent differences that can make it to be regarded as a dialect of its own.

The classification of the villages is represented bellow:

S/No	Dialects	The number of Villages and towns each dialect has
1	<b>Mboi</b>	Sigire, Golontabal, Baawo, Nadda, Bokki, Mbilla, Garintuwo, Bwarangai, Livo, Gulgul, Kesure, Zangra, Baitalami, Gakta, Dade, Murvəci, Gulungo, Garin Mission, Gejeli, Gerwel, Perwel, Lewa, Kəngo, Moddo, Shitto, Wuro modi, Jambutu, Kasamən, Kwayar, Bishi, Bumbo, Wantoro, Dame, Wuro Yeso, Baranga, Wurcibca, Kance, and Cikkol and etc.
2	<b>Handa</b>	Banga, Handa, Kuḃa, Bəne, Zəne, Kaulara, Zumbe, Diḃade and Bundu and etc.

The table below shows some common dialectal variations of the two major dialects of Mboi language which I mentioned earlier (Mboi and Handa) the variations seems to be consistent and clear. There are no much irregularities in their differences.

S/No	Mboi	Handa	Gloss in English
1	Mbiya	Mbəra	Water
2	Kitiya	Kucira	corn stock
3	Pitiya	Picura	Food
4	Semfandayau?	Semfandərau?	Is it not like that?
5	Hayau?	Harau?	Is it like that?

Looking at the illustration above, the variation of Handa from Mboi at some of the word level is ‘r’ for ‘y’.

**1.05. Linguistic Classification:** Mboi Language is from the language family of Niger Congo family which is said to be the world’s third language family in terms of speakers and Africa’s largest in terms of geographical area, number of speakers and the number of distinct languages, described as the largest language family in the world. It belongs to Bənah forms a branch of Adamawa spoken in central Adamawa state, Eastern Nigeria ‘Benah, Benah-Mboi 1258’ (Glottoloc). The language has the code of identification ‘moi’ (Ethnologue 18<sup>th</sup> ed. 2015)

**1.06. Vernacular Publications:** There are some publications that are produced by many writers, though not with the language orthography but the one that used the mbo language orthography are written by the same author in 2021: *Reading and Writing Mboi Language*; *Kawoyi nã Doroyi dã lhyã wa Mboi*, and *Gãna Ada cimiyã* (Lord's Prayer)

**1.07. Language Use:** It is realized that the Languages regularly used among the Mboi apart from Mboi Language itself, the native speakers also speak Bãna-Yungur, Lala, Gudu, Bata, Hausa, Fulfulde and English Languages. The use of English among youths and Hausa languages in most cases is because they see it as official or commercial languages. And Hausa is seen as Language of Wider Communication.

The issue of using other languages as advantages over the Mother Tongue in some segments of life is just of the recent. It is said that, in the past years when they were youth among 85% of communication in worships, markets, festivals was in their local language. Maybe "the only isolated event that stayed and lasted long under the influence of Hausa language is worship. This is because the early missionaries reached to them by the use of Hausa language, and with the Hausa Bible. Almost everything was conducted in Hausa language". Although now its result is declining and the Mother Tongue is taking over as orientation are taking place by some lovers of linguistics and Mother Tongue usage.

## GRAMMAR

Grammar "is a process of describing the structure of phrases and sentences in such a way that we account for all the sequence in a language". Yule (2006:74). There are many approaches to the study of language. In this book we are going to discuss with illustration the structure that Mboi language has in consideration of the language speakers being born with the capacity to use it. We will focus mainly on the formal characteristics of the language structure ("which is seeking to uncover the rules that 'generate' well-formed sentence") Pavay (2010:1)

Therefore, in trying to discuss the grammar of Mboi language, we will be looking gradually in to the structures and the functions of some of the grammatical elements and how they function in phrases, clauses and sentences.

## 2. Noun System

The structure of noun classes in Mboi language is a bit complex. This is because the discovered noun classes are eleven (11) including loan words group, and then the nominalized verbs which makes it a total of twelve (12) noun classes. Each of these is carefully described in this book for a reader to grasp a clear picture of the language use as naturally as it is in order also to help in maintaining the use of the language among the speakers.

Therefore, for the purpose of this book we are considering the [za, -a +za, ta, da, mba, mba+ta, won, won-ma, ma, -a + a, and -a +ta forms] as forms of pluralizing nouns, and we shall be looking at them one after the other.

### i. [za] form

The [za] is added as a suffix to the noun head in order to make a plural form of the word suffixed. Based on observation, the percentage of the words that is pluralized by the affixation of [za] is high and almost higher than any other form. Look carefully at the examples bellow:

Singular form		Plural Form	
Data	Gloss	Data	Gloss

ã	palm rat	ãza	Palm rats
abare	Sperm	abarza	Sperms
bũ	Hole	Bũũza	holes
amadazambul	red neck	amadazambulza	red necks
aduwure	village head	adawurza	village heads
adurgana	bambara nut	adurganaza	bambara nuts
Kuta	Mouse	kutaza	mice
agadambare	dorsal fin	agadambarza	dorsal fins
kwata	Dandruff	kwataza	dandruffs
dhã	baby sling	dhãza	baby slings

**ii. [-a + za] form**

In this way of pluralisation, the first [a] phoneme that begins the noun head is dropped and an addition of [za] at the end of the word as a suffix.

See the examples below on how words are pluralised in this form. Care should be taken by the reader in order to avoid the mixture of this form and (za form). They are two different formations of plurals in Mboi language. Look at the examples below for more clarification.

**Singular Form**

**Plural Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
aegbanje	lizard	gbangza	Lizards
afene	cooking pot	fanza	cooking pots
abwa	dog	bwaza	dogs
abwarigeya	fox	bwarigeza	foxes
abala	chisel	ebalaza	chisel
ahuze	uncle	huza	uncles
akhĩ	dish/calabash	khũza	dishes/calabashes
agənabide	vampire	gəna bidəza	vampires

**iii. [ ta ] form**

The [ta] is added as a suffix to the root word or head noun to form a plural of the word. Just like (za form) is, and so this form is formed by the suffixation of some singular words most especially nouns.

**Singular Form**

**Plural Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
kunglungya	tortoise	kunglungta	tortoises
kuya	robe	kuuta	robes
dimyã	heel	dimta	Heel
ɔkomya	chin	ɔkomta	chins
ndongya	bat	ndongta	Bats
mbalya	radius	mbalta	radiuses

nuyã

head

nuta

Heads

**iv. [da] form**

The [da] is added as a suffix to the root word or head noun to form a plural of the word. The examples bellow shows the [da] plural formation in Mboi Language:-

**Singular Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
bãbãkya	mymphaea nelumbo tree
ciya	faeces
cīyã	'Charcoal'
đogoya	'buttock'
kagəja	'raft'
karəŋgəya	'feather'
Kəmyã	'fur'
kahtamyã	'testis'

**Plural Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
bãbakda	mymphaea nelumbo trees
cida	Faeces
cinda	'Charcoals'
đogoda	'buttocks'
kagda	'rafts'
karangda	'feathers'
Kəmda	'furs'
kahtamda	'testes'

**v. [mba] Form**

The [mba] plural Form is realised when the noun head has an attachment of [mba] as a prefix. In this case the attachments come before the head nouns. It is contrary to the suffixation in plural formation. See the few examples below:-

**Singular Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
aa	'child'
aacene	'girl'
aakre	'boy'
ashide	'hut'
aabəra	'first born'
agade	'water pass'

**Plural Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
mba	'children'
mbatona	'girls'
mbakra	'boys'
mbashida	'huts'
mbabəra	'first borns'
mbagada	'water pass'

**vi. [mba+ta] Form**

The case of [mba+ta] form is another plural formation on its own. It refers to the type that has both prefix and suffix of it. The [mba] is prefixed and the [ta] is suffixed on the singular noun head and so it becomes a plural.

Read the few examples below carefully to get more idea about this type of plural formation:-

**Singular Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
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**Plural Form**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
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abwore	'puppy'	mbabworeta	'puppies'
akede	'finger'	mbaketa	'fingers'

**vii. [won] Form**

The plural formation in this case is having the addition of [won] as a prefix to the noun word. This form is applied to persons alone and they are mostly words that describe a person with his profession or attitude. It is not possible to find such formation used on inanimate.

**Singular Form**

Data	Gloss
acidan	'corward'
adimsə	'wise person'
angəla	'clergy man'
ancime	'messenger'
ampətadode	'king's assistant'
ankafike	'soldier'

**Plural Form**

Data	Gloss
woncidana	'corwards'
wondimsə	'wise people'
wongəla	'clergy men'
woncimo	'messengers'
wonpətadode	'king's assistants'
wonkafike	'soldiers'

**viii. [won-ma] Form**

The [won-ma] is similar to the case of [mba+ta] form, it is another way of plural formation. It refers to the plural formation that has both prefix and suffix of it. The [won] is prefixed and the [ma] is suffixed on the singular noun head. See the tabled information below for clarity:-

**Singular Form**

Data	Gloss
agbene	'squirrel'
adefe	'month'
adure	'groundnut'
are	'hoe'

**Plural Form**

Data	Gloss
wongbenma	'squirrels'
wondefma	'months'
wondurma	'groundnuts'
wonrema	'hoes'

**ix. [ma] Form**

In the [ma] form of pluralisation the noun head is added with the suffix [ma]. The table bellows provides you with the comprehensive illustration for clarity.

**Singular Form**

Data	Gloss
baro	'branch'
benglo	'leg'
cenyã	'anvil'
furya	'flower'
gidã	'spear'
gishã	'yam'
meza	'saliva'
Pəla	'wing'

**Plural Form**

Data	Gloss
barma	'branches'
benglma	'legs'
cenma	'anvils'
furma	'flowers'
gidãma	'spears'
gishãma	'yams'
mezma	'salivas'
Pəlama	'wings'

vĩso                            ‘star’                            vĩsma                            ‘stars’

**x. [-a + a] Form**

In this case, the first letter of the noun head which used to be a vowel particularly [a] is dropped then the remaining group of letters attracts the [a] as the end as a suffix.

In adding the [a] phoneme as a suffix, it normally replaces a phoneme which most at times are [e] and [i] vowels. Look carefully at the data below for examples.

Singular Form		Plural Form	
Data	Gloss	Data	Gloss
akre	‘husband/man’	kra	‘husbands/men’
amashi	‘sister in-law’	masa	‘sister in-laws’
akobe	‘younger brother/sister’	koba	‘younger brothers/sisters’
avele	‘king’	vela	‘kings’
andugene	‘brother in-law’	ndugano	‘brother in-laws’

The use of [-a + a] Form is used in titles of humans or relationship names.

**xi. [-a + ta] Form**

The [-a + ta] form refers to a vowel particularly [a] is dropped then the remaining group of letters attracts the [ta] as the end as a suffix. The examples are given below.

Singular Form		Plural Form	
Data	Gloss	Data	Gloss
avərɔvər	‘beetle’	Vərvəɾta	‘beetles’
akelenge	‘he-goat’	kelengta	‘he-goats’
akecekale	‘smallest toe’	kecekalta	‘smallest toes’

The deletion of initial [a] from root word and add [ta] as suffix (- a + ta) to form plural is mostly on animates.

**xii. Loan Words**

Loan words are those copied from other languages as a result of not having the words from the onset or being influenced by the frequent use of the nearby languages vocabularies around the affected language group.

Singular Form		Plural Form	
Data	Gloss	Data	Gloss
ɖərɔwəl	‘book’	ɖərɔwəlza	‘books’
alarba	‘Wednesday’	alarbaza	‘Wednesdays’

The two borrowed words are *derwel* from Fulfulde ‘*ɖərɔwəl*’ and *alarba* from Hausa ‘*laraba*’, though Fulfulde itself refer Wednesday as *alarba*.

**2.1. Nominalization**

Nominalized verbs are the noun words that are formed from actions. In this work there are different forms of nominalization. Most of them are formed by adding [an] as prefixes while others occur irregularly of which there is no pattern to describe them. Every word is formed from its root word in no relation with the other.

Verbs	Gloss	Formed nouns	Gloss
Bra	'to begin'	brayi	'beginning'
Cime	'to send'	ancime	'messenger'
rək	'to plant'	anrəkoyi	'planter'
zā	'to dig'	anzāye	'digger'
vā	'to deceive'	vadza	'lie'
đim	'to think'	andimsə	'wise person'
gan	'to speak'	gano	'speech'

### 3. Pronominal Forms.

The following are some of the pronominal forms of Mboi Language:

#### 3.1. Subject Pronoun

The subject pronouns are in two different ways for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> SG. It depends on the time or the environment being used at. For examples: if 'I' on the normal circumstance or in isolation is to be used, it is [inne] but when in a statement it becomes [nə]. Also, when referring to 'you' '2SG'. On a normal ground, it is [inge] but when in a sentence it uses [ngə]. On the other hand, the singular and the plural subject pronouns are different and clear from each other.

Person	Numbers			
	Singular	Gloss	Plural	Gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	inne/nə	I	nda	we (incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
			ta	we (excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
2 <sup>nd</sup>	inge/ngə	you	za	you
3 <sup>rd</sup>	a	he/she	wu	they

#### 3.2. Object Pronouns

The object pronoun in Mboi Language shows that the singular and the plural object pronouns are different and clear from each other, only that the 3PL. can be in two ways of a phonemic representation. This is not because of the environmental influence; rather, it is a free variant. Any one of them can be used at anywhere and anytime. See the examples below:

Person	Numbers			
	Singular	Gloss	Plural	Gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	mən	me	mənda	we (incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
			məta	we (excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
2 <sup>nd</sup>	ma	you	sa	you
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ada	him/her	Woda	them



### 3.3. Indirect Object Pronoun

The indirect object pronoun at the singular stage functions differently but in the same as that one of the direct one object pronoun in plurals.

Person	Singular	Plural	
1 <sup>st</sup>	nə	məda	Incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
		məta	excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	nge	za	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ad	da	

### 3.4. Possessive Pronouns

Looking at the possessive pronouns of Mboi Language, it is realized that it functions almost as a phrase 'my own' 'your own' 'his/her own' etc. therefore, that is how the language works. The use of the progressive is unlike English language as in other parts of its grammar.

Person	Singular	Plural	
1 <sup>st</sup>	nemi	wado	Incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
		wato	Excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	wayi	zebi	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	wado	wodo	

### 3.5. Possessive Adjective

Below is the example of the possessive adjectives of Mboi Language:-

Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	no	njemi
2 <sup>nd</sup>	yayi	wozo

3<sup>rd</sup> di wodo

### 3.6. Reciprocals

Reciprocal is a pronoun that indicates a reciprocal relationship. Anytime something is done or given in return, reciprocal pronouns are used. Below is an example showing how Mboi Language reciprocal pronouns are.

Person	Numbers
	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	wada
2 <sup>nd</sup>	wada
3 <sup>rd</sup>	wada

### 3.7. Reflexives

A reflexive pronoun is an anaphoric pronoun that must be confessional with another nominal within the same clause. This section shows grammatically how the reflexive pronouns of Mboi Language functions.

Person	Number	
	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	ihĩno	ihĩwado
		ihĩto
		Incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	ihyã yi	ihĩzo
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ihĩji	ihĩwodo

Note: The [ĩhĩ nó] means ‘myself’ which can directly be translated as ‘my mouth’ but it always sound clear and different from ordinary ‘my mouth’

### 3.8. Independent/Emphatic Pronoun

This is used for emphasis; a word like ‘myself’ is called like emphatic pronoun.

Person	Number	
	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	ne	ida
		ita
		Incl. 2 <sup>nd</sup> excl. 2 <sup>nd</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	nge	iza
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ada	od

### 3.9. 2.9 Logophoric pronouns

The logophoric pronouns are specially-formed anaphors that are morphologically distinct from the typical pronouns of a language. Below is the representation of the logophoric pronouns of Mboi Language.

a. **Orthographic form:** a ke aga wo (another person)

**Underlying form:** a ke a ga wo

**Gloss line:** 3<sup>rd</sup>SG said 3<sup>rd</sup>SG will come

**Free translation :** He said he (another person) will come

b. **Orthographic form:** a ke iga wo (the same person)

**Underlying form:** a ke i ga wo

**Gloss line:** 3<sup>rd</sup>SG. said 3SG will come (the same person)

**Free translation :** he said he will come

In the 3PL. the pronoun form representing the speaker himself and talking about another party is the same. Let's look at the sentence below:-

c. **Orthographic form:** wu ke wuga tamyě (whether the same or another person)

**Underlying form:** wu ke wuga tamyě

**Gloss line:** 3rdPLR said 3rdPLR+will do NEG.

**Free translation :** they said they will not do

## 4. Noun Phrases

### 4.1. Demonstratives

The markers for demonstratives are derived from the words <nda/ya>, <ye>, <wa> <we> and <wawe>. Demonstratives occur last in phrases where they take place, usually after the head noun. The demonstrative does not adjust in form or tone when it occurs in a different environment. In Mboi language demonstratives are marked differently when they mark something afar off. Also plurals are marked inversely; it is the same all over. Look at examples below and compare singulars with plurals:

a. **Orthographic form:** abwa ya

**Underlying form:** abwa ya

**Gloss line:** dog this

**Literal Translation:** This dog

b. **Orthographic form:** abwa ye

**Underlying form:** abwa ye

**Gloss line:** dog that (close distance)

**Literal Translation:** that dog

**c. Orthographic form:** abwa ye

**Underlying form:** abwa ye

**Gloss line:** dog that (afar off)

**Literal Translation:** that dog

**d. Orthographic form:** kra wa

**Underlying form:** kra wa

**Gloss line:** men these

**Literal Translation:** these men

**e. Orthographic form:** kra we

**Underlying form:** kra we

**Gloss line:** men those (close distance)

**Literal translation:** those men

**f. Orthographic form:** kra wawe

**Underlying form:** kra wawe

**Gloss line:** men those (afar off)

**Literal Translation:** those men

#### 4.2 Numerals

Numbers have independent roots from unit 1-10 while for all other group of tenth emerges from the same root.

Take for example

**Orthographic form:** nə biye bwazən fici

**Underlying form:** nə biye bwazə -n fici

**Gloss line:** 1SG see dogs PAST NUM.

**Literal Translation:** I saw two dogs

Numerals	Tone	Gloss
fandi	↓ 1	one
fici	↓ 1	two
tagən	↓ 1	three
kurun	↓ 1	four
wonon	↓ 1	five
minjike	1 ↓ ↓	six
mbutu	↓ ↓	seven
kurunkurun	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	eight
Wononkurun	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	nine
Bu	1	ten
bu ha fandı	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	eleven
bu ha fici	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	twelve

Looking at the tone on ‘ten’ it is pronounced High but anything from eleven is built on the [bu] ‘ten’ and it goes with a Low tone.

#### 4.3. Cardinals

A cardinal numeral or cardinal number word is a part of speech used to count. These are ‘one, two, three, four and the compounds three hundred, forty-two’ etc. for the purpose of this research we are considering only some of Mboi Language cardinals from the lowest level.

**Orthographic form:** dunguldə kurun

**Underlying form:** dunguldə kurun

**Gloss line:** stones four

**Literal translation:** four stones

#### 4.4. Ordinals

In linguistics, ordinal numerals or number words are words representing position or rank in a sequential order; the order maybe of size, importance chronology, and so on. For example ‘first, second, third and etc’.

In Mboi language there is a single discovered way of marking an ordinal in mboi language. This is by the use [a] as prefix to the root numeral and [nje] as suffix is attached after the numeral marker and make it ordinal. See example below:

**Orthographic form:** zã afandije

**Underlying form:** zã a fandı je

**Gloss line:** snake ORD. One ORD.

**Literal Translation:** first snake

#### 4.5. Quantifier

Quantifiers in natural language corresponds to words, such as every, some most, few and many others.

The quantifiers in mboi Language are < gengu, dəm, hangən, gundo >

The use of gengu quantifies; 'few and small' while dəm quantifies 'many and alot' then hangən refers to 'enough' and lastly gundo describe 'majority'

For example:

**Orthographic form:** bwazə gengu

**Underlying form:** bwazə gengu

**Gloss line:** dogs few

**Free Translation:** few dogs

Note: it is realised by the researcher that in Mboi Language, anything qualifying, modifying or quantifying comes after the noun it is describing.

#### 4.6. Determiners

Determiners come immediately after the head noun in Mboi Language.

For examples:

a. **Orthographic form:** abwa she, bwazə she

**Underlying form:** abwa she, bwazə she

**Gloss line:** dog the, dogs the

**Free Translation:** the dog, the dogs

b. **Orthographic form:** abwage, bwazəgo

**Underlying form:** abwa ge, bwazə go

**Gloss line:** dog Indf. DETM. dogs Indf. DETM.

**Free Translation:** certain dog, certain dogs.

c. **orthographic form:** bwazə mənū

**Underlying form:** bwazə mənū

**Gloss line:** dogs which

**Free Translation:** which dogs

The researcher discovered that in Mboi Language, the determiners always come after the noun it is pointing to.

#### 4.7. Adjectives

a. **Orthographic form:** anam gishi ya

**Underlying form:** anam gishi ya

**Gloss line:** animal big DETM.

**Free translation:** big animal

b. **Orthographic form:** anam gengu ya

**Underlying form:** anam gengu ya

**Gloss line:** animal small DETM.

**Free translation:** small animal

c. **Orthographic form:** akhĩ fifi ya

**Underlying form:** akhĩ fifi ya

**Gloss line:** calabash new DETM.

**Free translation:** new calabash

d. **Orthographic form:** kpəlang pak-pak ya

**Underlying form:** kpəlang pak-pak ya

**Gloss line:** stick light DETM.

**Free translation:** light stick

In qualifying or describing a noun, the noun being qualified comes first before the adjective. Here in qualifying a stick the noun does not appear fully (both in written and production form). Instead of <kpəlango> 'stick' it becomes kpəlang. The final vowel drops.

e. **Orthographic form:** kpəlang dəbdəb ya,

**Underlying form:** kpəlang dəbdəb ya

**Gloss line:** stick heavy DETM.

**Free translation:** heavy stick

f. **Orthographic form:** gombəl hiizo

**Underlying form:** gombəl hiizo

**Gloss line:** okra dried

**Free translation:** dried okra

f. **Orthographic form:** gombəl s̃ha

**Underlying form:** gombəl s̃ha

**Gloss line:** okra cooked

**Free translation:** cooked okra

g. **Orthographic form:** gombəl ləngo

**Underlying form:** gombəl ləngo

**Gloss line:** okra blended

**Free translation:** blended okra

h. **Orthographic form:** gombəl jiyo

**Underlying form:** gombəl jiyo

**Gloss line:** okra burnt

**Free translation:** burnt okra

i. **Orthographic form:** gombəl hã

**Underlying form:** gombəl hã

**Gloss line:** okra germinated

**Free translation:** germinated okra

#### 4.8. Possessive Phrase



In Mboi Language, the object possessed comes first before the possessor then followed by the possessive marker. The possessive marker is marked [no] as of 1.SG and by a determiner [ya] for other persons. See the example below:

Data	Gloss	Data	Gloss	Possessive Marker	Gloss	Possessive Pronoun	Gloss
aihĩ	mouth	narige	PRP. N	ya	DEM.	aihĩ narige ja	Narige's mouth
mbaketma	fingers			no	POSS.	mbaketma no	my fingers
mbaketma	fingers	narige	PRP. N	ya	DEM.	mbaketma ya	Narige's fingers

#### 4.9. The structure of the noun phrase

Almost every adjective and quantifier comes after the head noun. See the examples below:

**a. Orthographic form:** psal gishi fandi wa welo nda

**Underlying form:** psal gishi fandi wa welo nda

**Gloss line:** shirt big one DET. red DEM.

**Free Translation:** One red big shirt

The plural modifiers are quite different from the singular in Mboi Language. For examples in the above adjectival qualifying word is [gishi] for 'big' qualifying the single shirt, but in the plural of the noun it is qualifying the adjective is reduplicated as [gĩfĩ-gĩfĩ]. This is always found in adjective of size.

**b. Orthographic form:** psalzə gishi-gishi fici wa welo nda

**Underlying form:** psalzə gishi-gishi fici wa welo nda

**Gloss line:** shirts big two DET. red DEM.

**Free Translation:** two big red shirts

**c. Orthographic form:** i psalzə welo mən gishi-gishi fici nu?

**Underlying form:** i psalzə welo mən gishi-gishi fici nu?

**Gloss line:** It is shirts red which big two QUEST. MRK

**Free translation:** which two red big shirts?

Therefore, this is the structure of Mboi Language Noun Phrase

**HEAD NOUN > ADJ. > QUANTIFIER. > ADJ. > DEM.**

## 5. Adpositional Phrases

The Mboi language has only one adpositional phrase. For the reason of this study let's look at the preposition in Mboi language.

### 5.1. Prepositions:

Prepositions like on, at, in, in English, are marked as **H** tone on the first syllable of the object of a verb. The tone of a word in most cases is affected when a preposition is made. Also the structure of Mboi Language is almost the same with the English Language when it comes to prepositional functioning within phrases or sentence.

a. **Orthographic form:** a dhã da song

**Underlying form:** a dhã da song

**Gloss line:** he lives in Song (name of place)

**Free Translation:** He lives in Song

b. **Orthography form:** a kada kala baʒi ya

**Underlying form:** a kada kala baʒi ya

**Gloss line:** 3SG.SBJ. V. PRP. OBJ. DEM.

**Free Translation:** he sat beside his friend

c. **Orthography form:** ci cima baburumən

**Underlying form:** ci cima baburumə -n

**Gloss line:** put on table COMPLT.

**Free Translation:** put on top of a table

d. **Orthography form:** acen she ayi da wido kra fici

**Underlying form:** acen she a yi da wido kra fici

**Gloss line:** woman the she is in between men two

**Free Translation:** the woman is between two men

## 6. Verbal Morphology

### 6.1. Tense

There are three tenses types in Mboi Language. These are future, present and past tenses

The future tense is marked with an auxiliary [ga] M tone or a pronoun ending with [a] for the 1SG. [na] and 2SG [nga] and their plural partners; then the present is identified by a suffix [-n] added to the pronoun also M tone then lastly the past tense which is marked with a pronoun then a suffix ‘-n’ is added either on the **main verb** or on the **object** within a sentence or phrase.

For examples:

### Future Tense

In this tenses case the structure of Mboi Language seems to be unorganised at the 1SG compared to English language until restructured but in other parts they work similar to it. See the examples below:-

a. **Orthography form:** kəna bɔg aɡəna

**Underlying form:** kə na bɔg aɡəna

**Gloss line:** will I beat person

**Free translation:** I will beat a person

b. **Orthographic form:** kənga pad avije

**Underlying form:** kə nga pad avije

**Gloss line:** will you (SG) break door

**Free translation:** you will break a door

c. **Orthographic form:** aga wo yene

**Underlying form:** a ga wo yene

**Gloss line:** he will come tomorrow

**Free translation:** He will come tomorrow

d. **Orthographic form:** uga ce skat

**Underlying form:** u ga ce skat

**Gloss line:** they will cry the day after tomorrow

**Free translation:** they will cry the day after tomorrow

Looking at the future tense of Mboi Language carefully, it operates the same with English structure. eg ‘S. V. O.’

**Present Tense:** as earlier mentioned above the present is identified by a suffix [-n] added to the pronoun and it goes with an M tone. For examples:

e. **Orthography form:** aacenshe an wode

**Underlying form:** aacen she a n wode

**Gloss line:** girl the 3SG >PRSNT MRK. Coming

**Free translation:** the girl is coming

**Past tense:** The past tense of Mboi Language as discussed on the previous page is marked with a pronoun then a suffix ‘-n’ is added either on the **main verb** or on the **object** within a sentence or phrase. For examples:

f. **Orthography form:** a wodən

**Underlying form:** a wodə n

**Gloss line:** she die > Completive

**Free translation:** she died

g. **Orthographic form:** ngə biyen

**Underlying form:** ngə biye -n

**Gloss line:** you see Completive

**Free translation:** you have seen

h. **Orthographic form:** a bug abwan

**Underlying form:** a bug abwa -n

**Gloss line:** he beat dog Completive

**Free translation:** he has beaten a dog.

## 7. Aspect

**7.1. Habitual:** the Mboi language habitual marker is not different from the present form of it of which it is identified by a suffix [-n] added to the pronoun and it goes with an **M** tone. Secondly, it is sometimes marked by adding time factor to show the time of frequent action. e.g ‘always’ or ‘every day.’

Now, let’s take for examples the form of it which is identified by a suffix [-n] added to the pronoun:-

a. **Orthographic form:** nazə won fu yihã

**Underlying form:** nazə wo -n fu yihã

**Gloss line:** cows they HBTL.MRK eat grass

**Free Translation:** cows eat grass

Looking at the use of the pronoun 'wo' for 3PL, it is a change from 'wu' or 'u' as a result of the action attached to it to become 'wo' and -'n' (action marker)

Now, let's briefly consider the example of the one being marked by adding time factor to show the time of frequent action e.g. 'Always' or 'every day.'

b. **Orthographic form:** an koda ndugu ko gamən

**Underlying form:** ā -n ko da biri ko gamən

**Gloss line:** he HBTL MRK goes in market whichever day

**Free Translation:** he always go to market

### **Progressive**

The progressive form in Mboi Language is marked by time 'recently, now, hitherto'. This shows that the action is still in progress. On the other hand, it also uses simple present form by adding a suffix [-n] on a subject pronoun. Below is an example of the progressive for more clarification:-

a. **Orthographic form:** agəne woshi ndugu wiwi da sawasa

**Underlying form:** agən e wo shi ndugu wiwi da sawasa

**Gloss line:** father my come with farm own it in right now

**Free translation:** my father is working his farm right now

Below is an example of the form that uses simple present form by adding a suffix [-n] on a subject pronoun:

**Orthographic form:** aməne yan zug cinam shuwo

**Underlying form:** amən -e ya -n zug cinam shuwo

**Gloss line:** brother my he PRG MRK. doing work domestic

**Free Translation:** my brother is doing domestic work

### **Completive**

The completive sense in Mboi Language is marked with a word [bwad] as completive word on its own but that does not stand alone to give a complete sense until the usage of a suffix [-n] on an object receiving the action.

Lets look at the examples below on how completive sense functions in Mboi language grammar:-

a. **Orthographic form:** u bwad wazo ndugun

**Underlying form:** u bwad wazo ndugu -n

**Gloss line:** they finished weeding farm COMP. MRK.

**Free Translation:** they finished weeding farm

**b. Orthographic form:** nə bwad tam cinam shuwon

**Underlying form:** nə bwad tam cina -m shuwo -n

**Gloss line:** I finished doing work POSS. domestic COMP.MRK

**Free Translation:** I finished doing home work

**c. Orthographic form:** a bwad moiyo suzən

**Underlying form:** a bwad moiyo suzə -n

**Gloss line:** he finished building house COMP. MRK

**Free Translation:** he finished building house

### Incompletive

The incompletive form of statement in Mboi Language can be identified by verb form used on a normal ground. There is nothing tempering with the verb or pronouns used either subject or object. See the illustrational examples below:-

**a. Orthographic form:** kaikaya ka bənsə kai hazəmə yene

**Underlying form:** kaikaya ka bənsə kai hazəmə yene

**Gloss line:** Kaikaya will cook rice tomorrow

**Free Translation:** Kaikaya will cook rice tomorrow

**b. Orthographic form:** a bənsə kai hazəmə də

**Underlying form:** a bənsə kai hazəmə də

**Gloss line:** she cook rice DET.

**Free Translation:** she cook rice

**Orthographic form:** kaikaya an s̃hā mbəzeza də yage acenaje kaniyĩ yã

**Underlying form:** kaikaya a -n s̃hā mbəzeza də yage acena -je kaniyĩ yã

**Gloss line:** Kaikaya he INCOMP cook foods DET when wife his arrives DET.

**Free Translation:** Kaikaya will be cooking food when his wife arrives

### **Imperatives**

In Mboi language, a verb, when used alone symbols the imperative. Just as the English case; read! do! Come! take! and etc. if a noun is needed in the sentence, the structure becomes <N. Verb.>. Also, it is

observed that imperative is marked by H tone if it has only single syllable and to the words that have more than one syllable the H tone falls on the last syllable. However, whichever way, the verb comes first except the speaker intends to place emphasis on him himself that a noun or pronoun arrives as a head. Then if this occurs, the meaning of the account would rather be 'I said you should...' Therefore, let's study an example with the structure, N. Verb. For examples:-

nədə > stop!

kawa > read!

wo! > come!

abaji ganga! > friend return!

### **Subjunctive**

Subjunctive is a grammatical mood, a feature of the utterance that indicates the speaker's attitude towards it.

a. **Orthographic form:** uga wo

**Underlying form:** u ga wo

**Gloss line:** they should come

**Free Translation:** they should come

b. **Orthographic form:** uga wo ye

**Underlying form:** u ga wo ye

**Gloss line:** they should come NEG.

**Free Translation:** they should not come

c. **Orthographic form:** aga wo sawasa

**Underlying form:** a ga wo sawasa

**Gloss line:** he will come now

**Free Translation:** he will come now

d. **Orthographic form:** aga wo tangsə ye

**Underlying form:** a ga wo tangsə ye

**Gloss line:** he will come must NEG.

**Free Translation:** he must not come

**Irrealis**

The representations of the events that have not yet happened in Mboi Language are as follows:-

- a. **Orthographic form:** obozo u go fu kai hazəma  
**form:** obozo u go fu kai hazəma  
 they will eat rice  
 rice.

**Underlying**  
**Gloss line:**            may be  
**Free Translation:** they may be eating

- b. **Orthographic form:** aga gang tangsa

**Underlying form:** a ga gang tangsa

**Gloss line:** he will return must

**Free Translation:** he must return

**Interrogation**

This portrays questioning speeches. The question marker in Mboi language is mostly at the end of the questioning phrase or complete sense group of words. See examples below:-

- a. **Orthographic form:** u don fu kai hazəmə dəu?

**Underlying form:** u don fu kai hazəmə dəu?

**Gloss line:** they are eating rice QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** are they eating rice?

- b. **Orthographic form:** ngə ɖou nam nu?

**Underlying form:** ngə ɖou nam nu

**Gloss line:** you like meat QUEST MRK.

**Free Translation:** will you like some meat?

- c. **Orthographic form:** ngə wergɪ nu?

**Underlying form:** ngə wergɪ nu?

**Gloss line:** you prepare QUEST MRK.

**Free Translation:** are you ready?

**Yes-no (polar) questions**

In Mboi language, it appears that there is no difference between interrogatives and yes-no questions. For examples:

Data	Gloss	Yes-No	Gloss
------	-------	--------	-------



ngə wergi nu?	are you ready?	Eiye	yes
ngə dōu nam nu?	will you like some meat?	awo	No

### Content Questions

There are no differences from interrogatives and content questions. The [nu] is always the question marker at the end of every questioning statement. For examples:

#### **Data**

ngə ko mba gamənu?

Underlying form: ngə ko mba gamən -nu?

Gloss line: you go DET. day QUEST MRK

ngan ko nanu?

**Underlying form:** nga -n ko na nu?

**Gloss line:** you PROG. MRK go where QUEST MRK

ngau ngə ko nəfənu?

**Underlying form:** nga -u ngə ko nəfən nu?

**Gloss line:** you SG. are you go how QUEST. MRK

#### **Free Translation**

when are you going?

where are you going?

how are you going?

### **7. Verb Classes**

The verb classes of Mboi language are transitive, intransitive and ditransitive. See their examples as bellow:

#### **Transitive**

tod kill

sob wash

hui blow (musical)

mei build

gang return

#### **Intransitive**

gangən returned

wodən died

hanjin collapsed

dəfən spat

vurmaddən squeezed

#### **Ditransitive**

mən give

cimad sent

wiyod showed

konad collected

kyöd told

### **Activities**

This place comprises of the main activities then the states, also achievements and accomplishments. Therefore the illustrational examples below give more clarity about them:

Activities		States		Achievements		Accomplishments	
mei	build	ji	to be happy	pado	explore	gaŋ welwel	to turn red
hir	dance	gidgid	to be standing	mene	run	lo su	return home

wijede	blink	dhãdhã	to be abiding	tã	shoot	danjin	gotten
tã	shoot	tyityi	to be laying	weleb	blink	hũgin	hidden
shiki	walk	kobkob	to be squatting	ni	stand	padən	explored

### 8. Simple Clause (basic word order)

This place describes possible structures of simple clauses, which include ‘be’- clause and ‘have’-clauses. See the examples below:

8.1. **‘Be’-clause.** The verb ‘to be’ in Mboi language is [a/ an] and rarely use [3oi] for ‘will be’. The [a/an] has a multiple usage, covering a whole range of meanings like is, am. Also, when a speaker speaks negative (not to be or been) it changes to [di]. Below are examples:

S. V. ADJ

aama ne **an** ankafike  
 aama ne **an** ankafike  
 aama ne **an** ankafike  
 brother my **be** soldier  
 My brother is a soldier

S. V. ADJ

aama ne **3oi** ankafike  
 aama ne **3oi** ankafike  
 aama ne **3oi** ankafike  
 brother my **will be** soldier  
 my brother **will be** a soldier

S. V. ADJ

agəne **di** anwo3e ye  
 agəne **di** anwo3e ye  
 agəne **di** anwo3e ye  
 father my **is not** farmer  
 my father **is not** a farmer

### 8.2. ‘have’-clause

The ‘have’-clause of Mboi language is identified by a pronoun attached to [shi] meaning ‘to have’. The [shi] on its own does not make any meaning close or similar to ‘to have’ until it is attached with the subject pronoun or the beneficiary of the ownership within the given context. For examples:

S. V. COMPLEMENTIZER

avel cen she ma yeshi cimɗəzə buzə-wonon  
 avel cen she yeshi cimɗəzə buzəwonon  
 avel cen she yeshi cimɗəzə buzəwonon  
 king female the has sheep fifty  
 the queen has fifty sheep

### 9. Grammatical Relations

The grammatical relations between S V DO IO of Mboi language is as follows:

a. **Orthographic form:** ngə nad kandawoin

**Underlying form:** ngə na -d kandawoi -n

**Gloss line:** you gave him cocoyam Completive

**Structure:** S V DO IO

**Free Translation:** you gave him cocoyam

**b. Orthographic form:** ne nad akhĩn

**Underlying form:** ne na -d akhĩn

**Gloss line:** I gave him a calabash

**Structure:** S V DO IO

**Free Translation:** I gave him a calabash

**c. Orthographic form:** ʒei na afenen

**Underlying form:** ʒei na afene -n

**Gloss line:** he V.+to me give pot Completive

**Structure:** S V DO V IO

**Free Translation:** he gave the pot to me

## 10. Adverbials and Idiophones

The adverbial are the modifiers of activities taking place. It gives more information on how an event occurred. Then idiophone in the same vein is also describing the degree or level of the event occurring. The difference between adverbs and idiophones in Mboi language is that an idiophone is an adverb that sometimes repeats itself (though not many) with an intensity of description. See the examples below:

Verb	Gloss	Idiophone	Gloss of Idiophone
kan	enter	Sədak ʔ ʔ	slithered
Ro	fell (from high distance)	cukuluk ʔ ʔ ʔ	plop!
men	run	gekgek ʔ ʔ	zigzag
jifga	shut (of the door)	ndəng ʔ	gbim!
men	run	ɓwat ɓwat ɓwat ɓwat ʔ ʔ ʔ ʔ	gbim! gbim! gbim! gbim!

## 11. Focus constructions

At this stage the researcher describes different strategies for marking different constituents in Mboi Language.

**a. Orthographic form:** i aakre she todʒe abwa

**Underlying form:** i aakre she tod ze abwa

**Gloss line:** it is man the killed who a dog

**Free Translation:** it is the man who killed a dog

**b. Orthographic form:** yi abwa she aakre she todadi wa

**Underlying form:** yi abwa she aakre she todadi wa

**Gloss line:** it is dog the boy the killed DEM.

**Free Translation:** it is a dog that the boy killed

## 12. Multiclausal Construction

**Orthographic form:** arigeman nə salsal wu bek bənza mba wu hirhirya ba ifi yo su

**Underlying form:** arigeman nə sasal wu bek bənza mba wu hirhirja ba ifi yo sú

**Gloss line:** arigeman and salsal they play songs children they dance until sun goes home

**Free Translation:** Arigeman and Salsal played music and children danced until evening.

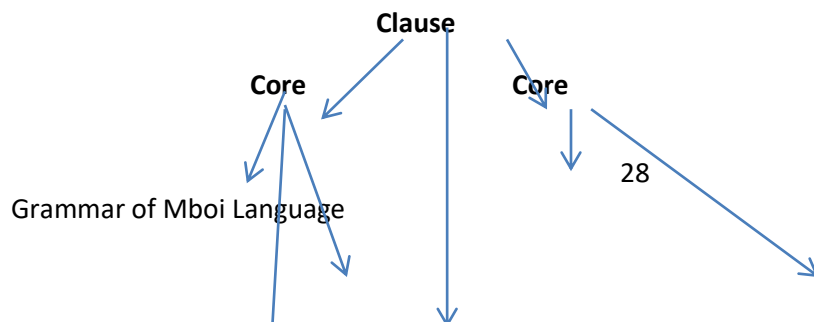
### 12.1. Coordination

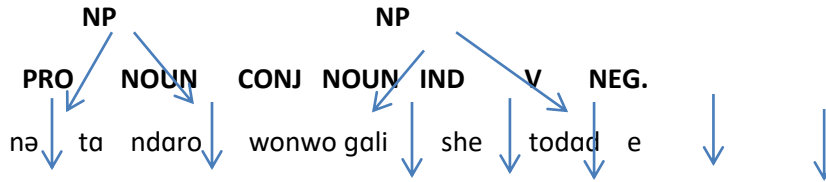
The coordination in Mboi Language is as follows:

nə	and/with
fanda	also
Ko	or
wonwo	but
handago	either
mwa	much more

See the tree illustration below:

nə ta ndaro wonwo gali she todade





Gloss line: I shot antelope but arrow the killed NEG.

Free Translation: I shot an antelope but the arrow didn't kill it

### 13. Greetings

The greetings in Mboi Language as many languages would, it has also differed from time to time.

a. **Orthographic form:** tuwo nu?

**Underlying form:** tuwo nu

**Gloss line:** sleep QUEST. MRK

**Free Translation:** good morning (early morning)

b. **Orthographic form:** zə kã ni cim nu?

**Underlying form:** zə kã ni cim nu

**Gloss line:** 2PL able wake up QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** good morning

c. **Orthographic form:** ngə kada pal nu

**Underlying form:** ngə kad pal nu

**Gloss line:** 2SG stayed late morning hours QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** good morning

d. **Orthographic form:** ngə kad wo nu?

**Underlying form:** ngə kad wo nu

**Gloss line:** 2SG stayed noon QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** good afternoon

e. **Orthographic form:** ngə kad zartə nu?

**Underlying form:** ngə kad zartə nu

**Gloss line:** 2SG stayed evening QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** good evening

f. **Orthographic form:** ngə kad riyo nu

**Underlying form:** ngə kad riyo nu

**Gloss line:** 2SG stayed late evening hours QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** good evening (late evening hours)

g. **Orthographic form:** zə tafənu bidnu

**Underlying form:** zə tafənu bid nu

**Gloss line:** 2PL how night QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** greetings at early night hours

h. **Orthographic form:** caka bidnu

**Underlying form:** caka bid nu

**Gloss line:** longed.2SG/PL night QUEST MRK

**Free Translation:** greetings just before bed

i. **Orthographic form:** lãã nə cinema

**Underlying form:** lãã nə cinema

**Gloss line:** well-done with work

**Free Translation:** greetings while working

j. **Orthographic form:** shishi

**Underlying form:** shishi

**Gloss line:** sorry

**Free Translation:** greeting a suffering party

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