

Aspects of Awing Grammar and Information Structure



Henry Zamchang Fominyam

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This work is dedicated to my kids: Treasured-Gift, Xenia and Talia, Fominyam.

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List of glosses

1st	<i>first person</i>
2nd	<i>second person</i>
3rd	<i>third person</i>
Adj	<i>adjective</i>
AgrP	<i>agreement phrase</i>
AM	<i>associative marker</i>
Asp	<i>aspect marker</i>
AspP	<i>aspect Phrase</i>
AUX	<i>auxiliary</i>
C-comand	<i>constituent command</i>
Comp	<i>complementizer</i>
CP	<i>complementizer phrase</i>
DEF	<i>definite</i>
Det	<i>determiner</i>
Dem	<i>demonstrative</i>
DP	<i>determiner phrase</i>
EPP	<i>extended projection principle</i>
FT	<i>future tense</i>
HAB	<i>habitual aspect</i>
IP	<i>inflectional phrase</i>
NEG1	<i>first negation particle</i>
NEG2	<i>final negation particle</i>
NegP	<i>negation phrase</i>
NP	<i>noun phrase</i>
PL	<i>plural</i>
Poss	<i>possessive</i>
PP	<i>prepositional Phrase</i>
PROG	<i>progressive</i>
QM	<i>question Morpheme</i>
Sg	<i>singular</i>
SM	<i>subject marker</i>
TAA	<i>tense, aspect and adverb</i>
TAM	<i>tense, aspect and mood</i>

TM *tense marker*

Notational conventions

- * Ungrammatical
- # Semantically/pragmatically unacceptable
- ? Marginally acceptable
- X^o Word Level Category (variable)
- X' Intermediate Level Category (variable)
- XP Phrasal Category (variable)
- ´ High tone
- ^ Falling tone
- ˘ Rising tone

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

This work has two main goals. On the one hand, it sets out to conscientiously describe the Awing nominal, verbal, and what has been termed truncation, systems. Given that Awing is an understudied language, it is necessary to begin by providing a comprehensive description of various aspects of the grammar. Chapters 2 and 3 therefore adopt a theory free approach in presenting the nominal and verbal systems, respectively. Chapter 4 introduces a phenomenon in Awing where verbs and nouns take two forms. Given the complexity of the phenomenon, the chapter avoids a typical descriptive approach. This is because we believe that describing a language or specific language phenomena with a theoretical mindset would result in a more in-depth description.¹ Nonetheless, the chapter is generally presented in an almost theoretical neutral style that can be easily accessible to any linguistic discipline. The second objective is theoretically motivated under the notion of Information Structure (IS). The focus is on the use of the *lǎ* (glossed: LE) morpheme in copular clauses, wh-questions and with focalized phrases. The main preoccupation is to identify the syntactic and semantic roles that the morpheme assumes in such constructions. By so doing, the syntax of copular clauses, wh-questions and focalization is presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7, respectively.

¹ The description in chapter 4 (and some sections in chapters 2 and 3) generally avert the (American) structuralism approach which, according to Joos (1957:96), assumes that: “languages could differ from each other without limits and in unpredictable ways [to the extent that each language should be studied] without any pre-existent scheme of what a language must be”. Rather, while emphasis is laid on every facet of a phenomenon being described, the discussion often mingles fundamental ideas of the Principles and Parameters framework (Chomsky 1981) which assumes that the syntax of natural languages has general principles but specific parameters can be identified.

1.1.1 Why aspect of Awing grammar?

One of the very first linguistic document that I laid my hands on was Heine and Nurse's (2000) introduction to African languages which describes the state of African languages in the following terms:

The quality and quantity of the documentation of African languages ranges from high to nil. We say fairly high because no African language has been documented or analyzed to the extent of the better research European or Asian languages. If we define fairly high as having a reasonable accurate and comprehensive reference grammar available, then less than a hundred African languages are in this category. For most, the documentation consists of an inadequate grammar, an analysis of part of the language, an article or two. For yet others all we have is a reliable word list or less than that. (Heine and Nurse 2000:5)

The implication of this excerpt has haunted me throughout these years, especially when I was asked in my second undergraduate year how modality and aspect are expressed in Awing and I could not identify words that I have been using for decades. I have put in considerable efforts in this work describing the Awing nominal and verbal systems and chapters that blend theory and data, substantial amount of time is allocated to describing the data first. Hopefully, no Awing speaker (or learner) would have to face the type of setback that I had in my undergraduate years. It is my desire that this work would not only serve as the beginning of grand exploit in Awing but also as a lantern that can illuminate other aspects in other African languages and beyond.

1.1.2 Why Information Structure (IS)?

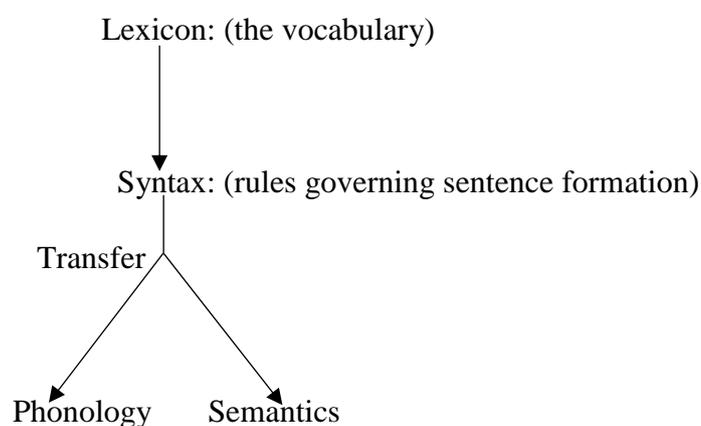
I was introduced to Information Structure (IS) in my first graduate year, couched in the cartographic view (Rizzi 1997; Cinque & Rizzi 2008). IS was almost a synonym to '*the fine structure of the left periphery*' (cf. Fominyam 2012). The basic idea was to identify the various IS categories, e.g., topicalized and focalized phrases and their order in the left periphery (à la Rizzi 1997), or within the lower IP domain (Belletti 2004). Exposure to other approaches, however, enabled me to realize that that was not actually a wrong direction but definitely a very narrow one. Among other things, this work aims to use a morpheme that

shows up with an IS notion, namely focalization and illustrate that the notion of focus cannot be subsumed to a syntactic position. The idea is to prompt students and researchers working on languages that have so-called ‘focus’ and ‘topic’ markers not to rely on such labels and draw conclusions like phrase X is in a focus position since it occurs with the ‘focus marker’. Instead, it would be profitable to scrutinize the meaning component of so-called ‘focus markers’ with IS notions and also in every other context that they might occur in. By so doing, we shall be able to better understand how language is designed and where IS fits in.

1.1.2.1 The human language

The generative framework is used to explain language phenomena in this work.² I specifically adhere to the Principles and Parameters (Chomsky & Lasnik 1993) and its ‘economy’ version reformulated in the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995 and subsequent works). The core assumption of these approaches is that there are intrinsic rules that speakers of natural languages innately comply to in order to form grammatical structures and the job of the linguist is to identify and explain such rules. For (most) generativists, the language’s architecture essentially consists of an inventory of ‘words’ stored in the lexicon. A simplified version of this architecture can be captured in (1) below.

(1) Language architecture: lexicon feeds syntax



It is generally assumed that the lexicon is a separate entity where words or distinct morphological features are stored. The big question that has however persisted is whether the lexicon is a fixed or a derivational mechanism. In its radical forms, this query questions the existence of the lexicon as represented in (1). Some generativists interested in the topic divert from the ‘primitive’ assumption that words are stored in an inventory that feeds syntax to

² The generative enterprise is a ‘program’ and not a theory (Chomsky 1995). The aim is therefore to elucidate the linguistic performance with as minimal requirements as possible. As such, the inquiry is flexible and multidirectional.

proposals attributing parallel derivational rules to the lexicon and syntax (see, e.g., Jackendoff 1997, 2002). Others attribute word formation to the morpho-syntactic domain, that is, words are derived in tandem with syntactic computations (see, Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994 and works related to Distributed Morphology). The complexity and creative nature of morphemes suggest that either the lexicon is constantly under some kind of syntheses or syntax has a crucial role in words formation that the architectural design in (1) ignores. We will not be dealing with such queries here. However, it is important to highlight that the representation in (1) merely captures these fundamental components of grammar and that the proper relationship between the components can be more complex. This work concentrates on the syntactic component and its capacity to create indefinite structures from limited words (or features).

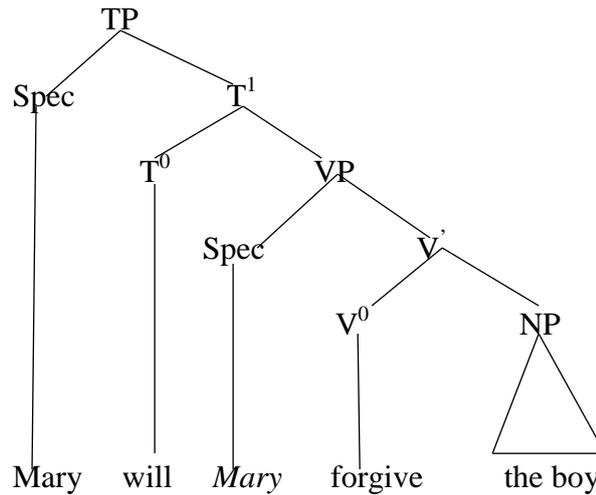
Syntax can be defined as the combination of words to form meaningful sentences. This module is said to manage categories like nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc., by enabling them to project (minimal) heads or (combine with others to form) maximal projections or phrases. At a more abstract level, syntactic derivations can be driven by the manipulation of, e.g., features like Case and number (for nouns), or even minimal atoms specific to such features, for instance, nominative (for Case feature) and singular (for number feature). These features share properties that permit them to form different kinds of relations with each other.

The relationship between items (be it meaningful words or minimal atoms) operate in a kind of compatibility relation that enables them to ‘Merge’ into larger units. Chomsky (2001) distinguishes two types of Merge: Internal Merge and External Merge. External Merge is hereditary to the lexicon in the sense that it deals with word roots directly. Internal Merge, on the other hand, ‘feeds’ on existing (externally merged) units. Consider the sentence in (2), for example. The verb ‘forgive’ in this sentence is said to be a transitive verb, meaning that it has two ‘arguments’ or noun phrases (NPs), namely the agent ‘Mary’ and the beneficiary ‘the boy’.

(2) Mary will forgive the boy.

External Merge applies in the sentence in (2), e.g., by selecting an appropriate NP (i.e., the boy) as the complement of the verb ‘forgive’. In a parallel fashion, the definite article ‘the’ selects a noun, in this case ‘boy’, to form the noun phrase (NP) ‘the boy’. The sentence in (2) is syntactically represented in (3) below.

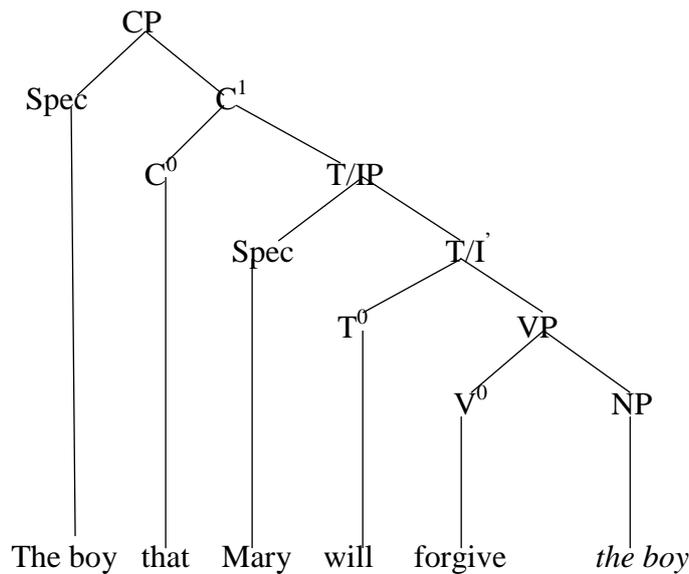
(3)



Observe in (3) that (the subject) ‘Mary’ occurs twice: in SpecTP and in an italicized form in SpecVP. This is meant to show that certain elements can be remerged from one syntactic position to another. The movement of ‘Mary’ from SpecVP to SpecTP is Internal Merged in the sense that it relocates an item from its first merged positions. Such a movement is to satisfy certain syntactic requirements, in this case the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) which requires an NP in the ‘subject position’ (Chomsky 1982).

Apart from displacing elements from one position to another, syntactic operations apply within various ‘domains’. For instance, the representation in (3) supposes that the subject and direct object originate (i.e., are externally merged) as the specifier and the complement of the verb, respectively. Following Larson (1988) and Koopman & Sportiche (1991), the verb, the subject and the direct object in (2) would constitute the VP domain (keeping aside the distinction between vP and VP). Hence, the subject and the direct object are technically referred to as the verb’s external and internal arguments, respectively. In addition to the verb and argument domain, two other important domains can be identified: the inflectional domain (IP or TP) and the complementizer domain (C-domain). The I/TP domain deals with categories like tense (and agreement morphology Chomsky 1981:52). Pollock (1989) identifies functional heads that the I/TP domain can accommodate. Above the T/IP domain is the C-domain, which, among other things, expresses illocutionary force and sentence types. The C-domain is notable, however, for having syntactic categories that are interpreted as belonging, or originate from the lower domains. As an illustration, consider the diagram in (4) below.

(4)



Following the discussion in (3), the NP ‘the boy’ would be externally merged as the internal argument (i.e., direct object) of the verb ‘forgive’. However, it shows up in the C-domain in (4) but still has to be interpreted as the theme of the verb ‘forgive’, which is simplistically shown by the italicized form within the relative clause (see, e.g., Kayne 1994; de Vries 2002). The type of ‘displacement’ instantiated with the NP ‘the boy’ in (4) falls under what is known as A-bar movement (or A’-movement). A’-movement is another form of Internal Merge which has to do with the dislocation of a phrase from either an externally merged position (e.g., ‘the boy’ in (4)) or a grammatical position (e.g., ‘Mary’ in SpecTP in (3)) to other syntactic positions that are not intrinsically related to grammatical functions.

One important aspect concerning movement is that it should generally be driven by the need to satisfy certain requirements. For example, the subject ‘Mary’ in (3) is said to move from SpecVP to SpecTP to satisfy the EPP requirement. Such a movement, termed Argument movement (A-movement), targets a position which satisfies certain grammatical functions like Case licensing. In the same vein, non-argument movement (i.e., A’-movement) (cf. movement of ‘the boy’ to the C-domain in (4)) can fulfil certain syntactic requirements. However, the nature of the C-domain and most importantly identifying factors that can cause an NP from within the lower domains to move to this domain has been controversial for decades. The notion of Information Structure further fuelled the argument relating to which kind of features operate in syntactic movements.

1.1.2.2 Where does IS fit in?

Information Structure (IS) refers to the structuring of sentences to meet the immediate communicative needs of the interlocutors. Chafe (1976:28) considers IS as having “to do primarily with how the message is sent and only secondarily with the message itself”. Clark & Haviland (1977:5) emphasize on the pragmatic nature of IS as the speaker’s attempt “to make the structure of his utterances congruent with his knowledge of the listener’s mental world”. To see what these actually mean, consider the examples in (5).

- (5) a. John a pe’ m-fe ηγῶσάηῶ mbo James
John SM P1 N-give maize to James
‘John gave maize to James’
- b. [lῶ ηγῶσάηῶ_i pa’a [TP John a pe’ m-fe t_i mbo James]]
? maize that John SM P1 N-give to James
‘It is maize that John gave to James’

Analogous to the italicized NP in the tree diagrams in (2), (3) and (4), the trace [t_i], co-indexed by the subscript *i* with the fronted NP ‘maize’ is used here to show the position where the NP in the C-domain is ‘semantically’ interpreted.

Both constructions in (5) naturally convey that ‘John’ (the subject or agent) gave ‘maize’ (the direct object or theme) to ‘James’ (the indirect object or recipient). This is the substance of the message expressed in both sentences. However, the manner in which the message is structured or presented differs: while the direct object occurs after the verb in (5a), it shows up before the subject, i.e., in the C-domain in (5b). In effect, the speaker in (5b) (re)-packages the information in accordance with his or her belief vis-à-vis to what the hearer is thought to know, or expected to be thinking about the actual message (Prince 1986:208). So, just as ‘window-dressing’ can greatly influence customer’s attention to a shop, so too can information structure be used to draw listener’s attention to specific phrases within a sentence. From this understanding, the term information structure is not an issue but information structure notions, even very primitive ones like ‘focus’ and ‘topic’ still constitute a challenge.

The main issue is whether information structure notions are rooted in syntax or not. There are two main opposing views: on the one side, syntax interacts with phonology and semantics, but not with information structure, see e.g., Fanselow (2006; 2008) and Fanselow & Lenertová (2011). Horvath (2010:1347) labels this approach as the Strong Modularity Hypothesis for Discourse Features and argues that “notions of information structure, rather than of formal

semantics, cannot be encoded as formal features in the C_{HL} and hence cannot constitute functional projections in the syntax”. Proponents of this view (although with slightly different formalities, see, e.g., Reinhart 1995; Costa 2004; among others) maintain that IS has no direct link to core syntactic configurations. On the other hand, researchers working under the Cartographic approach maintain that the attempt to disassociate IS notions from syntax is tantamount to ‘radically impoverishing’ the latter, see in particular Rizzi (2013).

Nonetheless, information structure is consensually viewed at this point as structuring of sentences via prosodic, morphological and syntactic means to meet certain contextual needs. From this understanding, it is common to find morphemes labelled as focus and topic markers in natural languages. Although (most) European languages lack such overt scope-discourse morphemes, they are very common in Austroasiatic and African languages. However, it appears that there is a sort of overgeneralization where any morphological element that shows up with an IS notion is considered, say, the seal of such a notion. The attribution of IS notions to specific morphemes is not merely for descriptive purposes but is argued to, parallel to formal syntactic features, assume special roles in syntactic derivations (Aboh 2010). Rizzi (2013:201) expresses the relation between such morphemes and syntax thus: “the structural view of the expression of scope-discourse semantics is immediately supported by the existence of languages in which the criterial heads are overtly expressed, with overt Q, Top, Foc markers.” Fominyam & Tran (2019), however, use examples like those in (6) and (7) in Awing and Vietnamese, respectively, to argue that it does not suffice to see a word that shows up with an IS notion to conclude that they are topic or focus markers.

- (6) a. [ɲgəsájɲ ló, [John a pe’ ɲ-kə m-fɛ t_i mbo James]]
 maize ? John SM P1 N-also N-give to James
 ‘The maize, did John also give it to James?’
- b. [ló ɲgəsájɲ pa’a [TP John a pe’ m-fɛ mbo James]]
 ? maize that John SM P1 N-give to James
 ‘It is maize that John gave to James’
- (7) a. [Nami_i thì [TP t_i thích bóng đá nhất]]
 Nam ? like football best
 ‘Nam likes football best.’
- b. [Nam_i thì [TP tôi giúp t_i]]
 Nam ? I help

‘It is Nam that I will help’

The phrases ‘maize’ and ‘Nam’ function as topics in (6a) and (7b), and as foci in (6b) and (7b). According to Rizzi’s (1997) split CP approach, the topicalized and focalized phrases in the C-domain would be hosted in TopP(hrases) and FocP(hrases), respectively. Following Aboh (2010), the *lá* and the *thi* morphemes in, e.g., (6b) and (7b), are endowed with focus features that trigger the foci to the C-domain. The immediate question with such an approach is whether the same morphemes occurring with the topics in (6a) and (7a) also have topic features performing parallel roles? With respect to focalization, it is shown in chapters 6 and 7 that if focus is considered as “indicating the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of a linguistic expression” Krifka (2007:6), there will be no need for such an ad-hoc assumption, given that in Awing a focused phrase can be realized without any prosodic, morphological or syntactic mechanism involved.

The fundamental setback of the cartographic approach therefore seems to be the association of specific syntactic positions to information structure notions, which is further entangled by simplistically considering morphemes that occur or associate with such notions as focus and topic markers. By so doing, the semantics of such morphemes are considerably neglected. Worse still, there seems to be a deliberate attempt to ignore other functions that such words can assume in most of the languages where they are described as focus markers. Amongst other things, this work concentrates on the use of the *lá* morpheme with wh-phrases and focalized constructions and show that by simply labelling a morpheme that occurs with a focalized phrase as a ‘focus markers’, without a proper definition of what focus is, and outlining the various concepts viz. contrast, exclusion, correction, exhaustivity that apply to the notion, a lot of interesting phenomena are undermined.

1.2 Organisation of the work

Chapter 2 focuses on the Awing nominal system. The chapter adopts a strict descriptive approach and presents the various elements that occur as modifiers within the noun phrase. Beginning with a brief note on noun classification, the chapter immediately takes on derivational morphology from deverbals and concludes with other derivational processes like compounding and reduplication. A thorough description is given to the pronominal system equally. It is shown that possessives fall into two groups: possessive pronouns (i.e., those that can substitute a noun phrase) and possessive determiners (i.e., those that are used with nouns as modifiers). Demonstratives are also described and it is shown that Awing has three

demonstrative categories. The chapter ends by combining the various noun modifiers (i.e., adjectives, possessives, demonstratives, numerals etc). By so doing, the various possible word orders in the Awing DP system is captured.

Chapter 3 follows the approach in chapter two and focuses on the verb. The chapter presents the basic sentence order in Awing and then concentrates on the verb's structure with a detailed description of the various elements that can be qualified as verbal modifiers. These include: aspect, tense, mood, negation, adverbs, verbal extensions. Also, analogous to most Grassfields languages (see, e.g., Ghomala': Moguo 2011; Bafut: Tamanji 2014), Awing has a homorganic N(asal)-prefix that sometimes show up with verbs and other verbal elements like aspects and negation. To the best of my knowledge, apart from Tamanji (2014), the use of this N-prefix has not received any substantial description in any of the languages that sporadically (i.e., few written or oral sentences) attest their usage. Chapter three therefore spends a considerable amount of time to outline the various contexts that trigger the N-prefix. It is concluded that although Awing exhibits striking similarities with Bafut (e.g., all future tenses in both languages do not trigger the N-prefix on the following N-prefix bearer while (some) past tenses obligatorily trigger the N-prefix), Tamanji's conclusion that only verbs or auxiliaries that still preserve verbal traits trigger the N-prefix cannot be extended to the Awing data.

Chapter 4 introduces a phenomenon in Awing where the final syllables or vowels of nouns and verbs are deleted in certain contexts. Since the phenomenon seems quite novel in Grassfields, I engage the discussion with a brief overview on other (non-related) languages that similar patterns could be identified. Concentrating on the Awing nominal system, I conclude (although with some exceptional cases) that nominal truncation depicts movement of the head noun within the DP layer. Accounting for verbal truncation, three main factors that cause the verb to take a truncated form are identified: a 'conspiracy' between the verb and plural objects; truncation of the verb and the direct object as a means to form questions and a general means to align exhaustive focus (in terms of Féry 2013). While discussing how truncation is used to align focus in Awing, the (dis)similarities between the Awing data and the notion of disjoint conjoint forms in some Southern and Eastern Bantu languages (e.g., Zulu: Buell 2005, 2009; Makhuwa: van der Wal 2011) is highlighted. One of the main conclusions in the chapter is that truncation in Awing generally mirrors how language's sub-systems, viz. syntax, semantics and phonology are interconnected.

Chapter 5 presents the multifunctional *lǎ* (henceforth: LE) morpheme in Awing and begins by showing the various contexts that the morpheme can be used in. The focus of the chapter is on copular clauses. It is shown that although LE can serve as a linker in such clauses, it is not the actual copular verb in this language and that the *pə* morpheme is. Adopting den Dikken's (2006) terminology, LE's role in copular clauses is summarized as that of a 'Relator'—mediating subject-focus versus topic-focus interpretations. It is further shown that such a 'Relator' role goes beyond copular clauses. One specific difference between chapter 5 and the following chapters has to do with the semantics of the LE morpheme. It is argued in chapter 5 that LE does not express exhaustivity in copula clauses in the same way as in non-copular clauses. Rather the focus effect that is attributed to the predicate of the copular clause relates to Grice's (1975) maxim of quantity, which is resumed to Zimmermann's (2007) notion of 'maximal list(ing)'. The conclusion is that the 'focus' interpretation in copular clauses is a 'natural' phenomenon since the complement of such clauses 'naturally' conveys new information.

Chapter 6 focuses on wh-questions and starts in a descriptive style by presenting general properties of subject and non-subject wh-questions. Parallel to most Bantu languages (see, e.g., Zentz 2016 for an overview), wh-subject and postverbal categories can occur either in-situ or in sentence-initial position in Awing. A peculiarity in Awing is that when the wh-subject is in-situ, the subject marker SM (or subject pronoun) cannot show up. Conversely, an ex-situ wh-subject necessitates the use of the SM in the embedded subject position. Using non-referential quantifiers like 'someone', 'nobody' and 'something', among other things, it is argued, in line with Fominyam & Georgi (2021), that the subject pronoun is disallowed with a wh-subject in Awing because bare wh-phrases are non-referential and that the subject pronoun generally does not show up with non-referential categories. On the other hand, the obligatory use of the SM in the embedded subject position when the wh-phrase is in sentence-initial position is said to satisfy the EPP subject requirement (à la McFadden & Sundaresan 2018). It is also shown that wh-phrases can optionally take the LE morpheme. Basing on Hamblin (1973) and Rooth's (1985) underspecified semantic notion of alternative focus, it is argued that LE's role in wh-questions is not to encode focus. Instead, LE is considered a focus-sensitive operator with semantic import that operates on the focus alternatives by presupposing an exhaustive answer, among other things.

Chapter 7 takes on focus realization and interpretation. After presenting how focalization is achieved in Awing, the chapter notes the difference between Awing and focus marking

languages like, e.g., Gungbe: Aboh (2004); Tuki: Biloa (2013). Morphological focus marking in Awing is considered as the association of a focus particle with the focused category for semantic reasons. It is argued that there is no F(ocus) head in Awing clausal projection and that answerhood focus is not marked by means of any prosodic, morphological or morph-syntactic mechanism. To substantiate the claim in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) that the LE morpheme is a morphological exponent of a functional head Exh corresponding to Horvath's (2010) EI (Exhaustive Identification), the chapter demonstrates via a number of diagnostics that exhaustivity is part of the semantics of the LE morpheme and not derived via contextual implicature. Regarding verb focus, the chapter modifies the idea in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) that considers verb doubling as a realization of two copies of one and the same verb. After probing into the syntax of negation, it is concluded that the focalized copy is merged directly as the complement of LE and that the *LE+Verb* cluster is a type of adjoining clause.

Chapter 8 concludes the work by providing the main findings of the previous chapters and possible future research areas. The chapter also presents an outlook of focus marking/association in two Grassfields languages.

1.3 State of research

Awing cannot really boast of much scientific works. Aziese (1993) was a tentative description of the Awing sound system, which was later revised by van den Berg (2009). Alomofor, Anderson and Hedinger (2007) came out with the Awing orthography guide and other small booklets (through SIL and CAPTAL) that are meant to educate the community to read and write their language. Another very useful piece is Alomofor's (2007) compilation of Awing words in what he termed *Awing English dictionary and English Awing index*. Atechi (2006, 2017) explore loan word formation in Awing and Alomofor (2012) takes other nominalisation processes. These works have been very instrumental to this endeavour, specifically in shaping the description on the nominal system in chapter 2. Nyomy (2012) also presented some aspects of Awing grammar and Fominyam (2012) worked on the left periphery of Awing. Fominyam (2015); Mucha & Fominyam (2017), Fominyam & Šimík (2017), Fominyam (2018); Fominyam & Thuan (2019); Fominyam and Georgi (2021) and Fominyam, Fanselow and Wierzba (in prep), offer a series of papers tackling the tense system, focalization, subject marking, island conditions, among other phenomena, in Awing.

1.4 The data

As an Awing native speaker, I provided most of the data used in this dissertation. However, I constantly consulted other native speakers whenever I had doubts about a particular construction or phenomenon. Moreover, field recordings were conducted in order to get spontaneous data from speakers in the Awing village (in 2017), for example the narration of the Awing migration history presented in chapter 5. Also, a web based questionnaire was used using L Rex (Wierzba & Starschenko 2020) at some point and participants (selected from Awing gatherings in Yaoundé, Cameroon and the USA) were presented an acceptability rating study with auditory stimuli. It is also important to note that some of the data was gotten from some educational literature on Awing via SIL and CABTAL Cameroon and also from previous works, which are acknowledged accordingly.

1.5 The language and the people

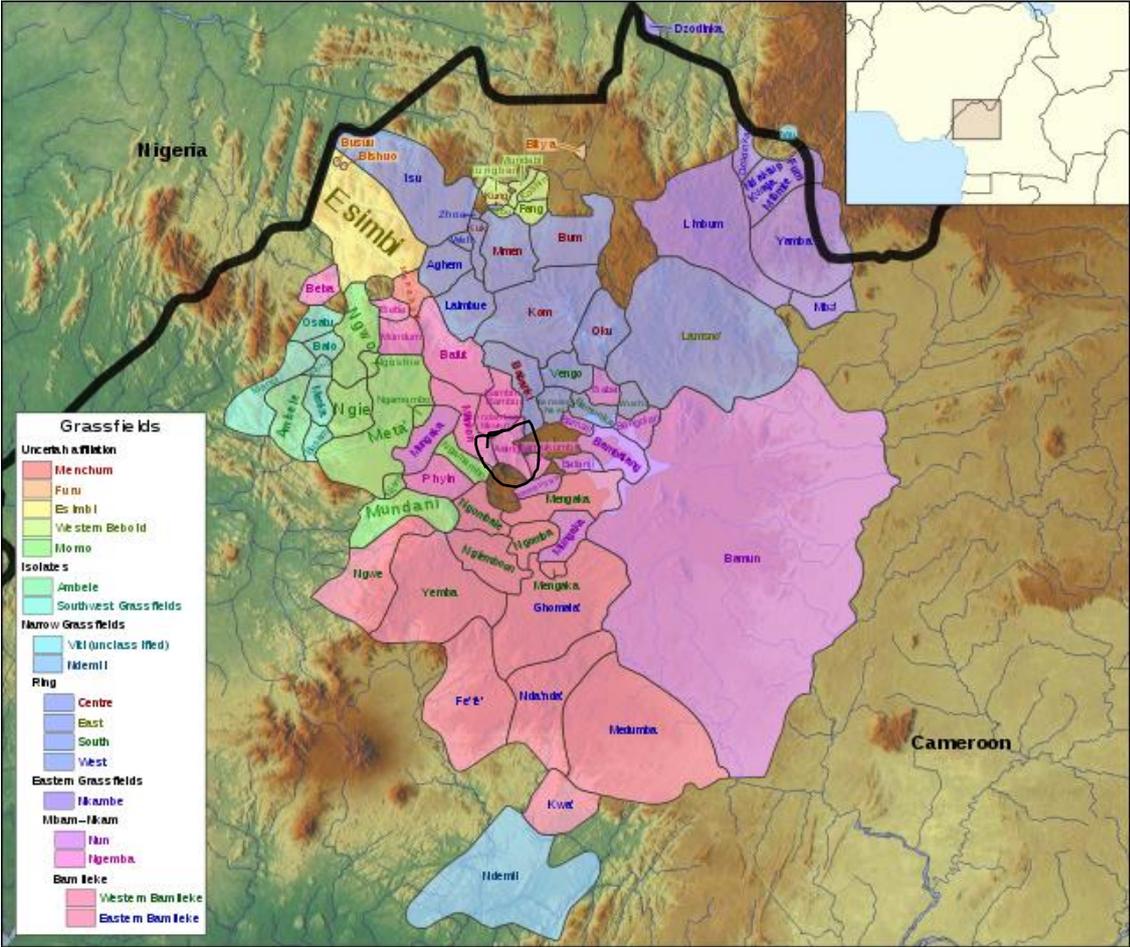
Awing refers to both the people and their language. Other designations are Mbwe'wi or Bambuluwing. The word '*wing*' comes from *nəwɪŋə* 'laughter' and history has it that when the founders of the village reached the location where they are now settled they started laughing. Their companions continued their quest for another location and later referred to the village as 'laughter' (a short excerpt of the migration history can be found in the introduction in chapter 5).

The population is estimated at offer 45.000 (Atechi 2017). Awing does not have any dialect but English, French, Pidgin English and Fulani are spoken in the village. The village shares border with the French speaking zone of Cameroon and some of Awing speakers living around this border have a slightly different way of communicating from the mainstream Awing people. This cluster of speakers are said to have been refugees from the Bamileke communities in the Western Region of French Cameroon who fled during the 1960s war of independence. They have a different language but also speak Awing fluently. However, they can be easily identified due to some phonological differences like replacing the schwa [ə] in word final positions with [a].

Geographically, Awing is located in the Mezam division, North West Region of Cameroon. The people live in a valley almost surrounded by hills and mountains belonging to the volcanic chain of the Bamboutos highlands of Cameroon. Only the Southern part makes an exception. The highest peak is mount Lefo which is 2525m above sea level. Awing is in

Southwest of Bamenda (the capital of the North West Region) in an area that covers 480/km² with a population density of 68 people per km². Its neighbors are: Bamunkumbit, Balikumbat, Bamenyam, Baligham, Njong, Akum, Bamendankwe, Bambili and BabankiTungo. All these villages are found in the North West Region, except Bamenyam which is located in the West Region of Cameroon.

Geographical location of Awing encircled in black (courtesy of Wiki 2 org.)

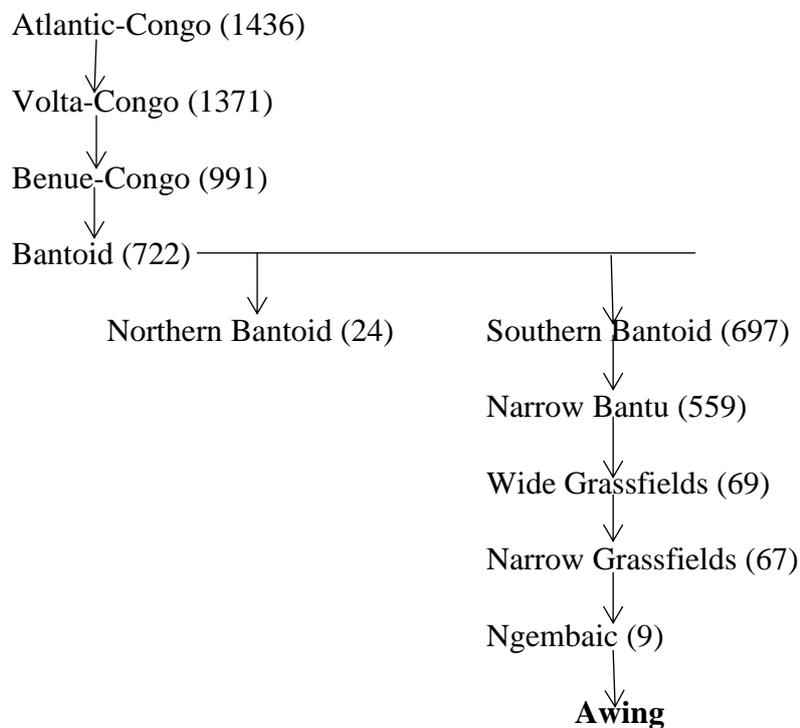


1.6 Linguistic classification

Basing on Greenberg (1963), Heine & Nurse (2000) situate African languages into four main phyla: Niger-Congo, Afro-Asiatic, Nilo-Saharan, and Khoisan. The Niger-Congo is the largest having around 1500, of the 2000 and more languages spoken in the continent (Grimes 1996). The Administrative Atlas of Cameroon National Languages (Breton & Fohtung 1991:132) classifies Awing within the Gamba group. The group, which has 9 languages, can be traced from the Niger-Congo phylum down to Bantoid under Narrow Grassfields. Classification of the Bantoid group seems to be heterogeneous, though. For instance, Blench (2012:2) considers Bantoid as “definitely not a group” and further describes it as “Bantu

borderland”. The Bantoid languages are, however, divided into Northern and Southern branches and the Northern branch counts about 24 languages spoken in eastern Nigeria and central Cameroon. Southern Bantoid comprises of about 697 languages, which are divided into subgroups and Bantu is said to be the largest, estimated to have 550 or more languages. Bantu speakers stretch from southeast of Cameroon, throughout Central Africa to Southeast Africa and Southern Africa. Bantu Grassfields languages are spoken in the Western High Plateau of Cameroon by those commonly referred to as the Bamilekes, French speaking in the West region, and the Anglophones in the North West region. Below is a truncated linguistic classification of Awing extracted from Glottolog.

Linguistic classification of Awing (assembled from Glottolog)



1.7 Phonology

Alomofor et al. (2007) identify 22 consonants and 9 vowels in Awing, which are presented in the following charts.

Vowels chart:

	front	central	Back
High	/i/	/ɨ/	/u/
Mid	/e/	/ə/	/o/
Mid low	/ɛ/		/ɔ/
Low		/a/	

Consonants chart:

	labials	alveolars	Palatal	velar	glottal
Plosives	/p/ /b/	/t/ /d/	/ch/	/g/	/ʔ/
Nasals	/m/	/n/	/ny/	/ŋ/	
fricatives	/f/	/s/ / z/ /s/ / z/	/j/	/gh/	
Laterals		/l/ / r/			
Glides	/w/		/y/		

Phonetically, Awing has five tones. But following Alomofor et al. (2007), this work does not mark low tone and the mid tone is represented as high.

Tone chart:

	Phonetic (IPA)	Grapheme (Diacritic)
High	[á]	á
Mid	[ā]	á
Low	[à]	a
Rising	[ǎ]	ǎ
Falling	[â]	â

Tones can distinguish lexical and grammatical functions. The grammatical function of tones is highlighted while discussing tense and aspectual marking in chapter 3 § 3.4 and § 3.5. Below are lexical pairs illustrating lexical functions of tones in Awing, the data below is extracted from Alomofor et al. (2007).

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|-----|------------------|-----|-----------------|
| (1) | kóŋá ‘ditch’ | (2) | akoolá ‘latrine’ | (4) | ko ‘take’ |
| | kóŋə ‘flow’ | | akoolə ‘leg’ | | kǒ ‘snore’ |
| | koŋə ‘owl’ | (3) | aləmá ‘pool’ | (5) | əfəgá ‘A blind’ |
| | koŋá ‘yell at (something)’ | | aləmə ‘cloud’ | | əfégə ‘fever’ |

The short description on the sound system brings us to the end of this chapters. Chapter 2 will focus on the Awing nominal system and the verb and its various categories viz. tense, aspect, negation, etc., would be dealt with in detail in chapter 3.

Chapter 2

The nominal system

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims towards a comprehensive description of the Awing noun and the various elements that occur as modifiers within the noun phrase. The notion of noun class classification will be briefly outlined in these introductory notes. Section 2.2 takes on derivational morphology beginning with deverbals and concludes with other derivational processes like compounding and reduplication. Section 2.4 tackles the Awing pronominal system. One of the most distinctive feature here is the observation that NPs and proper names can be coordinated with morphemes that I qualify as ‘accompaniment linkers’ but pronouns are generally incompatible with such morphemes. However, the language has an ‘alternative linker’ that can be used to coordinate pronouns on the proviso that the coordinated constituent functions as a topic and occurs before the grammatical subject or in sentence-final position as an afterthought (topic). Pronouns that are conjoined with the ‘alternative linker’ might however be objectivized but this is also conditioned: the clause must contain a focus operator which apparently transforms it into an exclusive alternative question. The section also presents possessives which fall into two groups: possessive pronouns, which, given the appropriate context, substitute a noun phrase, and possessive determiners which are used with nouns as modifiers. Possessive determiners are basically distinguished from possessive pronouns in that the latter category occurs with noun class prefixes. The section ends with demonstratives. Demonstratives are divided into three groups depending on the physical location of the addresser and/or addressee to the object which is being referred to. Section 2.5 combines the various noun modifiers (i.e., adjectives, possessives, demonstratives, numerals etc). The section begins by indicating the order of single modifiers with the noun and then

concludes with a broader view by combining different modifiers within the nominal phrase in order to capture the various possible noun phrase orders in Awing.

Before engaging into the description of the Awing nominal system, it is relevant to briefly introduce the reader to what is often termed as noun classification in Bantu literature. That is, the phenomenon whereby nouns are grouped into various classes depending on the (morphological) forms of the noun's prefix and other criteria like agreement with numerals, adjectives, demonstratives etc. within the noun phrase (see, e.g., Richardson 1967; Hyman and Voorhoeve 1980; Maw 1994). The data in (1) through (3) can be used to illustrate the 8 noun class prefixes that have been identified in Awing. These examples are courtesy of Alomofor (unpublished manuscript) with slight modifications on my part. The data in (1) simply presents the nouns in isolation with the various class prefixes.

(1) Classifying nouns

A. Noun class prefixes and roots	B. Glosses	C. Class numbers
ə-fəgǎ	blind Person	1
pə-fəgǎ	blind people	2
∅-ənoonə	crowd	3
m-ənoonə	crowds	6
∅-ŋkĩə	water	3
mə-ŋkĩə	waters/rivers	6
nə-lélə	soldier ant	5
mə-lélə	soldier ants	6
a-po'ə	slave	7
ə-po'ə	slaves	8
∅-ndelǎ	time	9
mə-ndelǎ	times	6
∅-əshûə	fish	9
m-əshûə	fishes	6
m-bóomə	builder	1
pə-póomə	builders	2

a-pô	hand	7
m-bô	hands	6
∅-máwúnó	hawk	1
pé- máwúnó	hawks	2
m-óonə	child	1
p-óonə	children	2
∅-mbê	tapping knife	9
mé-mbê	tapping knives	6
nə-pe	liver	5
m-be	livers	6

As can be seen in the above examples, the nouns (in column A) have different prefixes which are classified in various classes (column C.). I am not aware of any specific criteria in Awing that can be, or is used to ascribe the various numerals to the nouns.³ But class 6 seems to contain plurals that are non-atomic or abstract entities and class 3 nouns also seem to be mass nouns. The class 7 nouns seem to be for atomic things (or possessable, e.g., slave) and class 5 is apparently for atomic things that do not normally occur in isolation. However, the data in (1) is too limited to draw such general conclusions since it is meant to simply exhibit the notion of noun classification. Apart from mass-count distinction, it can be argued that features like animate versus inanimate have a significant role in the various pairing of this nouns into what is known as ‘genders’.⁴ Also note that not all nouns have overt prefixes—e.g., *∅-ŋkǎ* ‘water’ or ‘fish’ *∅-əshûə*.

³ The issue as to whether class attribution is arbitrary or semantically motivated has haunted linguists working on this domain for decades. The following excerpt from Richardson (1967) summarizes this problem.

‘It is impossible to prove conclusively by any reputable methodology that nominal classification in Proto-Bantu was indeed widely based on conceptual implication. In the absence of such proof one might equally well assume that the assignment of nominals to classes was for the most part an arbitrary grammatical device. Modern evidence which has been interpreted as the survival of an old system of semantic taxonomy in nominal classification which occurred during the evolutionary process, might justifiably be ascribed to a more recent analogical classification which occurred during the evolutionary process. Instances of such behaviour are observable in modern developments. Nominals already appearing in class may be re-assigned to other classes for a variety of reasons. Furthermore, new borrowings of the same general conceptual category are often taken into a language in different classes.’ (Richardson 1967:378-9)

⁴ The term ‘gender’ should not be mistaken for masculine or feminine: It is used differently in Bantu literature, specifically with noun classification, to refer to a group of nouns exhibiting the same (singular plural) agreement patterns.

(2) Grouping the various classes

Class 1: **ə-fəgə** ‘blind person’; **m-bóomə** ‘builder’ **ø-máwúnə** ‘hawk’ **m-óonə** ‘child’

Class 2: **pə-fəgə** ‘blind people’; **pə-póomə** ‘builders’ **pə-máwúnə** ‘hawks’ **p-óonə** ‘children’

Class 9: **ø-ndelə** ‘time’ **ø-əshûə** ‘fish’ **ø-mbê** ‘tapping knife’ :

Class 6: **mə-ndelə** ‘time’ **mə-əshûə** ‘fishes’ **mə-mbê** ‘tapping knives’

Class 3: **ø-ənoonə** ‘crowd’ **ø-ŋkĩə** ‘water’

Class 6: **mə-ənoonə** ‘crowds’ **mə-ŋkĩə** ‘waters’

Class 5: **nə-lélə** ‘soldier ant’ **nə-pe** ‘liver’

Class 6: **mə-lélə** ‘soldier ants’ **m-be** ‘livers’

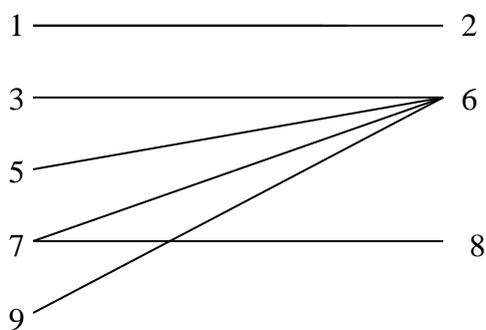
Class 7: **a-pô** ‘hand’

Class 6: **m-bô** ‘hands’

Class 7: **a-po’ə** ‘slave’ **a-peemə** ‘bag’ **a-tsə’ə** ‘dress’

Class 8: **ə-po’ə** ‘slaves’ **ə-peemə** ‘bags’ **ə-tsə’ə** ‘dresses’

(3) Singular plural pairing (genders)



In Awing, as it is the case in most Bantu languages (see, e.g., Carstens 1993, 2005), noun classification is not limited to just numbering the nouns and forming singular plural pairs/genders but the classification often triggers concord within the nominal system, as mentioned before, and also within the verbal system, where a verbal prefix agrees in number and animacy (among other things) with the ‘subject’ NP. Agreement within the verbal layer, specifically subject agreement or the subject marker SM will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. Example (4) below illustrates how agreement is manifested within the noun phrase.

- (4) a. \emptyset -tekó’ə \emptyset -fúfú \emptyset -ndê \emptyset -nê
 1-big 1-white 1-house 1-this
 ‘This big white house’
- b. pə-tekó’ə pə-fúfú mə-ndê mə- nê
 2-big 2-white 6-house 6-this
 ‘These big white houses’

We will eventually get to more of such examples while discussing the structure of the noun phrase in section 4 of this chapter. Having briefly introduced the notion of noun classification, it should be borne in mind that the Awing various noun classes will not be marked in the examples provided throughout this work. The main reason being that the Awing noun class system has not been fully developed and the issues dealt with in this work can be apprehended without a proper engagement to the noun class system. Nonetheless, in some examples in this chapter and the following chapter on verb morphology, specifically on the discussion on agreement, nouns will be identified with their various class prefixes since it is deemed necessary for a better presentation and understanding of the issues.

2.2 Derivational morphology

This section presents the various derivational processes employed in Awing to create new words.

2.2.1 *Deverbals*

The term deverbals is used to describe nouns that are derived from verbs. This subsection will illustrate how this morphological process works in Awing. Deverbals turn out to be one of, if not the most productive way to form nouns in Awing, as in most Grassfields languages (see, e.g., Bafut: Tamanji 2009). Below I present some examples on how this is achieved.

2.2.1.1 *The a- prefix*

The *a-* prefix seems to be the most common prefix used to derive nouns in Awing. In most cases the derived nouns occur with low tones. Such nouns can be a result of the action performed by the verb (e.g., dance), an instrument used to perform the action (e.g., comb) or an abstract idea expressed by the verb (e.g., forgiveness). In the examples provided in (4), and the rest of the examples, the verbs are presented in the imperative forms given that these forms are the least inflected. It is important to mention that *a-* is the class 7 noun prefix. Hence, plurals of most of the nouns formed via this process, particularly instrumental nouns,

will take the class 8 plural marker; for example, *a-shaabə* (singular) ‘comb’ will become *ə-shaabə* (plural) ‘combs’.

(5) a. /a-/ prefixation

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
a-	pénə	dance	a-pənə	dance
a-	kəŋə	love	a-kəŋə	love
a-	lěe	lust	a-lee	being lustful
a-	ləgnə	forgive	a-lagnə	forgiveness
a-	kwěe	answer	a-kwee	an answer
a-	wŭə	fall/fail	a-wuə	a fine
a-	shaabə	comb	ashaabə	a comb
a-	cháakə	accompany	a-chaakə	accompany a bride

b. Tsefor a wŭə ŋ-kwárə awuə

Tsefor SM fail N-take fine

‘Tsefor failed and got a fine’

c. achaakə Mefor laŋ shí’nə

accompany Mefor pass well

‘Mefor’s bride escort was a success’ (i.e., accompanying her to the husband’s home).

2.2.1.2 *The nə- prefix*

The /nə-/ prefix does not only transform a verb into a noun but also expresses the manner in which the action is conceptualized. The data in (6a) presents some examples in isolation and (6b) through (6d) exemplify the use of these nouns in sentences.

(6) a. /nə-/ prefixation

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived nouns</i>	<i>meanings</i>
nə-	kájə	fry	nə-kájə	manner of frying
nə-	ghə’ə	crush	nə-ghə’ə	manner of grinding
nə-	félə	exit	nə-félə	manner of outing
nə-	soŋə	say	nə-sóŋə	manner of saying

nə-	sɔ'ə	clear	nə-sɔ'ə	manner of clearing
nə-	kyéŋə	cry	nə-kyeŋə	manner of crying
nə-	táŋnə	suffer	nə-táŋnə	manner of suffering
nə-	jîə	eat	nə-jîə	manner of eating
nə-	náanə	sit	nə-náanə	manner of sitting

- b. maŋ táŋnə nətáŋnə yí shi'nə
 I suffer suffering LINK good
 'I am struggling a good struggle' (My suffering is worth it).
- c. Tsefor a kyánə nəkyéŋ fɿg-mbəəmə
 Tsefor SM cry cry lie-body
 'Tsefor is crying pretentiously'
- d. nəfelə ghó a kě mbo maŋ kɔ'nə pô
 outing your SM NEG to I correct NEG
 'Your outings are not proper to me' (suggests going to indecent places like nightclubs)

2.2.1.3 The nə...-nə circumfix

The circumfix /nə...nə/ often transforms dynamic verbs into nominals denoting locations or time. Some examples can be seen below. In example (7c), the idea is not that the subject (Ayafor) is sitting on the Fon's seat but rather taking the Fon's position or authority.

(7) a. nə...nə circumfixation

<i>circumfix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
nə...-nə	chwaakɿ	start	nə-chwaakɿ-nə	the beginning
nə...-nə	náanə	sit	nə-náanə-nə	sitting place
nə...-nə	shugə	remove	nə-shug-nə	resting place
nə...-nə	kwɛd	throw	nə-kwɛd-nə	garbage site
nə...-nə	tó'ə	carry	nə-tó'-nə	water site

- b. nətó'nə nə yó júmə əghâ-alumə
 water site this F2 dry time-dry
 'This water site will dry during the dry season'

- c. Ayafor a náanə nənáanə əfo ntɔ'ə
 Ayafor SM sit position Fon palace
 'Ayafor is taking the Fon's position'

2.2.1.4 The N-prefix

The N-prefix occurs before the verb and is homorganic with the verb's initial consonant. While the verb's stem maintains its tonal pattern in some cases, it is often modified in the majority of instances when this process applies.

(8) a. N- prefixation

<i>N-prefix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
N-	lónə	beg	n-dónə	beggar
N-	tégə	advise	n-təgə	advice
N-	fúnə	read	n-fúnə	reader
N-	zəəlê	steal	n-dzə'le	thief
N-	póomə	build	m-bóomə	builder
N-	pǎ	plant	m-biə	seed
N-	ŋwa'lê	write	ŋ-ŋwa'lə	'secretary'

- b. ndónə a lónə tsɔ'ə məjîə
 beggar SM beg only food
 'A beggar begs only food'

- c. Atechi a zəəlê ndzə'le
 Atechi SM steal thief
 'Atechi stole from a thief'

2.2.1.5 The tǎ-...-nǎ circumfix

The /tǎ-...-nǎ/ circumfix is distinctive from all the other deverbal processes discussed so far. Alomofor (2012:32) provides some examples and notes that nouns formed with this circumfix are unique in that they can only be used in narratives, i.e., story telling. Moreover, they cannot be 'discourse-initial', that is, used out of the blue, explaining the unacceptability of example (9d). In addition to these distinctions, forming this category of nouns incorporates another morphological process, namely reduplication of the verbal stem. Consider the examples below.

(9) a. *tá...ná* circumfixation

<i>circumfix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
tá-...-ná	fê	give	tá-fêfê-ná	giver/the one who gives
tá-...-ná	nô	drink	tá-nôno-ná	drinker/the one who drinks
tá-...-ná	jîə	eat	tá-jîji-nə	eater/the one who eats
tá-...-ná	kwûə	die	tá-kwûkwu-nə	the dead person
tá-...-ná	kwelô	pour	tá-kwědkwed-nə	the one who pours
tá-...-ná	kwáalə	take	tá-kwâkwa-ná	the one who takes
tá-...-ná	waalô	slaughter	tá-wădwad-nə	the one who slaughters
tá-...-ná	kwěe	answer	tá-kwěkwe-nə	the one who answers
tá-...-ná	zəəlô	steal	tá-zăzə-ná	the thief
tá...ná	sôŋə	say	tá-sôŋsoŋ-nə	the one who talks

Another interesting aspect with this manner of forming nouns is that the prefix can be dropped. When this happens, some examples exhibit high tone spreading—i.e., the reduplicated verb stem copies the tonal pattern of the preceding syllable (e.g., giver/drunken/eater). As far as I can tell, there is no semantic difference between the derived nouns in (9a) and (9b): the use or not of one of these variants is a matter of choice. As earlier noted, these forms are only used in narratives—exemplified in (9c).

b. *-ná* suffixation with tonal modification

<i>suffix</i>	<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
-ná	fê	give	fêfê-ná	giver/the one who gives
-ná	nô	drink	nónó-ná	drunk/the one who drinks
-ná	jîə	eat	jîji-ná	eater/the one who eats
-ná	kwûə	die	kwûkwú-ná	the dead person
-ná	kwáalə	take	kwâkwá-ná	the one who takes
-ná	kwelô	pour	kwědkwed-ná	the one who pours
-ná	waalô	slaughter	wădwad-nə	the one who slaughters
-ná	kwěe	answer	kwěkwe-nə	the one who answers

- c. ...tánônonó yíwə a tí' m-fi'tê alá'ə tsəmə ŋgə wădwadnə lə Tsefor
 ...drunk DEF SM then N-tell village all that murderer is Tsefor
 '...Then the drunk told the whole village that the murderer is Tsefor'
- d. *tə-kwúkwu-nə yíwə a nə mbə lə ngəənə mə
 dead-person DEF SM P2 be LE friend my
 Int: 'The deceased was my friend.'

2.2.1.6 Nouns form with the a-, ə- and N- prefixes

The set of nouns described here are considered to be derived from other nouns. Examples of such nouns can be seen in (10a), extracted from Alomofor (2012). It is not clear whether the abstract nouns beginning with the vowels are derived from those beginning with the nasals, or vice versa. According to Alomofor, the nouns beginning with the nasals are the source nouns because 'abstract nouns are mostly formed from concrete nouns' Alomofor (2012:21). However, given that these nouns have verbal counterparts, as I show in (10b), the only exception being the word for relative/relation, one can argue that the source words are the verbs. Hence, this category of nouns will still fall under the group of deverbals. From this understanding, the nominal variants (abstract versus concrete) will simply depend on the noun class prefix chosen to derive the specific category: abstracts nouns taking either the class 1 or class 7 prefix and concrete nouns with the N-prefix. The data in (10a) show a one way derivation (according to Alomofor 2012) while that in (10b) suggest that both nominal forms are derived from verbs (what I consider a two way derivation).

(10) a. One way derivation: nouns supposedly derived from other nouns

<i>Concrete nouns</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>abstract nouns</i>	<i>meaning</i>
ndɔŋə	lazy person	alɔŋə	laziness
ngəənə	friend	əghəənə	friendship
ngoonə	sick person	aghoonə	illness
ndimə	relative	əlimə	relation(ship)
mbóŋə	poor person	apóŋə	poverty
mbóŋə	somebody who fears	apóŋə	fear

b. Two way derivation: both nominal forms derived from verbs

<i>Verb</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>abstract nouns</i>	<i>meaning</i>
ghoonǎ	sick	aghoonǎ	illness
póŋǎ	lack	apóŋǎ	poverty
lónǎ	lazy	alónǎ	laziness
póŋǎ	fear	apóŋǎ	fear
ghǎǎǎ	visit	ǎghǎǎǎ	friendship
-----	-----	ǎlimǎ	relation(ship)

<i>concrete nouns</i>	<i>meanings</i>
ngoonǎ	sick person
mbónǎ	poor person
ndonǎ	lazy person
mbónǎ	fearful person
ngǎǎǎ	friend
ndimǎ	relative

c. aghoonǎ pá'a ǎ ghelǎ ŋgoonǎ ghoonǎ ghâ-tǎǎǎ kě pŋ pǎ
 sickness that SM make sick-person sick time-all NEG good NEG
 'Sickness that makes the patient always sick is dangerous'

d. mbónǎ a pŋ ǎtsǎ'ǎ ítê apóŋǎ á tónǎ nǎ
 poor SM lack dresses because poverty in town this
 'The poor lack dresses due to poverty in this town'

2.2.1.7 *Deverbal via tonal modification*

Let us conclude the discussion on deverbals with those that are derived by simply modifying tones on the verb. This suprasegmental process used to derive nouns is, however, very rare in the language. Two examples can be seen below.

(11) a. *tone change*

<i>verbs</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>nouns</i>	<i>meanings</i>
kóŋə	carry away	kóŋé	a ditch
tóŋə	dig	tóŋé	a digging tool

- b. móonə a kóŋə á kóŋé
child SM carry-away in ditch
'The ditch carried the child'

The overall discussion on deverbals illustrates that in most cases the derived nouns maintain the same syllabic structures of the verbs from which they are derived. Also, tonal modifications apply in some instances and in other instances the tones of the source verbs are maintained. There are also cases where both the tonal patterns and the syllabic structures get modified in the process. The examples provided here are not exhaustive. As far as I know, apart from special affixes like the *tá...ná* circumfix, there seems to be no specific reason why a particular verb root will opt for a particular affix or noun class prefix to derive the noun. Going through the various examples, it is obvious that transitivity plays no role in the choices. Perhaps some choices are arbitrated by the various noun-class attributes or place of articulation, among other things. It might also be a good direction to classify the verbs in various groups, e.g., action, possession, etc., and observe whether there is any harmony with the affix; I leave these hypotheses for future research.

2.3 Other derivational processes

Apart from deriving nouns from verbs, the Awiing grammar uses methods like compounding and reduplication, among others to form new words. Before we proceed to familiar processes like reduplication and compounding, let us begin with a prefix that can be used with some adjectives to derive nouns. Examples of adjectives expressing notions like size, quality and colour can be seen in (12a) below with the derived nouns.

2.3.1 Nouns derived from adjectives

(12) a. deriving nouns using the *nə*- prefix

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>adjectives</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived nouns</i>	<i>meaning</i>
<i>nə</i> -	<i>lənə</i>	old	<i>nə-lənə</i>	old-age
<i>nə</i> -	<i>fájə</i>	fat	<i>nə-fájə</i>	growth
<i>nə</i> -	<i>ságə</i>	tall	<i>nə-ságə</i>	tallness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>kəmkê</i>	short	<i>nə-kəmkə</i>	shortness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>shí'nə</i>	well	<i>nə-shi'nə</i>	goodness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>pəgə</i>	bad	<i>nə-pəgə</i>	foolishness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>pənê</i>	good	<i>nə-pəŋə</i>	goodness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>sénə</i>	black	<i>nə-sénə</i>	darkness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>fógə</i>	white	<i>nə-fógə</i>	whiteness
<i>nə</i> -	<i>pájə</i>	red	<i>nə-pájə</i>	redness

Note, however, that unlike in languages like English, Awing and most Bantu languages have very few true adjectives (see, e.g., Dixon, 1982). To the best of my knowledge, an inventory of all adjectives in Awing might not triple the list in (12). To see how poor this language can be as far as adjectives are concerned, it might be surprising to know, for example, that although the word *lənə* ‘old’ is considered an adjective, there is no actual adjective for the opposite of ‘old’—i.e., ‘young’ in Awing: Speakers will have to use the noun phrase *pə ŋkay nwunə* which literally means ‘people of age’ to express the notion of ‘young’. In effect, most adjectives are expressed in this way and the process seems to be very liberal, that is, speakers spontaneously combine words to describe a noun and some of such combination serves just the immediate purpose while others are eventually standardized. Another method used to describe nouns is by prefixing some verbs with a nominal prefix and most often, but not necessarily, other morphological processes like reduplication are incorporated. A good example is the verb *pagə* ‘break’ which occurs in a reduplicated form with the noun class 1 prefix *ə-pagpagə* ‘fragmented’. As we will see in the following chapter, adverbs too are very rare in Awing and the various ways in which these categories are expressed may constitute a good future research topic.

2.3.2 *Compounding*

Compounding is a very productive morphological process that the Awing grammar employs to create new words. As the term implies, this process constitutes of combining lexical items to create new complex words. In Awing, it appears that lexical items from any category, verbs, nouns, adjectives and even pronouns can be used to form compound words. Some characteristics of compounding are: most often the meanings of the derived words do not reflect the individual meanings of the lexical items; the compounds do not necessarily maintain the tones as in isolation and the grammatical categories of the compounds must not reflect those of the individual words. Some few words that are formed via this process can be seen below. The examples in (13a) are the lexical items in citation while those in (13b) are the derived compounds with the plural forms.

(13) a. words in isolation

<i>words</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>words</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
aŋwa'lə	book	ésâ	God	-----	-----
acha'tə	greetings	ésê	God	-----	-----
atseebə	speech	mó'ê	one	-----	-----
atûə	head	ndê	house	-----	-----
aləmə	tongue	mugə	fire	-----	-----
ŋgwé	wife	əsê	god	-----	-----
ndê	house	ndə	run	-----	-----
kwûə	die	neemə	meat	afoonə	farm
móo	child	ntó'ə	palace	-----	-----
məŋga	fortune telling	ésê	god	-----	-----
ndəŋ	tap	mələ'ə	wine	-----	-----
ŋwunə	person	chíə	be	ndê	house
akəféǵá	wind	ntsoolə	mouth	-----	-----
ŋwunə	person	súŋə	say	zíə	his

development/growth of such entities. As can be observed in (14) through (16), the AUG and DIM prefixes are mostly used with animate nouns.

(14) The augmentative *ndú-* prefix

a.	<i>AUG-Prefix</i>	<i>words</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
	ndú-	neemə	‘cow’	ndúneemə	‘bull’
	ndú-	kwúneemə	‘pig’	ndúkwúneemə	‘boar’
	ndú-	ləəmə	‘horse’	ndúləəmə	‘stallion’
b.	<i>plural forms</i>	<i>glosses</i>		<i>derived plurals</i>	<i>glosses</i>
	mə-neemə	‘cows’		pə-lú-pə-neemə	‘bulls’
	pə-kwúneemə	‘pigs’		pə-lú-pə--kwúneemə	‘boars’
	pə-ləəmə	‘horses’		pə-lú-pə-ləəmə	‘stallions’

(15) The augmentative *mé-* prefix

a.	<i>AUG-Prefix</i>	<i>words</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
	mé-	ɲwunə	‘person’	méɲwunə	‘a big person’
	mé-	ndê	‘house’	méndê	‘a big house’
	mé-	ɲgəbə	‘fowl’	méɲgəbə	‘mother hen’
b.	<i>plural forms</i>	<i>glosses</i>		<i>derived plurals</i>	<i>glosses</i>
	pəənə	‘people’		pə-mé-pə-pəənə	‘big people’
	məɲgəbə	‘chickens’		pə-mé-mə-ɲgəbə	‘mother hens’

(16) The diminutive *mɔ́-* prefix

a.	<i>DIM-Prefix</i>	<i>word</i>	<i>gloss</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>
	mɔ́-	ɲgwúə	‘dog’	mɔ́-ɲgwúə	‘puppy’
	mɔ́-	məɲgyɛ	‘woman’	mɔ́-məɲgyɛ	‘girl’
	mɔ́-	mbyâɲnə	‘man’	mɔ́-mbyâɲnə	‘boy’
	mɔ́-	ɲgəbə	‘chicken’	mɔ́ɲgəbə	‘chick’

	mɔ́-	fóolá	‘rat’	mɔ́fóolá	‘mouse’
	mɔ́-	kwúneemə	‘pig’	mɔ́kwúneemə	‘shoat’
	mɔ́-	sáŋá	‘bird’	mɔ́sáŋá	‘newly hatched bird’
b.	<i>plural forms</i>	<i>glosses</i>		<i>derived plurals</i>	<i>glosses</i>
	mə-ŋgáɓə	‘chickens’		p-ɔ́-pə-ŋgáɓə	‘chicks’
	pə-fóolá	‘rats’		p-ɔ́-pə-fóolá	‘mice’
	pə-kwúneemə	‘pigs’		p-ɔ́-pə-kwúneemə	‘shoats’
	pəŋgyě	‘women’		p-ɔ́-pəŋgyě	‘girls’
	pə-mbyâŋnə	‘men’		p-ɔ́-pə-mbyâŋnə	‘boys’
	pə-sáŋá	‘birds’		p-ɔ́-pə-sáŋá	‘newly hatched birds’

What is interesting in the data in (14) through (16) is the manner in which the plurals are formed. In (14b), the class 2 plural marker /pə/ is prefixed to the derived words and their initial homorganic nasal cluster [nd] becomes [l]. Observe that forming the plurals in both (14b) and (15b) necessitate the use of two plural prefixes: one preceding the AUG prefix and the other preceding the word which is being modified. It appears that both the class 2 /pə-/ and the class 6 /mə-/ plural markers can be used in a single word, e.g., /pə-mé-mə-ŋgáɓə/ ‘mother hens’. Also observe that there is a juxtaposition of the class 2 and 6 plural markers in the formation of plurals for ‘cow’ and ‘bull’, where the class 6 plural is used for /mə-nəəmə/ ‘cows’ and instead the class 2 plural shows up with /pə-lú-pə-neemə/ ‘bulls’. The alternation can also be seen in (16b), specifically with /mə-ŋgáɓə/ ‘chickens’ and /p-ɔ́-pə-ŋgáɓə/ ‘chicks’. What is not clear is whether the alternations from pə- to mə- is actually a change from class 2 to class 6 plural markers, as I claim, or some kind of phonological processes operating within these words. Considering the data in (16), one could argue that the actual DIM marker is /ɔ́/ and that /m-/ and /p-/ are singular and plural markers, respectively,—the same process which seems to apply with /məŋgyě/ ‘woman’ and /pəŋgyě/ ‘women’. This will mean that a word like /p-ɔ́-pə-fóolá/ ‘mice’ is formed by first changing the singular marker /m-/ of the diminutive prefix to /p-/ and then infixing the class 2 plural marker in between the diminutive marker and the actual word. In other words, both the diminutive stem and the word whose attribute is being modified by DIM have to take separate plural markers; thus harmonising

(16b) with the observation earlier made concerning (14b) and (15b), namely that the derivation of these plural forms involves two plural markers. Although this is just an observation, we already saw (in example 4) that this pattern, where each nominal category is marked for plurality separately within a single phrase, is common in Awing grammar. Let us now turn to another mechanism used to form new words in Awing, namely reduplication.

2.3.4 Reduplication

Reduplication is also attested in Awing. That is the process whereby either part of or an entire word is repeated to create a new word (see, e.g., Mutaka & Hyman 1990). A group of words that are derived via this morphological process are presented in (17) below. Although one can clearly see that the examples in (17a) have reduplicated stems, there are no words in the language that will correspond to any of the stems in isolation. Observe that all of the examples in (17a) are some kinds of insects. The manner in which they are named seems to flip between two notions: onomatopoeia or behaviour. For example while the word for butterfly */kígháləghálə/* seems to suggest the sounds of the feathers, the word for ‘praying mantis’ */aləŋələŋənáfoonə/* rather seems to describe their posture. I will therefore refer to this kind of reduplication as ‘iconic’ in the sense that the structure of the word resembles the structure of the mental image in some way. The examples in (17b) are common cases of reduplication, that is, the words are derived by reduplicating meaningful stems. Observe that the syllabic structure of the stems can take any structures: CCV (e.g., *kwá*); CVCV (e.g., *təmə*) or CCVC (e.g., *ndəm*); and the derived word can be of any category.

- (17) a. conceptual reduplication
- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| tátsětsě | ‘bug flies’ |
| təséləsélə | ‘ant’ |
| atseləndéŋndéŋə | ‘crickets’ |
| kilələŋkaŋkaŋə | ‘spider’ |
| kígháləghálə | ‘butterfly’ |
| aləŋələŋənáfoonə | ‘praying mantis’ |

b. common reduplication

<i>stems</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>derived words</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>categories</i>
akaŋə	plate	káŋkáŋə	container	Noun

kwá	sound of dancing	kwákwá	a dance group	Noun
ndəm	sound of pounding	ndəməndəm	mortar	Noun
gha	body sound	gha'gha'ə	impatience	Noun
paŋə	ripe	paŋpaŋə	red	Adj.
təəmə	stand	atəəmətəəmə	straight	Adj.
toŋə	dig	atoŋətóŋə	upside-down	Adv.

2.3.5 *Loan words*

Finally, the Awing language, as it is the case with natural languages, has the tendency to borrow words. This is a very common way to boost the Awing vocabulary. Hundreds of words exist in the language that can be clearly identified as English loan words. Most of the borrowed words are extracted from religious, governing, business, among other concepts that are not original in the Awing culture. An illustration is presented in (18). Observe that the plural forms of these borrowed words consistently take the class 2 /pə-/ plural marker.

(18)	<i>Singulars</i>	<i>meanings</i>	<i>plurals</i>	<i>meanings</i>
	tǎmto	tomato	pə-tǎmto	tomatoes
	gəlasə	glass	pə-gəlasə	glasses
	bərətə	bread	pə-bələtə	breades
	fələwa	flower	pə-fələwa	flowers
	alídiə	radio	pə-lídiə	radios
	baabəələ	bible	pə-baabəələ	bibles
	chósə	church	pə-chósə	churches
	wískîə	whisky	pə-wískîə	whiskies
	ləba	rubber	pə-ləba	rubbers
	kǐə	key	pə-kǐə	keys
	mantələsə	mattress	pə-mantələsə	mattresses
	bóbə	bulb	pə-bóbə	bulbs

While adopting words from other languages, the Awing speakers modify them via morphophonological and suprasegmental rules applicable in the system. For instance, given that consonant clusters like [gl] and [br] do not exist in Awing, the system uses anaptyxis to

break such clusters. Hence, ‘glass’ and ‘bread’ becomes *galasə* and *balétə*, respectively. In other circumstances, the words are pre-nasalized, e.g., ‘government’ and ‘guava’ take an initial nasal and become *ɣgɔmna* and *ɣgopa*, respectively. A class prefix can also be seen with some loan words, e.g., ‘radio’ takes the noun class 1 prefix and becomes *alídiə*. The most outspoken feature of this process in Awing is that irrespective whether the borrowed words end with a vowel or not, when integrated in the Awing system, they consistently end with a vowel. This too, as the attentive reader might have already noticed, is a normal pattern of the system: about 98 percent of the Awing nouns end with a vowel and the overwhelming majority of them end with the schwa, see Atachi (2006, 2017) and Alomofor (2012) for more on borrowing and roles that accompany the phenomenon in Awing.

2.4 The pronominal system

This section aims to present words that can stand in place of nouns or noun phrases (absolute pronouns) and those that can occur with nouns within the nominal phrase as modifiers.

2.4.1 Absolute human pronouns

As already mentioned, absolute pronouns are those that substitute a noun (phrase). As such, they can function as subjects, objects and complements of prepositions (oblique). Some of the subject pronouns can occur in two forms, which are presented in the table in (19) as stressed and unstressed.

(19)

	Subject	Stressed Subject	Object (<i>optionally stressed</i>)	Oblique
1 st sg.	n̩	maŋ	mə	maŋə
2 nd sg.	o	gho	gho	o
3 rd sg.	a	yá	yá	yá
1 st pl dual (incl.)	tə	póó	wóó	póó
1 st pl excl.	pəg		wəgá	pəgə
1 st pl incl.	pən		wənə	pənə
2 nd pl.	ná	p†	wəəná	pəəná
3 rd pl.	pó		əghoobá	pó
3 rd unsp.	pá			

The 1st person plural pronouns ‘we’ distinguishes itself from the other categories in that it subcategorises into three different categories: dual (inclusive), inclu(sive) and exclu(sive). The *tə* ‘we’ is used to refer to just the speaker and the addressee (dual). It is inclusive in the sense that the addressee and the speaker participate in the action. *pen* ‘we’ is also inclusive but different from *tə* ‘we’ in that it incorporates not just the speaker and addressee(s) but other unspecified party/ies. On the other hand, *pəg* ‘we’ will stand for the speaker and other unspecified party/ies without the addressee—hence exclusive. Another peculiarity with the pronouns in (19) is the object form of the 2nd and 3rd person singular pronouns. These are the only forms that are used as the objects and also as the stressed subjects. Before I elaborate on this peculiarity, it might be worth noting that the difference between the stressed and unstressed 1st and 2nd person pronouns depends on the speaker’s attitude. For example, by using *maŋ* or *n̄* in (20) below, the speaker wants to either stress on the fact that s/he is actually going to the market (i.e., with *maŋ*) or simply conveys the message that s/he is going to the market ((i.e., with *n̄*). Likewise, (21) with *o* will mean ‘you’ and that with *gho* will be translated to something like ‘you in particular’.

(20) *maŋ/n̄ ghenə məteenə*
 I go market
 ‘I am going to the market’

(21) *(gh)o fá’ə kə*
 you work what
 ‘What are you doing’

However, unlike the 2nd person stressed pronouns *gho*, the 3rd person pronoun *yə* can only be used in the subject position in cases that the weak pronoun *a* cannot be used, e.g., when the pronoun is modified by the exclusive focus operator ‘only’. Consider the examples below.

(22) a. *a nə m-berə məm ndě*
 he P2 N-remain in house
 ‘He remained in the house’
 b. **tsə’ə a nə m-berə məm ndě*
 only him P2 N-remain in house
 Int: ‘Only he remained in the house’

- c. tsó'ə yə nə m-berə məm ndě
 only him P2 N-remain in house
 'Only he remained in the house'
- (23) a. *tsó'ə a yó náŋ məkwúnə
 only he F2 cook rice
 Int: 'Only he will cook rice'
- b. tsó'ə yə (*a) yó náŋ məkwúnə
 only him he F2 cook rice
 'Only he will cook rice'

Discussing the distinction and intricacies between the *a* and *yə* pronouns will take us far beyond the descriptive aim of this chapter; the reader is referred to Fominyam & Georgi (2021) for some theoretical views. It is also important to note here that the two forms cannot be used in the same clause, as illustrated in (23b).⁵ In order to modify the 2nd person singular subject pronoun parallel to the above examples, only the stressed form will be used:

⁵ The third person *a* and *yə* variants are further distinctive in non-argument positions. That is, when they occur in the left periphery of the clause. As shown in (i) below, only the *yə* form can be: relativized (ia), topicalized (ib) and focalized (ic & d).

- (i) a. yə pá'a *(a) perə n-dzé'ə aŋwalə a yí fúŋə aŋwalə-əsê
 he that he still N-study book he F1 read book-God
 'he who is still going to school will read the bible.'
- b. nə *a/yə, *(a) kwáŋ ŋgə ŋkéebə tsélə akəŋnə
 with him he think that money pass love
 'As for him, he believes that money is worth more than love.'
- c. ló *a/yə pá'a *(a) kwáŋ ŋgə ŋkéebə tsélə akəŋnə
 LE him REL he think that money pass love
 'It is him who believes that money is worth more than love.'
- d. ló yə pá'a *(a) perə n-dzé'ə aŋwalə
 for him that he still N-study book
 'It is him who is still going to school.'

Notice that the stressed form is obligatorily resumed by the weak one in the subject position. As already shown in (23b), both forms cannot be used in the same clause, further see (ii) below. Note that the topicalized pronoun in (ib) must be separated by a pause, indicated with a comma. This intonation break cannot, however, be used to rescue the ungrammaticality of (ii), suggesting that the preposition corresponding to 'with' preceding the topicalized pronoun in (ib) is obligatory.

- (ii) *yó(,) a perə n-dzé'ə aŋwalə
 him he still N-study book

- (24) a. *tsó'ə o yó náŋ məkwúnə
 only you F2 cook rice
 Int: 'Only you will cook rice'
- b. tsó'ə gho yó náŋ məkwúnə
 only you F2 cook rice
 'Only you will cook rice'

Now, as far as objects pronouns are concerned, one might be wondering why the object column in (19) is also labelled as 'optionally stressed'. This is because all of the object pronouns can be used as, say, a kind of 'reflexive'. The following data illustrate how such pronouns are used to refer, not only to nominal expressions (25), but also to subject pronouns (26) in intransitive constructions.

- (25) a. Alombah (a) ghenê yó məteenó
 Alombah SM going him market
 Lit: Alombah is going him to the market'
- b. Alombah pó Tsefpr (pó) ghenê əghoobá məteenó
 Alombah with Tsefor SM going them market
 Lit: Alombah and Tsefor are going them to the market'
- (26) a. ñ ghenê mə (məteenó)
 I go me market
 Lit: 'I am going me (to the market)'
- b. o ghenê gho (məteenó)
 you go you market
 Lit: 'You are going you (to the market)'
- c. a ghenê yó (məteenó)
 he go him market
 Lit: 'He is going him (to the market)'
- d. tə ghenê wóo məteenó
 we go us market

Int: 'him, he is still going to school.'

- Lit: ‘We are going us to the market’ (Just you and I)
- e. pəg ghenə wəgə məteenə
we go us market
Lit: ‘We are going us to the market’ (we excluding you)
- f. pən ghenə wənə məteenə
we go us market
Lit: ‘We are going us to the market’ (All of us)
- g. nə ghenə wənə məteenə
you go you market
Lit: ‘You are going you to the market’
- h. pə ghenə əghoobə məteenə
they go them market
Lit: ‘They are going them to the market’

It should be borne in mind that these pronouns cannot refer to the subject in transitive construction, as shown in (27) below. This could be explained from the understanding that in intransitive clauses the verb lacks an internal argument (object) and the pronouns can ‘freely’ occupy the object position, contrary to transitive constructions where the object cannot be omitted.

- (27) a. #Alombah (a) lumə yə
Alombah SM bite him
‘Alombah has bitten him’ (Another person not himself)
- b. *Alombah (a) lumə yə moonə
Alombah SM bite him child
Lit: ‘Alombah has bitten him child’

Another issue which needs to be briefly clarified before we move on to how personal pronouns can be coordinated is the 3rd person pronoun which is labelled as unspecified in the last row in (19). Notice that this is the only pronoun that does not have either an object or the oblique form. The *pə* pronoun does not refer to any particular individual(s): it is an ‘impersonal pronoun’ used to express passive-like constructions as those in (28) below. So, ‘they’ (aligning the morpheme in question) should not be interpreted in these examples as referring to some specific individual(s).

- (28) a. pə́ pə́ n-dʒî məjîə
 they P1 N-eat food
 ‘The food has been eaten’
- b. pə́ nə n-dʒí’ə əlí’ə á ghâ-əlúmə
 they P2 N-work farms in time-dry
 ‘Farms were worked in the dry season’

2.4.2 Coordinating human pronouns

Concerning coordination, the first observation is that proper names or NPs can be coordinated with either *né* or *pó*, as in (29a). Both morphemes may be qualified as ‘accompaniment linkers’ since they cannot be used to conjoin clauses (parallel to, e.g., the English ‘and’ conjunction). Also, they cannot be used to coordinate a pronoun with a proper name or a noun phrase, as shown in (29b). In order to express the intended meaning in (29b), the dual plural pronoun *pəg* ‘we’ is used and if the speaker intends to specify the other participant, the NP which s/he wishes to specify will follow the pronoun with no linking morpheme (29c).

- (29) a. Tsefor nə́/pó móo yíwə (pó) yó ghenê afoonə məsânə
 Tsefor and child DEF SM F2 go farm morning
 ‘Tsefor and the child will go to the farm in the morning’
- b. *móo yíwə/Tsefor nə́ maŋ yó ghenê afoonə məsânə
 child DEF/Tsefor and I F2 go farm morning
 Int: ‘The child/Tsefor and I will go to the farm in the morning’
- c. pəg (móo yíwə/Tsefor) yó ghenê afoonə məsânə
 we(dual) child DEF/Tsefor F2 go farm morning
 ‘We/Tsefor and I will go to the farm in the morning’

Generally the so-called accompaniment linkers cannot be used to coordinate pronominal elements:

- (30) a. *gho nə́/pó maŋə yó ghenê məteenə
 you and me F2 go market
 Int: ‘You and I will go to the market’

Has to be:

- b. Póo yó ghenê mæteenó
we F2 go market
'We (just you and I) will go to the market'

- (31) a. *pó ná/pó penə yó ghenê mæteenó
they and us F2 go market
Int: 'They and us will go to the market'

Has to be:

- b. pen yó ghenê mæteenó
we F2 go market
'We (incl) will go to the market'

For completeness, see in (32a) and (33a) that pronouns cannot be connected with these morphemes in the object position and also as the object of a preposition.

- (32) a. *Alombah a yó shúmə o ná/pó maŋə
Alombah SM F2 beat you and I
Int: 'Alombah will beat you and I'

Has to be:

- b. Alombah a yó shúmə wóo
Alombah SM F2 beat us
'Alombah will beat us (just you and I)'

- (33) a. *Alombah a nə m-fi ndě yíwə mbo ó ná/pó maŋə
Alombah SM P2 N-sell house DEF to you and I
Int: 'Alombah sold the house to you and I'

Has to be:

- b. Alombah a nə m-fi ndě yíwə mbo póo
Alombah SM P2 N-sell house DEF to us
'Alombah sold the house to us (just you and I)'

However, pronouns can be coordinated with an 'alternative linker' parallel in meaning to the English 'or', on the proviso that the coordinated constituent functions as a topic. Consider the following examples.

- (34) a. gho ká maᵑə, wə yó ghenê mäteenó
 you or me who F2 go market
 'You or me, who will go to the market?'
- b. wə yó ghenê mäteenó, gho ká maᵑə
 who F2 go market you or me
 'Who will go to the market, you or me?'
- c. pó ká penə, mbə-ká ghenê afoonə senê
 they or us people-what go farm today
 'They or us, who are those going to the farm today?'
- d. mbə-ká ghenê afoonə senê, pó ká penə
 people-what go farm today them or us
 'Who are those going to the farm today, them or us?'

As shown in the above examples, the coordinated pronouns can either occur in sentence-initial position (34a) and (34c), or in sentence-final position (34b) and (34d). The comma separating them when they occur in sentence-initial position is indicative that they cannot be used as subjects:

- (35) *gho ká maᵑə yó ghenê mäteenó
 you or me F2 go market
 Int: Either you or me will go to the market'

On the other hand, the coordinated pronouns with the *ká* 'or' linker can be objectivized. But this also comes with another condition, namely that the focus operator *lǎ* (glossed LE) precedes the coordinated constituent.

- (36) a. Tsefor yó tú *(lǎ) ghó ká maᵑə
 Tsefor F2 send LE you or me
 'Tsefor will send you or me?'
- b. Aghetse yó zəg *(lǎ) wəg ká pó
 Aghetse F2 feed LE us or them
 'Aghetse will feed/take care of us or them?'

The focus operator plus the alternative linker seem to transform these sentences in exclusive alternative questions, where the two given alternatives exhaustify the answer space and only

one of them can be true. We will discuss such question types and the notion of exhaustivity in more details in chapter 7.

2.4.3 *Absolute nonhuman pronouns*

Unlike human pronouns, the nonhuman category comprises of only two morphemes: the *ə* expressing singular nonhuman entities which could be animate or inanimate and its plural forms: *mə* or *pə*, depending on the noun class (category) that it refers to. Examples of these nonhuman pronouns are provided in (37).

- (37) a. *ə* *pə*' *ŋgwûə* *alaŋə*
 it P1 N-fall road
 'It fell on the road' (can be referring to a dog, a handbag, a stone etc)
- b. *mə* *jum* *mə-tsəmə*
 they dry PL-all
 'They are all dry' (can be referring to rivers, food, farm lands etc)
- c. *pə* *fíə* *əpəgə*
 they resemble ours
 'They resemble ours' (can be referring to your dresses, cars, houses etc.)

As the translation in (37) suggests, using the nonhuman pronoun *ə* 'it' or its plural forms is indiscriminative to the noun class of the antecedent noun. Anticipating the discussion on subject agreement to be developed in the following chapter, one can note here that this simplified pronominal system actually illustrates how impoverished the Awing grammar is as far as subject agreement is concerned. Bafut, for example (which is linguistically and geographically very approximate to Awing), has 9 of such nonhuman pronouns corresponding to different noun classes (Tamanji 2009). Let us now turn to those nominal expressions that do not only stand in place of a noun but can also be used to modify the noun.

2.4.4 *Possessive pronouns and determiners*

Elements that are used to indicate possession of things or individuals have a very rich inventory in the Awing grammar. They can basically be classified into two groups: possessive pronouns, which given the appropriate context, will substitute a noun phrase, and possessive determiners, which are used with nouns as modifiers. The Awing grammar distinguishes the former, that is, the pronominal possessives with a noun class prefix. Thus, while the possessive determiners may be considered as the actual stems, the possessive pronouns will

constitute the stem and a concord vowel or CV cluster corresponding to the nominal class. In the tables in (38) and (40), columns represent the various persons and the rows stand for the noun classes.

(38) Possessive determiners

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st pl. (excl.)	1 st pl. (incl.)	2 nd pl.	3 rd pl.
	‘my’	‘your’	‘his/her’	‘our’	‘our’	‘your’	‘their’
1	mə	(gh)o	yĩə	wáǵǵ	wénə	wáəǵ	ghóobá
2	mə	po	píə	páǵǵ	pénə	páəǵ	póobá
3	mə	(gh)o	yĩə	wáǵǵ	wénə	wáəǵ	ghóobá
5	mə	zo	jíə	záǵǵ	zénə	záəǵ	zóobá
6	mə	mo	míə	máǵǵ	ménə	máəǵ	móobá
7	mə	zo	jíə	záǵǵ	zénə	záəǵ	zóobá
8	mə	po	píə	páǵǵ	pénə	páəǵ	póobá
9	mə	zo	jíə	záǵǵ	zénə	záəǵ	zóobá

(39) a. atsə’ə zo (ə) fĩə alóŋə zǵǵ
 dress your SM resemble dress our
 ‘Your dress resembles our traditional wear’

b. ətsə’ə po (pə) fĩə əlóŋə páǵǵ
 dresses your SM resemble dress our
 ‘Your dresses resemble our traditional wears’

The determiners in example (39a) are used with class 7 nouns. The plural form for the class 7 is the class 8, which is also reflected in the choice of the possessive determiners used with these forms in example (39b). One can therefore argue that even the so-called stems actually have plural or noun class concords. Apart from that, there seems to be a distinction with

possessives and absolute pronouns with regard to the possessive 1st person plural ‘our’ and the 1st person plural pronouns ‘we’. As shown above, the pronoun ‘we’ has three distinctions which are characterized as dual, inclusive and exclusive. Notice, however, that the dual category is not specified in (38) and (40) below with the 1st person plural ‘our/s’. Intuitively, the inclusive 1st person plural possessive determiner or pronoun could be referring to just the speaker and addressee, i.e., dual; or the speaker and other party/ies including the addressee. In other words, the dual property which we discussed for absolute pronouns does not have a specific possessive marker. On the other hand, the exclusive 1st person plural will have the same meaning as with the absolute pronouns, that is, the speaker and a third party but excluding the addressee. Let us now see how the pronominal counterparts of the possessive determiners in (38) will look like. This is presented in (40) below, as earlier noted, there is an additional vowel or CV cluster in each form. The vowel or CV cluster is what I consider to be the nominalized prefix which permits these forms to be used as pronouns—exemplified in (41).

(40) Possessive pronouns

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st pl. (excl.)	1 st pl. (incl.)	2 nd pl.	3 rd pl.
	‘mine’	‘yours’	‘his/hers’	‘ours’	‘ours’	‘yours’	‘theirs’
1	əghéemə	əgho	əyĩə	əwáǵǵ	əwénə	əwáəǵ	əghóobə
2	əpéemə	pəpo	pəpíə	pəpáǵǵ	əpénə	pəpáəǵ	əpóobə
3	əghéemə	əgho	əyĩə	əwáǵǵ	əwénə	əwáəǵ	əghóobə
5	nəzámə	nəzo	nəzĩə	nəzáǵǵ	nəzénə	nəzáəǵ	əzóobə
6	máméemə	məmo	məmíə	məməǵǵ	məməénə	məməáəǵ	məməóobə
7	azéemə	azo	azĩə	azáǵǵ	azénə	azáəǵ	azóobə
8	əpéemə	əpo	əpíə	əpáǵǵ	əpénə	əpáəǵ	əpóobə
9	əzéemə	əzo	əzĩə	əzáǵǵ	əzénə	əzáəǵ	əzóobə

- (41) a. atɬə'ə zo ɔ̄ fɪə əzə́gə
 dress your SM resemble ours
 'Your dress resembles ours'
- b. nə́zɪə nə́ ghá'ə tsé́lə nə́zə́gə
 his SM big pass ours
 'His is bigger than ours' (talking about, e.g., his liver)

2.4.5 *Demonstrative pronouns and determiners*

Demonstratives in Awing can be distinguished in three groups depending on the physical location of the addresser and/or addressee to the object which is being referred to. The proximate will refer to objects that are very close or can be touched by the speaker while distal will situate objects further from the speaker; med(ium) and far distal indicate how near the interlocutors are to the referent object with medium locating the object approximately closer while far is further away.

(42) Demonstratives

Class	this/these (prox.)	that/those (med. distal)	that/those (far. distal)
1	ghɛnə́/nə́	wə́	yiə́
2	pəənə́/pɛ	pə́	piə́
3	ghɛnə́/nə́	wə́	yiə́
5	zəənə́/zɛ	zə́	jiə́
6	məənə́/mɛ	mə́	miə́
7	zəənə́/zɛ	zə́	jiə́
8	pəənə́/pɛ	pə́	piə́
9	zəənə́/zɛ	zə́	jiə́

Demonstratives can either function as pronouns—that is, used in a proper context without the head noun; or as modifiers—that is, used to modify the noun. The example in (43) demonstrates these functions with the class 7 demonstratives *zəənə́* and *zɛ*. Also observe in (43) in the matrix clauses that when the demonstratives are used as modifiers they occur in the short form, and when used as pronouns in the subordinate clauses they have to be in the long

form. As already mentioned, the difference between (43b) and (43c) depends on the relative distance separating the object and the speakers. (43d) illustrates the plural forms of the demonstratives, which is expressed by substituting the singular noun class prefix with the plural form.

- (43) a. a-tsə' zɿ kě yá poŋ pô, a yí lógə zəənə
 7-dress this NEG him good NEG he F1 take this
 'He does not like this dress, he will take this'
- b. a-tsə' zɿ kě yá poŋ pô, a yí lógə zê
 7-dress this NEG him good NEG he F1 take that
 'He does not like this dress, he will take that'
- c. a-tsə' zɿ kě yá poŋ pô, a yí lógə jiá
 7-dress this NEG him good NEG he F1 take that
 'He does not like this dress, he will take that' (over there).
- d. ə-tsə' pɿ kě yá poŋ pô, a yí lógə pê
 8-dresses these NEG him good NEG he F1 take those
 'He does not like these dresses, he will take those'

2.5 Towards the Awing noun phrase head-directionality

Apart from adjectives that show up before the head noun, the other nominal modifiers that we have discussed thus far occur after the nouns that they modify. However, the system does not exhibit a simplistic two way directionality whereby all nominal modifiers follow the noun while adjectives precede it. This section therefore aims to categorize these elements with respect to their positions with the noun. The intent is not to argue whether Awing is a head initial or head final language but simply to present these modifiers as they occur with the head noun.

2.5.1 *The noun and the associative noun phrase with specific modifiers*

This section will briefly outline the various positions of the different nominal modifiers while the next section will take a broader look by combining the modifiers. Two main categories will be discussed here: a single noun with a modifying element, which I will call the 'simple noun phrase' and a 'complex noun phrase', which will constitute two nominals that are connected or associated with either covert or overt markers. Let us begin with the simple noun phrase, specifically with elements that show up before the noun. As already noted, this

category will include adjectives including colours, see (44). The cardinal number ‘one’, indefinite quantifiers like ‘few’ and ‘many’ and the focus exclusive operator ‘only’ will constitute the second category that show up before the noun, examples are provided in (45).

- (44) a. paŋpaŋ məŋgyě
red wowan
‘A red woman’
- b. shíshí apeemə
black bag
‘A black bag’
- c. fúfú məghólə
white oil
‘White oil’
- (45) a. tá’a aŋwarə
one book
‘One book’
- b. nda’ moonə
lone child
‘The lone/only child’
- c. tsó’ə ŋkéebə
only money
‘Only money’
- d. ntá’lé peenó
few people
‘Few people’
- e. ala’ə peenó
many people
‘Many people’

Apart from ‘one’, all other cardinal numbers occur after the head noun. An A(ssociative) M(arker) AM which changes in form depending on the noun class links the noun with the cardinal numbers:

- (46) a. ə-ŋwarə péŋ pě
8-book AM two
‘Two books’
- b. p-əngyě péŋ teeló
2-woman AM three
‘Three women’
- c. mə-náa mén nəkwa
6-cow AM four
‘Four cattle’

Although some adjectives precede the head noun, as further shown in (47) below, others have to be after the noun. The adjectives that follow the noun often show up with an associative marker (48). Note that apart from adjectives expressing colour attributes—compare (47c) and (48c) or (47f) and (48e), adjectives that occur after, and are linked to the noun with the AM, cannot be used in the pre-nominal position, we will return to this in the next section.

- | | | | | |
|------|----|-------------------|----|-------------------------|
| (47) | a. | təsê mǎngyǎ | b. | apagpagə ntóəmə |
| | | tall woman | | fragmented heart |
| | | ‘A tall woman’ | | ‘A broken heart’ |
| | c. | fúfu mǎló’ə | d. | kǎə (ashúə) mǎ-mbyâŋnə |
| | | white wine | | deaf handsome child-man |
| | | ‘Palm wine’ | | ‘A (handsome) deaf boy’ |
| | e. | asóələ ŋgwuə | f. | paŋpaŋə ŋgwubə |
| | | castrated dog | | red shoes |
| | | ‘A castrated dog’ | | ‘Red shoes’ |
-
- | | | | | |
|------|----|---|----|-----------------|
| (48) | a. | ná yí mbáŋnə | b. | ná yí sáŋnə |
| | | meat AM red | | meat AM dry |
| | | ‘Red meat’ | | ‘Dried meat’ |
| | c. | mǎlú’ mǎ fúə | d. | atsə’ yí fió |
| | | wine AM white | | dress AM new |
| | | ‘Palm wine’ | | ‘New dress’ |
| | e. | ná’ ø páŋə | f. | ŋgəsáŋ yí fiŋnê |
| | | sauce AM red | | maize AM wet |
| | | ‘Yellow sauce’ (used to eat pounded yams) | | ‘Fresh corn’ |

It is also important to mention that Awing has just three main colours: black, white and red; that is why yellow in (48e) is described as red (see, e.g., Kay et al. 1997 for cross-linguistic differences). Moreover, as I early noted, the examples in (48) may be considered as some kind of description that has been standardized. For instance in (48b) the verb *sáŋə* ‘to dry’ is used with the AM as ‘dried’ in the same way as the verb *fíŋə* ‘(being) wet’ is ‘adjectivized’ with the help of the AM to ‘fresh’ in (48f). Further observe that in addition to the AM, there seems to be a process of /n/ or /nə/ infixation operating in some of the examples in (48). It is not clear to me at this point whether this is actually the process that changes these verbal elements

to adjectives given that the same process applies to colour adjectives, e.g., (48a). Once more I leave this open for future work. Getting back to the description, we have seen that indefinite quantifiers occur before the noun. Conversely, the universal quantifier *tsəmə* ‘all’ has to be used after the noun and just like demonstrative determiners (see examples in (43) above), it will agree in number and class with the head noun. Consider the following examples.

- (49) a. *ŋyuj tsəmə*
 person all
 ‘Everybody’
- b. *p† pə-tsəmə*
 people 2-all
 ‘Everybody or every people’
- c. *m-ɔŋkə tsəmə*
 1-child all
 ‘All/Every kid(s)’
- d. *p-ɔŋkə pə-tsəmə*
 2-children 2-all
 ‘All kids’
- e. *məló’ mə-tsəmə*
 wine 6-all
 ‘All of the wines’

We already saw that possessive determiners also follow the head noun (41). However, for emphatic reasons, the possessive determiner can occur before the head noun. The few examples in (50) below illustrate this; but note that all possessive determiners can be emphasized in this way.

- (50) a. *məʒîə mə*
 food my
 ‘My food’
- b. *əmə məʒîə*
 my food
 ‘My own food’
- c. *ŋgəsáŋə mə*
 maize my
 ‘My maize’
- d. *əghâ ŋgəsáŋə*
 my maize
 ‘My own maize’
- e. *məló’ə məgá*
 wine our
 ‘Our wine’
- f. *əməg məló’ə*
 our wine
 ‘Our own wine’

With associative noun phrases, that is, noun phrases in which two nouns are connected in some instances by an associative marker, the possessed noun always precedes the possessor—genitive noun. Examples can be seen in (51).

- (51) a. aŋwere ø Tsefor
book SM Tsefor
'Tsefor's book'
- b. nəló'ə nə móonə
spoon AM child
'The child's spoon'
- c. məghə' mə Mofor
oil AM Mofor
'Tsefor's oil'
- d. məghə' mə náajənə
oil AM cooking
'Cooking oil'
- e. pɪ pə əfu'semə
people AM Bafoussam
'Bafoussam people'

Not all associative noun phrases indicate possession in the strict sense of the term. For example, while example (51d) indicates an attribute of the first noun, (51e) rather specifies the origin of the people. The associative noun phrase can be used with demonstrative determiners and the latter will agree with the possessed noun, as exemplified in (52).

- (52) a. n-əló'ə nə móo nê
5-spoon AM child this
'This child's spoon.'
- b. m-əló'ə mə móo mə-nê
6-spoon AM child 6-this
'These child's spoons.'
- c. (mə)ŋgyě ø Tsefor nê
wife AM Tsefor this
'This Tsefor's wife.'
- d. pəŋgyě pə Tsefor pə-nê
2-wife AM Tsefor 2-this
'These Tsefor's wives.'

Another category of elements that can show up with the associative noun phrase are those that, among other things, can be interpreted as definite and indefinite articles. As can be seen in the examples in (53) and (54), this category basically has two roots: *tsə*, which I label as indefinite (IND) and *wə*, which is considered as the definite (DEF) counterpart. Keep in mind that the notion of (in)definite is more or less a matter of pragmatics in Awing. That is, NPs are generally realized without these 'articles' since context determines the familiarity (or not) of

the NPs. Hence, the so-called (in)definite markers are used in typical contexts, e.g., the IND marker can be used in the very beginning of a discourse or storytelling and the DEF might be used in contexts where the speaker wants to ‘emphasize’ the identifiability and familiarity of an NP. We will not get into such details at this point, it suffices to note here that this category can also take a number prefix corresponding to the plural class marker of the possessed noun; compare, e.g., (53a) and (53c) against (54a) and (54b), respectively. Another observation that can further be noted here is the difference between (53b) and (53c). Given that ‘spoon’ is pluralized in (53b), one would expect to see the class 6 plural prefix show up with the IND marker, as in (53c). The main difference between (53b) and (53c) is that the use of the class 6 plural prefix with the IND marker in (53c) adds a quantificational interpretation of ‘some’, which is not available in (53b), with the singular prefix. Conversely, one does not get this kind of semantic nuance with the definite marker, specifically in examples (53e) and (53f).

- (53) a. n-əló’ nə móo yi-tsə
 5-spoon AM child SG-IND
 ‘A (certain) child’s spoon.’
 ✓‘The spoon of a certain child.’
 X‘A certain spoon of a child.’
- b. m-əló’ mə móo yi-tsə
 6-spoon AM child SG-IND
 ‘A child’s spoons.’
- c. m-əló’ mə móo mə-tsə
 6-spoon AM child 6-IND
 ✓‘Some of the child’s spoons.’
 X‘Some of the spoons of the child’
- d. n-əló’ nə móo yí-wə
 5-spoon AM child SG-DEF
 ‘The child’s spoon.’ (that we have been talking of)
- e. m-əló’ mə móo yí-wə
 6-spoon AM child SG-DEF
 ‘The child’s spoons.’ (that we have been talking of)
- f. m-əló’ mə móo mə-wə
 6-spoon AM child 6-DEF

‘The child’s spoons.’ (that we have been talking of)

- (54) a. η wun \emptyset \textasciixc0 fu’sem \textasciixc0 yí-t \textasciixc0
 person AM Bafoussam SG-IND
 ✓‘A (certain) Bafoussam man.’
 ✓‘A certain man from Bafoussam.’
 ‘A certain Bafoussam man’
- b. p† p \textasciixc0 \textasciixc0 fu’sem \textasciixc0 p \textasciixc0 -t \textasciixc0
 people AM Bafoussam 2-IND
 ✓‘(Some) Bafoussam people.’
 ✓‘Some people from Bafoussam.’

See from examples (53a) and (53c) that ‘certain’ and ‘some’ modify only the possessor nouns. However, both quantifiers can felicitously associate with the head noun (i.e., person/people) and the(ir) origin (i.e., Bafoussam) in (54a) and (54b). Given that (53) and (54) express different kinds of ‘possessions’, the possibility to associate the quantifiers to just the possessor in one context (53) and to both NPs in another context (54) could point to a selectional restriction for associative phrases in that the possessor phrase in (53) might not constitute a DP, but only an NP. We leave such queries for another time, though, and concentrate on the agreement pattern for now. Just as the demonstrative and the (in)definite markers have to agree with the possessed noun, so too does the subject marker, that is, in full sentences:

- (55) a. m \textasciixc0 -náa m \textasciixc0 \textasciixc0 fó m \textasciixc0 /*a p \textasciixc0 ’ η -gwû \textasciixc0 akoob \textasciixc0
 6-cattle AM Fon SM P1 N-fall forest
 ‘The Fon’s cattle fell in the forest’
- b. \textasciixc0 fó \emptyset m \textasciixc0 -náa a/*m \textasciixc0 p \textasciixc0 ’ η -gwû \textasciixc0 akoob \textasciixc0
 fon AM PL-cattle SM P1 N-fall forest
 ‘The head of cattle fell in the forest’

So far we have seen that elements that occur with the associative noun phrases as ‘modifiers’, namely the demonstrative determiner, the (in)definite markers and the subject marker generally agree with the first NP which is the possessed nouns. Conversely, the possessive determiner does not agree with the possessed noun. Recall that parallel to possessive pronouns, possessive determiners also have a rich agreement pattern (see the table in 38).

Also as a reminder, observe that the possessive determiners in the noun phrases in (56) systematically agree with the head noun. However, there is no such agreement in the associative noun phrases in (57).

- (56) a. ndě (gh)o b. a-tsə'ə zo
 House your 7-dress your
 'Your house' 'your dress'
- c. ə-tsə' po d. məlo' mo
 8-dress your wine your
 'Your dresses' 'Your wine'
- (57) a. ndě ø ŋgyě (gh)o b. a-tsə'ə ø ŋgyě (gh)o
 house AM wife your 7-dress AM wife your
 'Your wife's house' 'Your wife's dress'
- c. ə-tsə' ø ŋgyě (gh)o d. məlo' mə ŋgyě (gh)o
 8-dress AM wife your wine AM wife your
 'Your wife's dresses' 'Your wife's wine'
- e. n-əló' nə ŋgyě (gh)o f. m-əló' mə ŋgyě (gh)o
 5-spoon AM wife your 6-spoon AM wife your
 'Your wife's spoon' 'Your wife's spoons'

The examples in (58) below illustrate that the possessive determiner rather agrees with the second (genitive) noun in such constructions. It should be mentioned also that irrespective of the kind of modifier that is used with the associative noun phrase, the AM systematically bears resemblance (or agrees) with the first NP—that is, the possessed noun.

- (58) a. nkəd ø a-tsə'ə (gh)o
 rope AM 7-dress your
 'Your dress's rope/zipper'
- b. nkəd ø ə-tsə'ə po
 rope AM 8-dress your
 'Your dresses' rope/zipper'
- c. mə-nkəd mə a-tsə'ə (gh)o
 6-rope AM 7-dress your
 'Your dresses' rope'

- d. mə-nkɛd mə ə-tsə'ə po
6-rope AM 8-dress your
'Your dresses' ropes/zippers'

Elements that normally occur before the noun or the associative noun phrase, that is: adjectives (59b) and (59d); the cardinal number one (59c); indefinite quantifiers (59e) and (59f), all function as attributes to the genitive noun, parallel to the observation pertaining to examples (53a) and (53c). The only exception is the exhaustive focus operator 'only', which is ambiguous—that is, can be interpreted as either the attribute of the possessed or the genitive noun (59a), analogous to the data in (54).

- (59) a. tsó' ndě ø Tsefor b. shishi ndě ø Tsefor
only house AM Tsefor black house AM Tsefo
'Only Tsefor's (only) house' 'Tsefor's black house'
- c. tá' ndě ø Tsefor d. ndá' móo ø Tsefor
one house AM Tsefor lone child AM Tsefor
'Tsefor's one house' 'Tsefor's lone child'
- e. ntá'lé mə-naa mə Tsefor f. alá' mə-naa mə əfó
few 6-cow AM Tsefor many 6-cow AM fon
'Tsefor's few cattle' 'The fon's many cattle'

The data in (59) concludes the various patterns that the Awing simple and associative noun phrases take. A summary of the system can be captured in the table provided in (60) below.

(60) The various NP orders

Types of NP	NP Order	Examples
Adj., Quant. & Car.Num. 1	Adj./Quant./Num.>N	44, 45 and 47
Adj. (post-nominal)	N>AM>Adj.	48
Car.Num. 2 and above	N>AM>Car.Num.	46
Universal Quant. 'all'	N>Quant.	49
Demonstratives	N>Dem.	43
Possessives	N>Poss.(neutral) Poss.>N (emphasis)	50
Associative NP	N-Possessed> (AM)N-Genitive	51

2.5.2 Combining different nominal modifiers

This section attempts to address the overall organisation of the Awing nominal system by combining the different modifiers that we have encountered in the language. In doing so, I will use Greenberg’s (1963) universal 20, in particular Cinque’s (2005) appraisal, as the backdrop of the description. According to studies done using this model, the most attested order is Dem>Num>A>N which can be seen in languages like German—*diese drei schwarzen Mädchen*, or in English—*those three black girls*, among many others. Awing grammar exhibits a variety of orders. Let us begin with the two orders [Num>A>N>Dem.] and [A>N>Num>Dem.] as shown in (61) below.

- (61) a. tá’a shíshí ŋgeb jíó [Num>A>N>Dem.]
 one black chicken that
 ‘That one black chicken’
- b. mə-shishi mə-ŋgeb m-én m-bě m-ió [A>N>Num>Dem.]
 6-black 6-chicken 6-AM 6-two 6-that
 ‘Those two black chickens’
- c. pə-shishi mə-ŋgeb p-én pě p-ió [A>N>Num>Dem.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-AM two 2-that
 ‘Those two black chickens’
- d. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-én teeró p-ió [A>N>Num>Dem.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-AM three 2-those
 ‘Those three black chickens’

We will return to agreement within the nominal system in a while but before that it is worth mentioning that both orders in (61) are attested in ‘very few languages’ Cinque (2005:320). Cinque (2005:FN15) identifies just about 6 languages that demonstrate the [Num>A>N>Dem.] order in (60a), among which three creole languages (Berbice Dutch creole and Sranan and Bislama creoles (Haddican 2002)). Given that only a single specific cardinal number in Awing demonstrates this pattern, stating that Awing has the [Num>A>N>Dem.] order might be considered an overstatement. Hence, the cardinal number one, which occurs before the noun, could be considered as a kind of quantifier or attribute and subsumed under such categories that naturally precede the noun. As such, Awing can be said

to have the order [A>N>Num>Dem.]. One can further note that so-called (in)definite articles are realized in the same position as demonstrative. This can be seen in the examples in (62).

- (62) a. tá'a shíshí ŋgeb yítsə [Num>A>N>IND.]
 one black chicken IND
 '(A certain) one black chicken'
- b. tá'a shíshí ŋgeb yíwə [Num>A>N>DEF.]
 one black chicken DEF
 'The one black chicken'
- c. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-én teeró p-itsə [A>N>Num>IND.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-AM three 2-IND
 '(Some) three black chickens'
- d. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-én teeró p-iwə [A>N>Num>DEF.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-AM three 2-DEF
 'The three black chickens'

Concerning agreement within the noun system, it appears in some instances that the head noun does not determine the agreement prefixes of the other elements. Such a conclusion might be reached when one examines the data in (61) and (62), where the noun is having the class 6 plural prefix /mə-/ but the other elements show up with the class 2 plural prefix /pə-/, except (61b). The example in (61b) is interesting as one can see agreement across the board. Besides this example (although we will have more subsequently), the issue seems even more confusing given that the substitution of the pre-nominal adjective in (63) below (with the same *m-bě* version of 'two') will not take the class 6 plural prefix. The issue seems to be that pre-nominal adjectives do not necessarily agree with post nominal elements. Moreover, Num. seems to have a great deal to say as far as agreement is concerned. I will not pursue this issue further here since that will need a more detailed investigation and a considerable amount of participants for judgemental purposes which this chapter is, unfortunately, not dedicated for.

- (63) *mə-/pə-mé mə-ŋgeb m-én m-bě m-íó [A>N>Num>Dem.]
 6-2-big 6-chicken 6-AM 6-two 6-those
 'Those two big chickens'

Keeping aside agreement, it should be borne in mind that the order of the post-nominal elements, namely Num>Dem can be altered to Dem>Num with no pragmatic/semantic

modification. The morphemes which are simplistically considered as the definite and indefinite articles can also swap positions with Num. The following examples illustrate.

- (64) a. pə-mé mə-ŋgeb m-íə m-én teeló [A>N>Dem>Num.]
 2-big 6-chicken 6-those 6-AM three
 ‘Those three big chickens’
- b. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-íə p-én teeló [A>N>Dem>Num.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-those 2-AM three
 ‘Those three black chickens’
- c. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-ítsə p-én teeló [A>N>IND>Num.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-IND 2-AM three
 ‘(Some) three black chickens’
- c. pə-shíshí mə-ŋgeb p-íwə p-én teeló [A>N>IND>Num.]
 2-black 6-chicken 2-DEF 2-AM three
 ‘The three black chickens’

Note that the associative marker (AM) that precedes cardinal numbers is what actually shows up with the cardinal counting system beginning with the number twenty.⁶ This is not specific to numerals: As I earlier mentioned, not all adjectives can be in the prenominal position and

⁶ The Awing counting system has specific numbers from number 1 up to number 19. As from number 20, one would have to say things like ‘tens of two’ and number 30 will be ‘tens of three’ while the numbers in between will be a long phrase like (iid) which literally sounds like ‘tens of three and four’.

- (ii) a. n-əghómə
 5-ten
 ‘Ten’
- b. m-əghém m-én m-bě
 6-10 6-AM 6-two
 ‘twenty’
- c. m-əghém m-én teeló
 6-10 6-AM three
 ‘Thirty’
- d. m-əghém mén teeló ná mén nəkwa
 6-ten AM three and AM four
 ‘Thirty four’ (...)

Ordinal numbers beginning with third make use of a different AM which can be seen with third and fourth below. As for first and second, the former can be considered a compound word, and the latter is a deverbal process.

- (iii) a. kwá mbiə
 take front
 ‘First’
- b. a-zoŋkə
 7-follow
 ‘Second’
- c. zoŋ pá pě
 follow AM two
 ‘Third’
- c. zoŋ pá teeló
 follow AM three
 ‘Fourth’ (...)

- (67) a. (pə-shishi) pə-moto p-ê p-ə fɪə p-én teeló
 2-black 2-car 2-this 2-AM new 2-AM three
 ‘These new three (black) cars’
- b. (pə-shishi) pə-moto p-ə fɪə p-ê p-én teeló
 2-black 2-car 2-AM new 2-this 2-AM three
 ‘These new three (black) cars’
- c. ?pə-moto p-ê p-én teeló p-ə fɪə
 2-car 2-this 2-AM three 2-AM new
 ‘These three new cars’
- d. *pə-moto p-én teeló p-ê fɪə p-ê
 2-car 2-AM three 2-AM new 2-this
 Int: These three new cars’
- e. *pə-moto p-én teeló p-ê p-ê fɪə
 2-car 2-AM three 2-this 2-AM new
 Int: These three new cars’

Summarizing: Concerning the various orders within the Awing noun system, it can be noted that apart from the cardinal number 1 which exhibits the pattern [Num>A>N>Dem], the normal order is either [A>N>Dem>Num], (which Cinque (2005:FN11) identifies only two languages—Koiari (Dutton 1996) and Bai (Wiersma 2003) with it) or [A>N>Num>Dem] (which according to Cinque (2005FN 18) is with no doubt attested only in Sango a creole language spoken in Central African Republic). We have also seen that when there is an additional post-nominal adjective, Num has to show up as the final element. In this latter scenario, two possibilities are available: either [N>Dem>A>Num] (which Cinque 2005FN27 notes only three languages having this order among which is Noni a Beboid language spoken in Cameroon (Rijkhoff 2002:273)) or [N>A>Dem>Num] (which Cinque 2005:FN12 identifies a couple of languages with this order among which is Aghem a Grassfield Bantu language also spoken in Cameroon (Hymam 1979:27)). When we consider cases like those in (67a) and (67b), where there are two adjectives, one preceding the noun and the other one following it, and further generate the possible word order that can occur in such contexts, it will be difficult to fit the Awing data in the word orders that most of the studies that explore this domain claim to be the only possible ones.

Let us add the possessive determiner to the picture. First, note that when the possessive (Poss.) and the demonstrative are used, the possessive must precede the demonstrative, as (68a) and (68b) illustrate. The data in (69) further suggest that the post-nominal adjective has to precede both the possessive and the demonstrative. This implies that once the possessive determiner comes in, the only possible post-nominal order, where Num is singular and occurs before the noun, is [Num>(A>)N>A>Pos>Dem], see (69a); and all other orders are ruled out, see (69b) through (69d).

- (68) a. (ta'a mɛ paŋpaŋ) moto (gh)o jíə
 one big red car your that
 'That your (one red new) car'
- b. *moto jíə (gh)o
 car that your
 Int: 'That your car'
- (69) a. ta'a (paŋpaŋ) moto yə fɪə (gh)o jíə
 one red car AM new your that
 'That your one (red) new car'
- b. *ta'a paŋpaŋ moto (gh)o jíə yə fɪə
 one red car your that AM new
 Int: 'That your one red new car'
- c. *ta'a paŋpaŋ moto jíə yə fɪə (gh)o
 one red car that AM new your
 Int: 'That your one red new car'
- d. *ta'a paŋpaŋ moto (gh)o jíə yə fɪə
 one red car your that AM new
 Int: 'That your one red new car'

Now, when number is plural and has to also be in the post-nominal position, the only attested order, as expected, is [(A)>N>A>Poss>Dem>Num]; any other order is ungrammatical, as can be seen in (70b) through (70d).

- (70) a. pə-paŋpaŋ pə-moto p-ə fɪə p-o p-íə p-én teeló
 2-red 2-car 2-AM new 2-your 2-that 2-AM three
 'Those your three red new cars'

- b. *pə-paŋpaŋ pə-moto p-íə p-ə fíə p-o p-én teeló
 2-red 2-car 2-that 2-AM new 2-your 2-AM three
 Int: ‘Those your three red new cars’
- c. *pə-paŋpaŋ pə-moto p-én teeló p-ə fíə p-o p-íə
 2-red 2-car 2-AM three 2-AM new 2-your 2-that
 Int: ‘Those your three red new cars’
- d. *pə-paŋpaŋ pə-moto p-o p-én teeló p-ə fíə p-íə
 2-red 2-car 2-your 2-AM three 2-AM new 2-that
 Int: ‘Those your three red new cars’

Finally, combining the various nominal modifiers with the associative noun phrase (N_{-AS-N}) will yield the same patterns that we have observed with the noun: the singular Num in the pre-nominal position will have the order [Num>A>N_{-AS-N}>Dem.], as shown in the various examples in (71); this order cannot be altered.

- (71) a. shishi atə’ ø Tsefor nê [A>N_{-AS-N}>Dem.]
 black dress AM Tsefor this
 ‘This Tsefor’s black dress’
- b. tá’ shishi ətsə’ ø Tsefor [Num>A>N_{-AS-N}.]
 one black dress AM Tsefor
 ‘One of Tsefor’s black dresses’
- c. tá’ shishi ətsə’ ø Tsefor nê [Num>A>N_{-AS-N}>Dem.]
 one black dress AM Tsefor this
 ‘One of this Tsefor’s black dresses’

We know that when there is no post-nominal adjective Dem and Num can occur in any order, as shown in (72a) [A>N_{-AS-N}>Dem>Num] and (72b) [A>N_{-AS-N}>Num>Dem].

- (72) a. pə-shishi ə-tsə’ ø Tsefor p-ê p-én nəkwa
 2-black 8-dress AM Tsefor 2-this 2-AM four
 ‘These Tsefor’s four black dresses’
- b. pə-shishi ə-tsə’ ø Tsefor p-én nəkwa p-əənə
 2-black 8-dress AM Tsefor 2-AM four 2-this
 ‘These Tsefor’s four black dresses’

On the other hand, we have seen that there is a rigid order when there is a post-nominal adjective. In effect, only two orders are available for the simple noun phrase (which are: [(A>)N>Dem>A>Num.]—(67a) and [(A>)N>A>Dem>Num.]—(67b)). In the same way, these two orders can be used with the associative noun phrase as attested in (73a) [(A>)N-_{AS}-N>Dem>A>Num.] and (73b) [(A>)N-_{AS}-N>A>Dem>Num.].

- (73) a. (mə-shishi) mə-ndě m-ə Tsefor m-ê m-ə fīə m-én m-bě
 6-black 6-house 6-AM Tsefor 6-this 6-AM new 6-AM 6-two
 ‘These Tsefor’s two new (black) houses’
- b. (mə-shishi) mə-ndě m-ə Tsefor m-ə fīə m-ê m-én m-bě
 6-black 6-house 6-AM Tsefor 6-AM new 6-this 6-AM 6-two
 ‘These Tsefor’s two new (black) houses’

The ungrammatical structures of (73) are not provided but the story remains the same: Num has to occur in the final position. Having shown that the structure of the associative noun phrase is the same as that of the simple noun phrase, we can conclude the description with an interesting specificity that applies to the associative noun phrase which, due to its nature (i.e. being just one nominal), the simple noun phrase cannot exhibit. To some extent, the Awing associative noun phrase behaves like the English genitive phrase in that the post-nominal adjective can split the possessed and the genitive nouns as shown in (74). When this happens, unsurprisingly, Dem and Num can (once more) occur in any order: recall that the presence of the post-nominal adjective restricts the post-nominal order, to an extent. Note also that no other element can occur in between the possessed and the genitive nouns as the associative-adjective does, not even the pre-nominal adjective.

- (74) a. (mə-shishi) mə-ndě m-ə fīə m-ə Tsefor m-én m-bě mə-nê
 6-black 6-house 6-AM new 6-AM Tsefor 6-AM 6-two 6-this
 ‘These Tsefor’s two new (black) houses’
- b. (mə-shishi) mə-ndě m-ə fīə m-ə Tsefor m-ê m-én m-bě
 6-black 6-house 6-AM new 6-AM Tsefor 6-this 6-AM 6-two
 ‘These Tsefor’s two new (black) houses’

The data in (74) further boost the possible orders in Awing to [(A>)N->A-_{AM}-N>Num>Dem.] for (74a), and [(A>)N->A-_{AM}-N>Dem>Num.] for (74b). The table in (75) captures these various nominal orders. Recall that the simple NP orders are what we have with the associative NP with the same constraints; the only exception being the examples in (74).

(75)

NP Types	NP Orders	Examples	Notes
NP	[Num>A>N>Dem.]	(61a)	Car.Num.1 only
NP	[Num>A>N>ART.]	(62)	DEF./IND. ARTicles
NP	[A>N>Num>Dem.]	(61b, c & d)	Car.Num. 2 and above
NP	[A>N>Dem>Num.]	(64 a & b)	Same meaning as (61)
NP	[A>N>ART>Num.]	(64c & d)	Same meaning as (62)
NP	[Num(>A)>N>A>Dem.]	(66)	Car.Num. 1 with a post-nominal Adj. plus optional pre-nominal Adj.
NP	[(A>)N>Dem>A>Num.]	(67a)	Both Num. and Adj. are post-nominal
NP	[(A>)N>A>Dem>Num.]	(67b)	Same meaning as (67a). NB Num. must be final.
NP	[Num>(A>)N>A>Pos>Dem]	(69a)	Order cannot change.
NP	[(A>)N>A>Poss>Dem>Num]	(70a)	Post-nominal plural Num. must be final.
Ass. NP	[Num>A>N- _{AM} -N>Dem.]	(71c)	NB The Ass(ociative) NP illustrates the same orders as the simple NP.
Ass. NP	[(A>)N>- _{AM} A- _{AM} -N>Dem>Num.] OR, [(A>)N>- _{AM} A- _{AM} -N>Num>Dem.]	(73)	NB Main difference with the simple NP: post-nominal Adj. occurs between the two nouns and Dem. can change positions with Num.

2.6 Summary

This chapter aimed to present the various processes used to create new nouns in Awing and how the nominal system is organised. The overall discussion on nominal formation concentrates on how specific affixes combine with categories like verbs, nouns and adjectives and how these categories themselves are combined to create new words. I argued that affixation on the verb is one of the most productive ways to obtain new nouns in Awing. We also saw that in creating new words, additional morpho-phonological processes can apply, e.g., the /n/ or /nə/ infixation on post-nominal adjectives (see the data and discussion pertaining to example (48)). Moreover, it has been noted that verb stems maintain their tonal

patterns in some instances but in most cases they are modified. Some of the morpho-phonological and tonal patterns that accompany the various nominal processes that have been briefly highlighted in this chapter might constitute an interesting domain for future research for phonologists. A specific morpho-phonological property that deserves to be emphasized is the N-prefix that occurs before the verb and is homorganic with the verb's initial consonant. This N-prefixation can be used to derive nouns, as we saw in sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.6. In the following chapter, we will see that there is also a homorganic N-prefix that attaches to verbs and other verbal elements like aspect. The N-prefixation process that we will be discussing in the following chapter does not transform the verbs into nouns. Thus, it might be of interest to investigate in future why the verbs do not get a nominal interpretation, or at least an ambiguous reading when affixed with the N-prefix in such context in Awing. In addition to these observations, it was noted that one of the most outspoken features of Awing nouns is that they generally end with a vowel and the majority of them end with the schwa. We have seen that even borrowed words take the final vowel. Given that nouns and verbs in Awing can occur in two forms, i.e., long and short forms and the short form is either a sort of 'truncated' form (e.g., *móonə* vs *mó* 'child') or simply the loss of the final vowel (e.g., *ηgesáyǎ* vs *ηgesáy* 'maize'), chapter 4 will be investigating the various contexts that condition the use of these forms. Finally, it has been noted that analogous to (Grassfields) Bantu languages, adjectives are very limited in Awing and that most adjectival phrases can be spontaneous descriptions (i.e., combinations of words, e.g., *people of age* meaning 'youths'). Investigating adjectives and adverbs and their various forms might equally constitute an exciting future research domain in Awing.

Chapter 3

Verb morphology and clause structure

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the basic sentence order in Awing with particular emphasis on the verb's structure. Among other things, the chapter will focus on: aspect, tense, mood and negation. Awing, parallel to most Grassfields Bantu languages (Watters 2003), is an SVO language with a considerable amount of preverbal affixes and a verbal extension slot. The status of these verbal categories, that is, whether they are free or inflectional morphemes is still an ongoing debate in Bantu literature (see, e.g., Bresnan & Mchombo 1987; Buell 2005). I 'simplistically' consider them as inflectional morphemes due to the tight morpho-phonological patterns that they exhibit with each other and also with the verb; to become evident in the course of this chapter. As mentioned in the previous chapter, nouns are glossed without their class references. Nonetheless, in the discussion on agreement to be developed in the following section, nouns are numbered based on an ongoing work (Akem et al. in prep.).

Although preverbal elements are considered as affixes in Awing, it should be mentioned that Grassfields languages differ from well documented Bantu languages like Swahili in that verbal categories are isolative and can be easily segmented in Grassfields. In other words, Grassfields languages mostly have analytic preverbal slots which differ from Southern Bantu languages that have a more or less synthetic structures. Example (1a) illustrates the basic SVO sentence order with the various prefixes. Note that none of the preverbal element is obligatory (1b). Sentences with two objects, the indirect object is obligatorily introduced by a preposition; but a preposition is not obligatory with temporal or other types of adjuncts.⁷ Having the indirect object precede the direct object is not permitted (1c).

⁷ Apart from the fact that prepositions can be optional with adjuncts, they seem to derive their meaning contextually. For example, the preposition *á* in the following examples is glossed as 'to', 'in' and 'on'. However, one might argue, intuitively, that the preposition's basic meaning is 'to', and that the other meanings are derived in combination with the nominals that it occurs with. Walters (2003:243-244) quoting Chia 1983:82-87) notes a similar property in Kom, another Grassfields Bantu language.

- (1) a. Aghetse a pə' m-bí m-fi ndzô *(mbo) Ngwe (á) mäsâne
 Aghetse SM P1 N-ITE N-sell beans to Ngwe in morning
 'Aghetse sold beans again to Ngwe in the morning'
- b. Aghetse fi ndzô mbo Ngwe
 Aghetse sell beans to Ngwe
 'Aghetse has sold beans to Ngwe'
- c. *Aghetse fi mbo Ngwe ndzô
 Aghetse sell to Ngwe beans
 'Aghetse has sold beans to Ngwe'

Also, unlike Southern and Eastern Bantu languages that have object markers (OMs) that agree in (some) features with the object and function, more or less as SMs depending on the language (see, e.g., Bresnan and Mchombo 1987; Baker 1996), Grassfields languages generally do not have object markers, to the best of my knowledge. As such, when the object is omitted the object position can take a pronoun or is left as a gap, depending on the language or the clause type. Example (2b) shows that the object pronoun is optional in Awiing canonical SVO sentences when the object is not phonetically realized.

- (2) a. Aghetse a nə m-fi ndzô mbo Ngwe əzooná
 Aghetse SM P2 N-sell beans to Ngwe yesterday
 'Aghetse sold beans to Ngwe yesterday'
- b. əm̀, *(a) nə n-ká m-finê (zərə) mbo Ayafor
 Yes, SM P2 N-also N-give it to Ayafor
 'Yes, she also sold it to Ayafor'

-
- (i) Ayafor a pe' ŋ-ghenê (á) məteená ná ŋgəsáŋá
 Ayafor SM P1 N-go to market with maize
 'Ayafor went to the market with the maize'
- (ii) Ayafor a nə tséebə mbo Tsefor (á) ndé-nchwá'ə
 Ayafor SM P2 talk to Tsefor in house-meeting
 'Ayafor talked (to Tsefor in the meeting)'
- (iii) Ayafor a pe' náanə (á) ndú əlelə
 Ayafor SM P1 sit on husband bridge
 'Ayafor sat on the bridge'

Apart from the facts that there is no OM and that none of the preverbal slot is obligatory in canonical SVO sentences, a couple of observations from the data in (1) and (2) need to be highlighted. First, observe in (2b) that a null subject obligatorily warrants the presence of the SM, contrary to the observation in (1b) that none of the preverbal element is obligatory. Although it is clear that the morpheme glossed as ‘it’ in (2b) is an anaphoric pronoun, descriptively, the exact status of the SM is less obvious, given that it can co-occur with the subject. Section 2.2 will be concerned with an inventory of subject markers in Awing; to get a (theoretical) grasp of the semantic role of the SM in Awing the reader is referred to chapter 6 section 6.4 of this work and Fominyam & Georgi (2021). Also notice that there is a homorganic nasal that attaches to the verb and the preceding aspectual marker. In the preceding chapter we saw that there is a similar nasal, or process used to transform verbs into nouns. The situation here seems to be different in that the homorganic nasal does not transform the verb and aspect into nouns. Section 3.7 will elaborate on the various triggers of this homorganic nasal prefix within the verbal/inflectional system. Moreover, the reader might have realized that the verb ‘sell’ in (1) and (2) takes a different form in example (2b). This has to do with the notion of long and short forms that was mentioned in the conclusion of the preceding chapter. This, unfortunately, will only be fully addressed in the following chapter. As already mentioned, this chapter will concentrate on the description of verbal categories. The organisation is as follows: section 3.2 will present what I believe is the infinitive verb form, given that we shall be encountering different forms of the same verb in the course of this chapter and work in general. Then the following section takes on the the subject marker and other verbal categories will follow thus: tense; aspects; mood; the N-prefix; verbal extensions; negation and we will conclude with adverbial phrases.

3.2 The infinitive verb

A verb in its infinitive form can be considered as that form in which the verb is free from any inflectional modification. Modification on the verb can include, amongst other things: temporal, aspectual and modal inflections. The Awing verb in what I consider to be the infinite form is made up of the root and a circumfix and both the prefix and the suffix have a CV structure with (arguably) high tones. The prefix and suffix on their own are void of any semantic content. Understanding the form of the Awing verb is crucial as we will eventually see how the verb changes forms depending on the nature and/or (dis)placement of its arguments, that is, the subject and, most importantly, the direct object. It might be of interest to also note that there are no verbs in Awing that begin with vowels. In addition, the Awing

verb is mostly, if not always just a single syllable which can be open CV(V) or closed CVC, that is, when they do not occur with the infinitive markers. This is typical of Grassfields Bantu, see Watters (2003:245). The data in (3) column A and B show verbs that are not bearing the infinitive circumfix and those that occur with the circumfix, respectively. The verbs towards the end of column A appear as though they have two syllables. However, this might be deceptive: the same verbs bearing the infinitive circumfix suggest that these verbs are monosyllabic verbs. So, the schwa /ə/ might be a residue of the infinitive suffix.

(3) A. Finite verb forms		B. Infinitive verb forms			
roots	Glosses	Prefixes-roots-suffixes			Glosses
fê	‘give’	má-	fê	-nə	‘to give’
kwáalə	‘receive’	má-	kwáa	-nə	‘to receive’
tsó’ə	‘remove’	má-	tsó’	-nə	‘to remove’
ŋá’ə	‘open’	má-	ŋá’	-nə	‘to open’
ghenê	‘go’	má-	ghen	-nə	‘to go’
kɔŋê	‘love’	má-	kɔŋ	-nə	‘to love’
zágə	‘feed’	má-	zág	-nə	‘to feed’
póŋə	‘lack’	má-	póŋ	-nə	‘to lack’

The sentences in (4) demonstrate the use of infinitive verbs. It is used in (4a) in the complement clause as, say, a gerundive subject; and in (4b) in what is referred to as ‘control clauses’, that is, a clause with an implied subject.

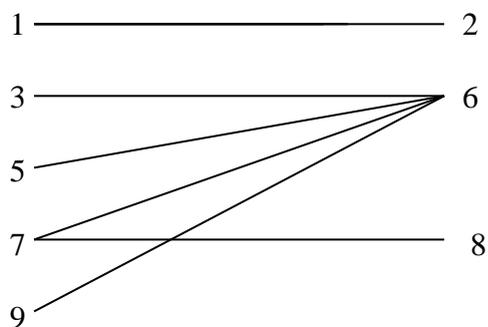
- (4) a. Neh a súŋ ŋgó má-fê-nə məló’ə mbo móonə má mboŋ
 Neh SM said that INF-give-INF wine to child NEG good
 ‘Neh said that giving wine to a child is not good’
- b. Neh a lónə má-zág-nə móonə
 Neh SM want INF-feed-INF child
 ‘Neh wants to feed the child’

Being fully aware that the data in (3) might not depict a holistic picture of the syllabic structure of Awing verbs, it is important to at least have in mind what the infinitive and finite verbs look like in citation. The next sub-section aims to identify the various subject markers in Awing.

3.3 Subject markers

In Bantu languages, subject agreement/marking generally refers to the phenomenon whereby a preverbal element/morpheme agrees, that is, shares the same noun-class feature(s) with the subject. From a theoretical view point, however, the notion of subject marking turns out to be a crucial one. Among other things, subject marking is argued to be responsible for a certain type of nominal displacement within the sentence, specifically subject movement (see for example, Baker 2003; Collins 2004). The presence or not of the subject marker has also been attributed to the information status of the subject NP in Bantu literature (see among others Zerbian 2006; Zeller 2008; van der Wal 2009; Halpert 2012; and Baier 2018). The aim of this section is not to get into any of these theoretical issues (cf. chapter 6 sections 6.4 & 6.5) but rather to present the various subject markers that Awing grammar makes use of and, importantly, observe the main feature(s) that determine the choice of the subject marker. To achieve this, we will examine a series of sentences with subjects belonging to the various noun classes that are attested in Awing. Such constructions are provided in (6) through (16). A reminder of the various noun classes with the singular plural (gender) pairing is provided in (5) below.

(5) *Singular plural pairing (genders)*



- (6) a. **∅**-kwúneemə ó ferə akeeló
 1-pig SM leave fence
 ‘A/the pig is out of the fence’
- b. **pə**-kwúna pə ferə akeeló
 2-pig SM leave fence
 ‘Pigs are out of the fence’

- (7) a. **∅-ənoonə** é nə chîə á lí'ə nəwûə
 3-crowd SM P2 be in place death
 'There was a crowd at the funeral'
- b. **m-ənoonə** mə nə chîə á lí'ə nəwûə
 6-crowds SM P2 be in place death
 'There were crowds in the funeral'
- (8) a. **∅-ŋkĩ** yíwə é jumə
 3-water DEF SM dry
 'The water is dry'
- b. **mə-ŋkĩ** míwə mə jumə
 6-waters/rivers DEF SM dry
 'Waters/Rivers are dry'
- (9) a. **nə-lélé** é pə' n-dumə Tsefor
 5-soldier-ant SM P1 N-bite Tsefor
 'A soldier-ant has bitten Tsefor'
- b. **mə-lélé** mə pə' n-dumə Tsefor
 6-soldier-ant SM P1 N-bite Tsefor
 'Soldier-ants have bitten Tsefor'
- (10) a. **∅-téséləsélə** é pə' n-dumə Tsefor
 1-ant SM P1 N-bite Tsefor
 'An ant has bitten Tsefor'
- b. **pə-téséləsélə** pə pə' n-dumə Tsefor
 2-ant SM P1 N-bite Tsefor
 'Ants have bitten Tsefor'
- (11) a. **a-tíə** é pə' n-gwǔə laaŋə
 7-tree SM P1 N-fall road
 'A tree fell on the road'
- b. **mə-tí** mə pə' ŋ-gwǔə laaŋə
 6-tree SM P1 N-fall road
 'Trees fell on the road'

- (12) a. \emptyset -ndɛlɔ́ ɔ́ laŋə
 9-time SM past
 ‘It is late’
- b. mə-ndɛ’ mə laŋə
 6-times SM past
 ‘Those times have past’ (for example, all planting seasons)
- (13) a. a-kwe ʒíə ɔ́ kě nɔ́ maŋ kó’ pô
 7-answer his SM NEG with me reach NEG
 ‘I do not agree with his response’
- ə-kwe píə mə kě nɔ́ maŋ kó’ pô
 8-answer his SM NEG with me reach NEG
 ‘I do not agree with his responses’

The examples in (6) through (13) have non-human subject NPs. These examples actually exhaust the various noun classes identified in Awing. Observe that all singular NPs (i.e., classes 3, 5, 7 and 9) in the above examples take the same subject marker ɔ́ . The subject NPs expressing plurality, namely the classes 2, 6 and 8, have two subject markers: the classes 6 and 8 take $mə$ and class 2 nouns occur with $pə$. The data in (6) through (13) suggest that class noun reference play no role in the choice of the SM. The main distinctive feature in these examples is number: the distinction between singular and plural NPs. Another feature that also determines the choice of the SM in Awing is human/non-human. As already noted, all the above examples take non-human subject NPs. Conversely, when the subject NP is human, a different pair of SMs is used. Examples can be seen from (14) to (16).

- (14) a. ə-fəgɔ́ a nə ŋ-gwũə məm ŋkíə
 1-blind SM P2 N-fall inside water
 ‘A blind fell inside the water/river’
- b. pə-fəgɔ́ po nə ŋ-gwũə məm ŋkíə
 2-blind SM P2 N-fall inside water
 ‘Blind men fell inside the water/river’
- (15) a. m-ɔ́-ə-mbyâŋnə a ghenê afoonə
 1-child-?-man SM go hunting
 ‘A/the boy went hunting’

- b. **p-ó-pə**-mbyâŋnə po ghenê afoonə
 2-child-2-man SM go hunting
 ‘The boys went hunting’
- (16) a. **a-po’ó** yítsə a nə n-djwítə ŋkǎmóʒó’ó yíwə
 7-slave IND SM P2 N-kill monkey DEF
 ‘A slave killed the monkey’
- b. **ə-po’ó** pítsə po nə n-djwítə ŋkǎmóʒó’ó yíwə
 8-slaves IND SM P2 N-kill monkey DEF
 ‘The/some slaves killed the monkey’

If we now compare, for example, (13) against (16), taking into consideration the fact that they have the same noun gender pairing, namely the class 7 and 8 gender, it becomes obvious that the choice of the SM is actually immune to noun class reference. We can therefore sum up by stating that the nature of the subject marker in Awing basically relies on number and human versus non-human. There are five morphemes used as subject markers, two of which serve as singular markers and the other three are used to express plurality. This can be captured in the following table.

(17) Awing SM paradigm:

	Human	Non-human
sg	a	ó
pl	pə	pə, mə

I claim that the subject marker in Awing is immune to noun class reference. However, it is not clear from such a position why the non-human plural has two forms. We know that *pə* is the class 2 plural for class 1 nouns and that *mə* is the class 6 and 8 plural which takes as singular classes 3, 5, 7, and 9. Hence, the two plural markers could be seen as a residue of noun class reference in Awing. Semantically, the choice between these two non-human plural forms seems to be driven by whether the subject denotes a clearly individuated atomic or non-atomic (i.e., mass-like) entities. In such a distinction, the *pə* SM will be used with atomic entities (e.g., ‘pigs’ in (6b)) and the *mə* SM with mass-like entities (e.g., ‘crowd’ in example (7b) or ‘water’ in (8b)); but example (11b) with ‘trees’, which is a countable (contrary to forest), (already) obscures this generalization.

To conclude, it is also important to mention that parallel to human subject markers (see chapter 2 section 3.1), non-human subject markers also function as (free) pronouns, that is when the subject NP can be inferred contextually:

- (18) a. é pə’ n-gwǔə laaŋə
 SM P1 N-fall road
 ‘It fell on the road’ (talking about a tree, for instance)
- b. mə pə’ ŋ-gwǔə laaŋə
 SM P1 N-fall road
 ‘They fell on the road’ (talking about trees, for instance)
- c. pə ferə akeeló
 SM leave fence
 ‘They are out of the fence’ (talking about pigs, for instance)

Compared to Southern Bantu languages that have preserved a rich noun class system, it is not surprising that so-called subject markers are not only limited in Awing but generally do not take into account the noun class reference of the subject NP. In effect, while it is argued that subject marking (or agreement) can be achieved via a low tone on the verb in Aghem (Hyman 1979b:48), most Grassfields languages do not have subject markers, or at least elements that optionally co-occur with the subject NP like those described here for Awing. This therefore begs the question whether these elements are actually ‘subject agreeing morphology’ in the strict sense of the term or some kind of pronominal elements. In Awing, specifically, Fominyam & Georgi (2021) argue that subject markers are pronominal elements that can co-occur with the subject NP, as in examples (6) through (16), or actually occupy the subject position as pronouns (18) and that the crucial property that determines the presence or not of the subject marker is the ‘referentiality’ of the subject NP. This is because unlike in canonical SVO constructions, certain clause types prohibit or oblige the use of the SM in Awing. This will become obvious in chapter 6; for a more technical view the interested reader is referred to Fominyam & Georgi (2021). The next section takes on the Awing temporal system.

3.4 Tense

Crystal (2008:479) describes tense as “a category used in the grammatical description of verbs referring primarily to the way the grammar marks the time at which the action denoted by the verb took place”. Tense can therefore be viewed as a verbal category/form that locates the

time of *action*⁸ expressed by the verb in relation to the time of utterance. The timing can be situated in the past, present or future. In Awing, as in (most) Bantu languages, tense is expressed either by the combination of tonal modification on the verb and/or segmental elements that often precede the verb (see Nurse 2003:92). Present continuous or habitual tenses/actions can be expressed in Awing via tonal modification on the verb. This can be achieved by adding a high tone on the verb's final vowel. For example the verb *shúmə* 'beat' in isolation occurs with a high-low tone. The present continuous tense can be achieved by docking a high tone on the schwa, as shown in (19a) below. On the other hand, the present perfect tense can be achieved by deleting both high tones (19b). I must say, though, that such a simplistic description might not be generalized to all verbs (and contexts). What is important to take from this is that, what might be considered as both the present continuous and present perfect tenses can be expressed via tonal modification on the verb. While the present continuous tense takes a high-high pattern, the present perfect tense has a sort of low-low or falling rhythm. To determine the exact tonological patterns involved, a wider range of verbs and contexts, and perhaps specific equipments, might be needed.

- (19) a. Alombah a shúmə móonə
 Alombah SM beat child
 'Alombah is beating/beats the child'
- b. Alombah a shumə móonə
 Alombah SM cook food
 'Alombah has beaten the child'

Concerning segmental tenses, Awing has three symmetrical ways to express past and future actions. The past tense marker *pe* ' (P1) expresses actions that occurred the same day (of speech)—'today marker'. In the same manner, the future tense marker *yí* (F1) denotes actions that are likely to occur the same day. The second category is the *nə* (P2) and *yó* (F2) markers. The former expresses actions that happened the previous day(s), week(s) or even year(s) while the latter denotes actions that are likely to happen the following day(s) week(s) or year(s). This kind of symmetric graded tense system is very common in Bantu (Grassfields) languages (see, e.g., Mucha 2016 on Medumba). The following examples with optional time adverbials clarify the distribution and interpretation of these time locators in Awing.

⁸ 'Action' is used here as a cover term for any sort of mental or physical activity, i.e., state, event or process, expressed by the verb.

- (20) a. Alombah pe' m-fe ndzǒ mbo Tsefor (məsâṇə/*əzoonə)
 Alombah P1 N-give beans to Tsefor morning/yesterday
 'Alombah gave beans to Tsefor (in the morning/*yesterday)'
- b. Alombah nə m-fe ndzǒ mbo Tsefor (əzoonə/ḡgo'ə / *məsâṇə)
 Alombah P2 N-give beans to Tsefor yesterday year morning
 'Alombah gave beans to Tsefor (yesterday / last year/ #in the morning)'
- (21) a. Alombah yî fé ndzǒ mbo Tsefor (əghâ-kwanə/ *ḡgwε'ə)
 Alombah F1 give beans to Tsefor time-return tomorrow
 'Alombah will give beans to Tsefor (in the evening/*tomorrow)'
- b. Alombah yó fé ndzǒ mbo Tsefor (ḡgwε'ə/ ḡgo'ə / *əghâ-ḡkwanə)
 Alombah F2 give beans to Tsefor tomorrow year time-return
 'Alombah will give beans to Tsefor (tomorrow/ next year/ *in the evening)'

A closer look through the above examples and the English translations makes one wonder how the time reference is interpreted, in particular, how the tense marker associates with the time adjunct to obtain a particular time reference. For example, *ḡgo'ə* 'year' occurs as a bare noun/time adjunct in Awing but is translated as 'last year' and 'next year' in (20b) and (21b), respectively. Such a query will obviously take us far beyond the scope of this chapter. It suffices to note that the time adverbs are used to indicate that in Awing, as in most Bantu languages, the tense system is graded. Awing uses the P2 and F2 markers to denote remote actions, as opposed to recent ones: P1 and F1. More concretely, these markers express actions that can locate specific past and possible future actions. That is, the speaker will use P2 when s/he expresses an action which can be located within a specific time in the past; likewise, F2 will be for actions that will/might occur at a particular time in the future. Conversely, when the speaker cannot recall, or is ignorant of the specific time of the action, be it in the past or in the future, a third category of markers is used, namely a combination of P2 or F2 with the 'indefinite' time adverb *lá'a* (loosely translated as 'ever'). Note that the adverb can be used without the tense markers, see the examples in (22a) and (22b). When used in combination with either P2 or F2, as in examples (23a) and (23b), respectively, the speaker expresses, as already noted, his ignorance to the time of reference.

- (22) a. Neh lá'a (pí) lógə kán ḡgwúə nê əfó
 Neh ever ITE get type dog this where
 'Where will Neh ever get this type of dog (again)?'

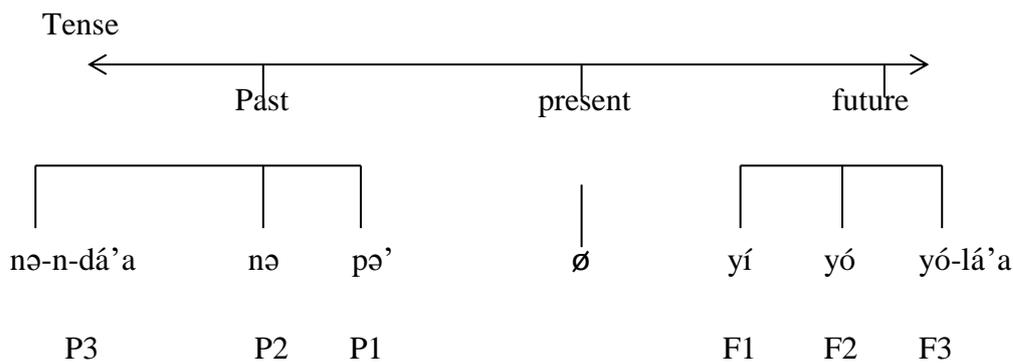
- b. Neh pɛ'tə n-dá'a n-dzəənə kán ŋgwúə nê--é
 Neh already N-ever N-seen type dog this-QM
 'Has Neh ever seen this type of dog?'

- (23) a. Neh nə-n-dá'a ŋ-ghɛtə kán ŋgwúə nə
 Neh P3 N-have type dog this
 'Neh once had this type of dog'

- b. Neh yó-lá'a ghétə kán ŋgwúə nə
 Neh F3 have kind dog this
 'Neh will/shall one day have this type of dog'

Below is a visual representation of the Awing tense system:

(24)



The above representation recapitulates the simple tense system. I must mention, though, that the P2 and the F2 have variant: *kə* and *ló*, respectively. There is no semantic difference using *kə* or *nə* (P2), likewise *ló* or *yó* (F2). However, the P2 markers *kə* and *nə* exhibit a morpho-syntactic difference with respect to the nasal prefix that sometimes attaches to the verb; we return to that in section 3.7. The following sub-section addresses a more complex way of expressing time reference in Awing.

3.4.1 A complex tense clause

Grammars usually find ways to express complex concepts and tense is not an exception. As earlier mentioned, most Bantu languages have a 'simplistic' tense graded system which can be express via inflectional or segmental morphology. Northern Sotho, for example, basically uses both methods to express simple past and future tenses. However, Nurse (2008:131) reports that compound clauses/tenses often combine an auxiliary verb which precedes the

main verb and both the main and the auxiliary verbs are inflected by tense and/or aspectual markers. Consider the example from Northern Sotho in (25) below extracted from Nurse (2008).

- (25) Re-tlo-b-e re-rek-ile
 1pl-FUT-AUX-SBJV SM1pl-buy-PERF
 ‘We will have bought’ (*Northern Sotho, Nurse 2008:157*)

In the above construction, the verb takes a perfective (PERF) suffix/aspect and the auxiliary is prefixed with a future tense, resulting in a sort of future perfect interpretation (in English). Aving grammar also has different ways to express complex tense clauses. Some are simple and others are more complex. In example (26), the morpheme *pîpə* (which I gloss as an auxiliary since it seems to be void of semantic content (Nurse 2008:94)) is used before the verb to derive, say, a ‘simple compound tense’. Example (26a) differs from (26b) in that the P2 marker precedes *pîpə* (AUX) in the latter; both constructions express past conditional tenses.

- (26) a. Alombah a pîpə náŋnə məjíə
 Alombah SM AUX cook food
 ‘Alombah should have cooked food’
- b. Alombah a nə m-bîpə náŋnə məjíə
 Alombah SM P2 N-AUX cook food
 ‘Alombah would have cooked food’

Notice the shift from ‘should’ in (26a) to ‘would’ in the past in (26b). This suggests that *pîpə* is a modal element, contrary to the claim that the morpheme has no semantic content. In effect, it seems that the meaning of this morpheme is determined in combination with the type of tense that it occurs with. Hence, for neutrality, I gloss the morpheme as auxiliary. Now, one way to express a more complex tense will consist of—first having a verb in sentence-initial position prefixed with what appears to be the infinitive prefix *má-* and the (today) past tense (P1), and then have the P2 marker precede the *pîpə* morpheme, see examples (27a), (28a) and (29a). Also observe that there is another verb preceding the second negation (NEG) marker. The exact status of the sentence-initial cluster containing the verb, the P1 marker and what seems to be the infinitive prefix in these constructions is less obvious. Intuitively (as shown in the English translation), the cluster is interpreted as a gerund. As such, it is likely that the

initial prefix is (actually) the infinitive marker. However, the presence of P1 seems to cast doubt on such a classification. Again, to avoid any labelling confusion, let us refer to the cluster as a tensed and situated proposition. Such a proposition seems to serve as a kind of ‘semantic restrictor’ to the *bîpə* auxiliary. Moreover, for some (non-obvious) reasons, this tense and situated proposition sounds weird in affirmative clauses; see (27b), (28b) and (29b). To express the intended affirmative sentences, either the conditional marker *támbo’* ‘if’ or the infinitive form of the verb is used, as in, e.g., (28c) and (29c), respectively. So, in addition to the fact that the categorial status of the so-called tense and situated proposition is not obvious, its usage seems to be restricted in affirmative clauses. Unfortunately we will not get into such details (which might necessitate a deeper semantics of these elements and clause types) for now; the focus at this point is to observe how complex tense clauses are realized in Awing. A context is provided to best apprehend each of the examples.

Context: *Schools are on strike. A politician tries to convince the people that if schools had resumed their problems will be looked upon. They don’t believe him...*

- (27) a. mǎ-pə’-n-chwakə əŋwa’rə nə m-bîpə kě ŋgǎ’ yíwə tsoŋkâ pô
 ?-P1-N-begin schools P2 N-AUX NEG trouble DEF fix NEG
 ‘Resuming schools would not have fixed the problem’
- b. ?mǎ-pə’-n-chwakə əŋwa’rə nə m-bîpə tsoŋkâ ŋgǎ’ yíwə
 ?-P1-N-begin schools P2 N-AUX fix trouble DEF
 Int: ‘Resuming schools would have fixed the problem’
- c. támbo’ əŋwa’rə nə m-bî’ n-chwakə bə *(ǎ) tsoŋkâ ŋgǎ’ yíwə
 if school P2 N-AUX N- begins be it fix trouble DEF
 ‘Resuming schools would have fixed the problem’
 Lit: If schools have started the problems would have been fixed’

Context: *A Family is complaining that a relative is dying because he was not being given medications from the time he fell sick...*

- (28) a. mǎ-pə’-nô mǎ-fǔǎ nə m-bîpə kě yə tsó’ pô
 ?-P1-N-drink PL-drugs P2 N-AUX NEG him cure NEG
 ‘Drinking medicines would not have cured him’

- b. ʔmǎ-pǎ'-nô mǎ-fǔǎ nǎ m-bîpǎ tsó' yǎ
 ʔ-P1-N-drink PL-drug P2 N-AUX cure him
 Int: 'Drinking medicines would have cured him'
- c. tǎmbǎ' a nǎ m-bî' nô mǎ-fǔǎ bǎ *(a) nǎ ŋgyǎŋǎ
 if he P2 N-AUX drink PL-drug be he P2 well
 'Drinking medicines would have cured him'
 Lit: 'If he would have drank medicines he would have been cured'

Context: *A mother is complaining that her son is a thief because the father had refused giving him money...*

- (29) a. mǎ-pǎ'-m-fǎ ŋkéebǎ mbo yǎ nǎ m-bîpǎ
 ʔ-P1-N-give money to him P2 N-AUX
 kě yǎ kwúblǎ pô
 NEG him change NEG
 'Giving him money would not have changed him'
- b. ʔmǎ-pǎ'-m-fǎ ŋkéebǎ mbo yǎ nǎ m-bîpǎ kwúblǎ yǎ
 ʔ-P1-N-give money to him P2 N-AUX change him
 'Giving him money would have changed him'
- c. mǎ-fǎ-nǎ ŋkéebǎ mbo yǎ nǎ m-bîpǎ kwúblǎ yǎ
 INF-give-INF money to him P2 N-AUX change him
 'Giving him money would have changed him'

Observe for instance in (29a) and (29c) the word order alternation between the (second) verb and the object; the discontinuous negation marker *kě...pô* changes word order from SVO (in affirmative clauses) to SOV (in negative clauses). We will get to this and related issues in section 3.9. It might be argued that the Awing sentences in (27) to (29) comprise of two clauses. This is evident in the affirmative sentences in (27c) and (28c) that use the copular verb *bǎ* 'be' (to be clarified in chapter 5) to link the clauses. Notice that the morphemes immediately following the copula, that is, 'it' and 'he' resume the subjects in the matrix clauses. The subject position in Awing must be occupied (cf. chapter 6 § 2.3), hence these elements cannot be dropped.

Semantically, the constructions in (27), (28) and (29) seem to be viewed from a past P2 perspective, where the action denoted by the ‘embedded’ verbs ought to have occurred but did not. From this view, P2 seems to be a fake past marker assuming the role of an aspect. We will also see in section 3.6.3 below while discussing modals that P1 can also assume a fake tense role, where its role, apparently, is to accompany the P2 marker. Actually, contrary to what is described in the preceding section, it appears that tense markers do not generally have a one to one interpretation when used in such complex tense clauses. Nonetheless, they seem to preserve their semantics to an extent. For instance, the P2 marker cannot substitute P1 in the tense and situated proposition in (27a), (28a) and (29a); the ungrammaticality of example (30) is due to an attempt to use the P2 marker instead of P1. Recall that the P2 morpheme cannot be used in ‘today’s clauses’, that is, clauses that the action coincides with the same day of speech. Now, if the initial prefix in the tense and situated proposition is actually an infinitives marker, it is not surprising that P2 is incompatible in such a verbal chunk since P2 generally describes far past perfective actions.

- (30) *mǎ-nə-nô mǎ-fũə nə m-bîpə kě yə tsó’ pô
 ?-P2-N-drink PL-drugs P2 N-AUX NEG him cure NEG
 Int: ‘Drinking medicines would not have cured him’

Contrary to the P2 marker, it is possible to use the future tense markers with this sentence-initial tense and situated proposition, the examples in (31) and (32) illustrate. Example (31a) is with the infinitive circumfix. There is no discernible semantic difference between (31a) and (31b) which is used with the (today) F1 marker, as can be seen in the English translation. It seems, though, that there is a sort of pragmatic difference: while (31a) appears to be certain ‘going clubbing’, (31b) with the F1 seems to be anticipating or fantasizing ‘going clubbing’. In either case, both constructions express the idea of going clubbing ‘today’ and if it is the case that the sentence-initial verbal chunk in (31a) functions as a gerund, then the assumption that those in (27) to (29) are gerunds is not farfetched.

- (31) a. mǎ-ghɛn-nó ndé-apénə əghâ-kwanó ló ndá’ nú
 INF-go-INF house-dance time-return LE only thing
 pá’a maŋ kwáŋnə əghâ nǎ
 that I think time this
 ‘Going clubbing this evening is the only thing that I have in mind now’

- b. mǎ-yí-ghenê ndé-apénə əghâ-kwanó lǎ ndá' nú
 ?-F1-go house-dance time-return LE only thing
 pá'a maŋ kwáŋnə əghâ nê
 that I think now this
 'Going clubbing this evening is the only thing that I have in mind now'
- c. mǎ-yó-ghenê ndé-apénə lǎ ndá' nú pá'a maŋ kwáŋnə əghâ nê
 ?-F2-go house-dance LE only thing that I think time this
 'Going clubbing (tomorrow of after) is the only thing that I have in mind now'

Now, see that the initial-verbal chunk in (31c) is used with the F2 marker. As such, the event is construed as something that can only happen the following day (or weeks). As earlier mentioned, the meaning of tense markers seems to vary in such clauses: the F2 marker in (31c) might be interpreted as an aspectual marker that locates the event time in the future. Other examples are provided in (32) below. While (32a) will have a parallel interpretation to (31c), the example in (32b) with the 'adverbial' (ADV) element is construed as action that might likely happen in the future. Again, it is difficult to tell the difference between (32b) and (32c)—which is used with the F3 (i.e., the combination of the F2 and adverbial *lá'* morpheme).

- (32) a. mǎ-yó-chwákə əŋwa'rə alá'a nə yó má pə mɔ nú
 ?-F2-begin school village this F2 NEG be small thing
 'Resuming schools in this village will not be an easy task'
- b. mǎ-lá'-kwárə nəfónə mbo Tsefor yó má pə mɔ nú
 ?-ADV-take power from Tsefor F2 NEG be small thing
 'Taking power from Tsefor will not be an easy task'
- c. mǎ-yó-lá'-kwárə nəfónə mbo Tsefor yó má pə mɔ nú
 ?-F3-take power from Tsefor F2 NEG be small thing
 'Taking power from Tsefor will not be an easy task'

Notice, for example, that the translation provided for all constructions in (32) still consider the initial verbal chunk as a gerund, even though they are not used with the F1 (or P1) that express actions to be (or that have been) accomplished the same day. Put it differently, if F1 and P1 are considered compatible with the sentence-initial tense and situated proposition's prefix because they express actions that—has just, is being, or is to be accomplished the same

day, why are the F2 and F3 markers also compatible with such a proposition? And why is the proposition (always) interpreted as a gerund? Recall that P2 and P3 are said to be incompatible with the proposition because they express actions that do not coincide with the day of speech: they are not, in a sense, present or progressive actions. Attempting answers to these queries will take us far beyond the present objective. What these suggest, however, is that the Awing tense and aspect systems might be intertwined in ways that disassociating, at least, the semantics of one from the other will be nontrivial business. The aim here was to illustrate how complex tense clauses can be encoded in Awing. Having done that, we can conclude by stating that the Awing tense system in general needs to be worked out in more details. In particular, co-occurrence restrictions and interpretations within and across clause types could be an interesting domain to explore; see Mucha & Fominyam (2016) for a glimpse on the semantics of simple tense clauses in Awing.

3.5 Aspect

Unlike tense that situates the time of action, aspect conveys the way the action unfolds: progressive, repetitive etc. According to Comrie (1976:3), aspects are the “*different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation*” Thus, while tense is considered as situation external, aspect is seen as situation internal. Apart from the rare cases in so-called compound clauses where two tense markers show up, aspect is the only verbal prefix/slot in Awing and perhaps Bantu in general (Nurse 2003:95-96), that can accommodate more than two elements. Before we get to the various morphological aspects attested in Awing, let us briefly re-consider a statement made in the conclusive remarks in the preceding section, namely that distinguishing tense from aspect can sometimes be problematic. For example, it was mentioned that the past perfect and present continuous tenses can be expressed via tonal modification on the verb and the example in (19), repeated below as (33), was provided to illustrate that. The question however is: is tone used to distinguish past from present/progressive tenses or perfective from imperfective aspects or both tense and aspect in such cases? Providing satisfactory responses to these queries will need proper definition of these concepts and detail understanding on how tone manifests with verbal categories and the verb, which, unfortunately, is not yet the case. One thing which is certain, though, is that an example like (33b) is understood, on the one hand, as action that has just taken place (immediate past) and, on the other hand, as action that has been completed, that is, perfective.

- (33) a. Alombah a shúmé móonə
 Alombah SM beat child

‘Alombah is beating/beats the child’

- b. Alombah a shumə móonə
Alombah SM cook food
‘Alombah has beaten the child’

Following Mucha’s (2016) proposal on Medumba, it could be argued that the high-high (HH) tones (in (33a)) and the low-low (LL) ones (in (33b)) mark the difference between imperfective (IPFV) and perfective (PFV) aspects, respectively. Technically, the LL pattern would involve a covert PFV aspect operator which, “besides quantifying over the event variable, makes events temporally bounded since it ensures that the event time is included in the reference time” Mucha’s (2016:147). In Awing, this will create a bounded event which receives an anteriority interpretation. So the past interpretation would be pragmatic, along the line of, e.g. Wurmbrand’s (2014) proposal that English sentences without overt morphological aspect marking obtain perfective interpretations, or tenseless languages like Mandarin Chinese (e.g., Smith & Erbaugh 2005). From this understanding, the present orientation with the stative imperfective predicate in (33a) would also be mediated at the pragmatic level.

Now, before we get into the various morphological aspects, it is important to further note that tonal variation on the verb is not conditioned solely at the pragmatic level viz. the perfective vs imperfective distinction: morphological tense and aspectual elements that precede the verb can also determine the choice of the verb’s tones. For example, parallel to the verb in (33), *fóŋə* ‘read’ has a high-low tonal pattern in citation. The construction in (34a) shows that *fóŋə* ‘read’ maintains this tonal pattern when preceded by a future tense marker. Conversely, when it is preceded by a past tense marker, exemplified in (34b), the high tone is no longer perceptible. However, if a progressive aspect intervenes between the past tense morpheme and the verb, not only does it maintain the initial high tone but there is another rising tonal rhyme perceptible in the final vowel, which I have indicated in (34c) with a high tone.

- (34) a. Ngwe a yí fóŋə aŋwərə
Ngwe SM F1 read book
‘Ngwe will read a book’
- b. Ngwe a nə n-fóŋə aŋwərə
Ngwe SM P2 N-read book
‘Ngwe read a book’

- c. Ngwe a nə n-tá n-fóŋǎ aŋwərə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-PROG N-read book
 ‘Ngwe was reading a book’

I should also mention that past tense markers have low tones and future tenses and aspectual markers are realized with high tones. Thus, it seems that, either there is some sort of tone spreading, or tense and aspectual markers come with floating tones (see Hyman 2003:280 who argues that the second hypothesis applies in Bàsàa). Once more I should note that the tonal pattern in the examples in (34) might be more complex. For instance, one might wonder how the tonal pattern in a context like (34) would be if the verb’s stem originally bears a low or falling tone. As I earlier mentioned, such queries will have to be left open for future works. The following paragraphs present morphological aspects that Awing grammar makes use of.

3.5.1 *Progressive: /tá/*

As the term indicates, the progressive aspect expresses actions that are in progress. This means that the unfolding of the action is not bound to the time of reference. This can be captured in example (35). While (35a) indicates that the action is unfolding, (35b) with the P2 marker indicates that the action was in the past and was in a progressive manner.

- (35) a. Ngwe a tá n-fóŋǎ aŋwa’rə
 Ngwe SM PROG N-read book
 ‘Ngwe is reading a book’
- b. Ngwe a nə n-tá n-fóŋǎ aŋwa’rə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-PROG N-read book
 ‘Ngwe was reading a book’

3.5.2 *Habitual: /zá/*

The habitual aspect describes the situation as something that is frequent within a given period of time. Comrie (1976:27) coins it as: “a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time, [...] the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period”. So, while (36a) is construed as action that was frequently done within a specific time period, (36b) combined with the progressive aspect is viewed as something that happened in the past, was progressive and was frequent—that is, was a habit of the person involved in the action.

- (36) a. Ngwe a nə n-dzá n-fóŋǎ ə-ŋwərə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-HAB N-read PL-book
 ‘Ngwe often read books’
- b. Ngwe a nə n-tǎ n-dzá n-fóŋǎ ə-ŋwərə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-PROG N-HAB N-read PL-book
 ‘Ngwe was often reading books’

3.5.3 Iterative: /pǎ/

Bybee et al. (1995:127) consider iterative aspect as the repetition of an event on one single occasion, which is different from habitual in that the latter indicates repeated actions over more than one occasion (Comrie (1976:27-28)). The preverbal element *pǎ* indicates that the action was repeated on a single occasion.

- (37) a. Ngwe a pǎ n-fóŋǎ aŋwərə
 Ngwe SM ITE N-read book
 ‘Ngwe has read a book again’
- b. Ngwe a nə m-bí n-tǎ n-fóŋǎ aŋwərə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-ITE N-PROG N-read book
 ‘Ngwe started reading a book again’

Apart from the homorganic nasal which is prefixed on aspects (see section 2.6 below), tense and clause type do not influence the form/shape of these lexical aspects. The next section shows how mood is realized in Awing.

3.6 Mood

Whereas mood can be considered as a distinctive means to express modality, these notions often seem to overlap in definition. SIL glossary of linguistic terms, for example, considers ‘mood to refer to the contrastive grammatical expressions of different modalities and modality to refer to the meanings so expressed’. Mood is generally used to characterize speech acts like: infinitive, declarative, interrogative, subjunctive conditional etc. Given that most of these concepts are addressed in different sections of this chapter, we will keep aside details distinguishing modality from mood here and focus on how Awing grammar morphologically expresses these concepts. Moreover, what might be considered as the interrogative mood - question formation - will be fully addressed in chapter 4 section 4.4.3, since interrogative

clauses involve the use of short/truncated nominal and verbal forms, among other things. Before getting to morphemes that are used to express certain moods, I should also mention that mood or modality can be expressed via suprasegmental features like tone and/or intonation (and perhaps syntactic re-ordering); the imperative mood is a case in point.

3.6.1 *The imperative mood*

The imperative mood is obtained by leaving out the subject of the clause and having the sentence end with a rising intonation, indicated in (38a) with the rising arrow. This is a common phenomenon in (Grassfields; e.g., Tamanji 2009; Bafut) languages. Also, it is possible in Awing, as it is the case in languages like English—(*get out, Joseph*) to have the subject after the verb (38b). In this latter case, it appears that the subject is phrased with the preceding elements, although the intonation is still a rising one. If I am correct that there is no pause in the Awing example in (38b), as depicted in the English translation, then the imperative mood is the only case where the VOS word order is allowed in Awing.

- (38) a. kwúnə məm ndé †
 enter inside house
 ‘Get into the house’
- b. kwúnə məm ndé Tsefor
 enter inside house Tsefor
 ‘Get into the house, Tsefor’

3.6.2 *The subjunctive mood*

The subjunctive or conditional mood is lexicalized. The morpheme *əghâtsə* which can be literally translated in English as ‘maybe’ is used to express actions that might likely occur. The SVO canonical order is maintained and the mood occurs immediately before the subject:

- (39) əghâtsə Neh a yó ŋ-gǐə məsâne
 COND Neh SM F2 N-come morning
 ‘Maybe Neh will come in the morning’

3.6.2.1 *The potential (POT) mood /támboʔ/*

The mood *támboʔ* also shows up in sentence-initial position and parallel to the conditional mood *əghâtsə*, it is used to express contingency. I will label it as POT(ential) mood to

distinguish it from the preceding one. This is because apart from inherently being contingent, the *támbo'* morpheme, in some contexts, expresses the idea that the action is, say, very likely to happen. The English translation provided in (39) and (40a) tries to capture this differences. Example (40b), however, suggests that both morphemes can be subsumed under the notion of subjunctive. Note that none of them can occur in a preverbal slot, parallel to aspectual or tense markers.

- (40) a. *támbo'* Neh a yó η-gĩə məsânə
 POT Neh SM F2 N-come morning
 'Neh can come in the morning'
- b. *támbo'* Neh a nə η-gĩə (əghâtsə) pén chíə alá'a əghânə
 POT Neh SM P2 N-come COND we be village now
 'If Neh had come, (maybe) we would have been in the village now'

The bracketing in (40b) indicates that the sentence-initial mood can take the entire bi-clausal structure as complement.

3.6.3 *The certainty (CERT) mood /pé/*

Unlike the subjunctive mood, the *pé* morpheme, which I consider to be a certainty (CERT) mood, is used by the Awing speaker to express what they believe will, say, surely happen. Consider the following sentences.

- (41) a. Tsefor yó pé lánə aŋwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F2 CERT pass book DEF
 'Tsefor will surely pass the exams'
- b. Tsefor yó pé pʃ lánə aŋwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F2 CERT ITE pass book DEF
 'Tsefor will surely pass the exams again'
- c. mbíŋ yí pé lo
 rain F1 CERT fall
 'It will surely rain'

The F2 marker in (41a), for instance, indicates that the passing of exams will happen maybe tomorrow or sometime in the nearest future. In the same manner, F1 in (41c) signals that rain will fall at some point today. Note that the certainty interpretation with the *pé* mood is

restricted to F(uture)-contexts: Using it with a past tense marker, as in (42a) and (42c), rather results to a contingent or a desiring mood. For lack of a better label, I will simply gloss it as (auxiliary) AUX in (42).

- (42) a. Tsefor pe' pé lánə aŋwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F1 AUX pass book DEF
 'Tsefor would have passed the exams' (e.g., if something had happened or did not go wrong)
- b. *Tsefor nə pé lánə aŋwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F2 AUX pass book DEF
 Int: 'Tsefor would have surely passed the exams'
- c. mbíŋ pə' pé lo
 rain P1 AUX fall
 'It should have rained' (i.e., as a wish)
- d. *mbíŋ nə pé lo
 rain F2 AUX fall
 Int: 'It would have rained' (i.e., may be yesterday)

As shown in (42b) and (42d), the *pé* morpheme cannot be used with the F2 marker. However, surprisingly, such constructions can be rescued by having the P1 marker between the P2 marker and the *pé* morpheme:

- (43) a. Tsefor nə m-be' pé lánə aŋwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F2 N-F1 AUX pass book DEF
 'Tsefor would have passed the exams' (e.g., if something had happened or did not go wrong)
- b. mbíŋ nə m-bə' pé lo
 rain P2 N-P1 AUX fall
 'It should have rained' (i.e., as a wish)

Having both past tense markers in the same clause as in (43) is very strange given the rigid gradable system described in section 3.4. The difference between (42a) and (42c) on the one hand and (43a) and (43b) on the other hand is that the former without the P2 marker describe possibilities or wishes that would have happen the same day while the latter with the P2 marker signals that the action would/should have been yesterday or days/weeks before. So,

the P1 marker in (43) seems to assume a fake tense marking role, parallel to the role of the P2 marker in the tensed and situated proposition in section 3.4.1. This is in line with the observation that tense morphemes may function as aspectual markers in complex tense clauses, that is, clauses that combine tense markers and other aspectual and/or modal elements.

Finally, note that the *pé* AUX (or certainty mood) distinguishes from the subjunctive in that it occurs in a preverbal slot whereas the subjunctive mood shows up in sentence-initial position. This shows that mood or modality encompasses different clause types and language sub-systems. We have seen that in Awing it can be realized morphologically at the suprasegmental level and also syntactically (i.e., with the imperative mood). The reader might be wondering why the homorganic nasal shows up with some verbs and aspectual marker but is omitted in other contexts. The answer to that is precisely the preoccupation of the following section.

3.7 The N-Prefix

Most Grassfields languages have a special nasal prefix that is sometimes attached to nominals and verbal categories (see among others, Ghomala': Mogue 2011; Bafut: Tamanji 2014; Medumba: Keupdjio 2020). The N(asal)-prefix is homorganic with the first consonant it attaches to. As far as I know, apart from Tamanji (2014) who argues that the N-prefix in Bafut functions as a noun (class) classifier with nominals and plays the role of a participle with verbs, there is no in-depth investigation on this N-prefix, specifically its role with the verb, in any of the languages that attest them. We saw in chapter two that the nasal prefix can be attached to some verbs and adjectives in Awing to derive nouns. As such, its role within the nominal domain can be resumed to a nominalizer. However, till this point we have seen a(nother) N-prefix occurring with verbs and other verbal categories like tense and aspectual markers with no nominalization involved. This section therefore aims to present the various contexts that trigger the N-prefix within the verbal category in Awing.

The distribution of the N-prefix can be intriguing. The first observation is that the prefix is completely absent when any future tense marker is used in simple declarative clauses like those provided in (44).

- (44) a. Alambah a yí tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alambah SM F1 fetch water
 'Alambah will fetch water'

- b. Alombah a y/ló tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM F2 fetch water
 'Alombah will fetch water'
- c. Alombah a y/ló-lá' tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM F3 fetch water
 'Alombah will one day fetch water'

Note that wherever the N-prefix is not used it means that it cannot be there and when it is used it means that it must be there. Contrary to the data in (44), the examples in (45) illustrate that past tense markers trigger the use of the N-prefix:

- (45) a. Alombah a pe' n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM P1 N-fetch water
 'Alombah fetched water'
- b. Alombah a nə n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM P2 N-fetch water
 'Alombah fetched water'
- c. Alombah a nə-n-dá' n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM P3 N-fetch water
 'Alombah once fetched water'

Observe that the adverbial element *lá'* 'ever' (which is used with the F2 and the P2 to express the F3 and P3, respectively) also takes the N-prefix in example (45c). Given the composition of the P3 and F3, one may conclude that Awing has just two past and two future tenses; I leave such an argument for another time. We can state at this point that while past tense markers trigger the N-prefix, future tense markers do not. A reasonable question to ask is: how would the present continuous and present perfect tenses that are achieved by tonal modification on the verb behave with respect to the N-prefix. As can be seen in (46), the N-prefix is missing in both cases, suggesting that the N-prefix is triggered by a set of preverbal morphological categories.

- (46) a. Alombah a tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM fetch water
 'Alombah is fetching water'

- b. Alombah a tu'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM fetch water
 'Alombah has fetched water'

The assertion that a set of preverbal elements and not the tense paradigm is responsible for the N-prefix is supported by the fact that all aspectual markers trigger the N-prefix on the verb:

- (47) a. Alombah a zá n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM HAB N-fetch water
 'Alombah often fetches water'
- b. Alombah a tó n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM PROG N-fetch water
 'Alombah is fetching water'
- c. Alombah a pí n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM ITE N-fetch water
 'Alombah is fetching water again'
- b. Alombah a kó n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM also N-fetch water
 'Alombah is also fetching water'

We now know that past tense and aspectual markers trigger the N-prefix on the verb. Moreover, we have seen throughout this and the previous chapters that aspects also occur with the N-prefix. This happens when an aspect is preceded by a morpheme that triggers the N-prefix, which could be a past tense marker, as in (48a) and (48b), or another aspect, (48c) to (48e), since the aspectual slot can accommodate two elements. Notice in (48c) and (48d) that the aspects immediately following the SM do not bear the N-prefix. The N-prefix shows up only with the second aspects and the verbs; conversely, (48e) has the N-prefix on both aspects and the verb, because it is preceded by the P2 marker. This means that the SM is not included within the category that triggers the N-prefix.

- (48) a. Alombah a pe' n-tó ŋ-kórə məkwunə
 Alombah SM P1 N-PROG N-eat rice
 'Alombah was eating rice'
- b. Alombah a nə n-dzá n-tú'ə ŋkiə
 Alombah SM P2 N-HAB N-fetch water

- ‘Alombah often fetched water’
- c. Alombah a tó n-dzá n-tú’ó ŋkiə
Alombah SM PROG N-HAB N-fetch water
‘Alombah is often fetching water’
- d. Alombah a kó n-tó ŋ-kóró məkɥunə
Alombah SM also N-PROG N-eat rice
‘Alombah is also eating rice’
- e. Alombah a nə ŋ-kó n-tó ŋ-kóró məkɥunə
Alombah SM P2 N-also N-PROG N-eat rice
‘Alombah was also eating rice’

Before we proceed to the next category of elements that trigger the N-prefix, it is important to note that future tenses bleed/prevent aspectual markers of their ability to trigger the N-prefix on the following aspect and the verb. This can be seen in (49) below.

- (49) a. Alombah a yí kó kóró məkɥúnə
Alombah SM F1 also eat rice
‘Alombah will also eat rice’
- b. Alombah a y/ló tó zá tú’ó ŋkiə
Alombah SM F2 PROG HAB fetch water
‘Alombah will often be fetching water’

Another category that shows up in the preverbal position is negation. Awing has two negation strategies: plain (mâ) and discontinuous (kě...pô) (which will be fully addressed in section 3.9). There seems to be no semantic difference between both strategies (but see section 3.9 for clause compatibility differences); however, they exhibit morpho-syntactic differences. Our concern here is with the (morphological) N-prefix. Parallel to aspectual markers, the plain marker (mâ) triggers (50) and also takes the N-prefix (51).

- (50) a. Alombah a mâ n-tó n-tú’ó ŋkiə
Alombah SM NEG N-PROG N-fetch water
‘Alombah is not fetching water’
- b. Alombah a mâ n-dzá m-fé ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor
Alombah SM NEG N-HAB N-give money to Tsefor

‘Alombah does not often give money to Tsefor’

- (51) a. Alombah a nə m̀-mâ n-t́ n-tú’ó ŋkiə
Alombah SM P2 N-NEG N-PROG N-fetch water
‘Alombah was not fetching water’
- b. Alombah a nə m̀-má n-dzá m-fé ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor
Alombah SM P2 N-NEG N-HAB N-give money to Tsefor
‘Alombah did not often give money to Tsefor’

The discontinuous marker (*kě...pô*) does not trigger the N-prefix itself (52) but takes it, that is when it is preceded by a past tense marker, as shown in (53).

- (52) a. Alombah a kě t́ n-tú’ó ŋkiə pô
Alombah SM NEG PROG N-fetch water NEG
‘Alombah is not fetching water’
- b. Alombah a kě zá m-fé ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor pô
Alombah SM NEG HAB N-give money to Tsefor NEG
‘Alombah does not often give money to Tsefor’
- (53) a. Alombah a pə’ ŋ-kě t́ n-tú’ó ŋkiə pô
Alombah SM P1 N-NEG PROG N-fetch water NEG
‘Alombah was not fetching water’
- b. Alombah a nə ŋ-kě zá m-fé ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor pô
Alombah SM P2 N-NEG HAB N-give money to Tsefor NEG
‘Alombah did not often give money to Tsefor’

The data in (53) is strange to the overall observation. This is because the NEG marker preceding aspect, parallel to the future tense markers, does not trigger the N-prefix on the aspect. However, unlike the future tense markers, it does not prevent the aspect of its ability to trigger the N-prefix on the verb. This might be due to the fact that S-NEG-V-O-NEG constellations like those in (52) and (53) have S-NEG-O-V-NEG variants, exemplified in (54).

- (54) a. Alombah a nə ŋ-kě ŋkiə t́ n-tú’ó pô
Alombah SM P2 N-NEG water PROG N-fetch NEG
‘Alombah was not fetching water’

- b. Alombah a nə ŋ-kě ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor zá m-fé pô
 Alombah SM P2 N-NEG money to Tsefor HAB N-give NEG
 ‘Alombah did not often give money to Tsefor’

There are two possible accounts as to why the N-prefix is absent on the higher aspectual heads in the examples in (52) to (54). On the one hand, one could (simply) assume that the preverbal NEG marker does not trigger the N-prefix. On the other hand, the fact that examples like those in (54) are preferred to their counterparts in (52) and (53), it could be argued that the aspectual markers in the sentences in (52) and (53) do not actually precede the preverbal NEG marker, contrary to what we observe in these constructions. I will argue in chapter 7 that there is a syntactic mechanism that disguises the actual structure of the sentences in (52) and (53), and that the second hypothesis holds. Keeping aside such details for now, one could simply place the verb immediately after the negation marker *kě* to see whether the latter will trigger the N-prefix on the verb. Although it is impossible to have a transitive clause with the order S>NEG>V>O>NEG without an aspectual marker (55a), the intransitive example in (55b) shows that the preverbal NEG marker does not trigger the N-prefix on the verb.

- (55) a. *Alombah a nə ŋ-kě tu’ə ŋkiə pô
 Alombah SM P2 N-NEG fetch water NEG
 Int: ‘Alombah did not fetch water’
- b. Alombah a nə ŋ-kě wŭə pô
 Alombah SM P2 N-NEG fall NEG
 ‘Alombah did not fall’

Keeping the description simple, we can summarize the data thus far by stating that while both of the pre-verbal NEG markers take the N-prefix, only the plain NEG *mâ* assigns the N-prefix to the following N-prefix bearer. We have also seen that all aspectual markers can take the N-prefix and cause the following elements to take it too. Also, past tense markers trigger the N-prefix on the following elements but parallel to future tenses, they do not bear the N-prefix. This is due to the fact that the tense slot immediately follows the subject marker and the subject marker does not trigger this N-prefix on the following element(s). This is to say that the Awing preverbal elements have a fix order: SM>T>NEG>ASP(ASP)>V. When there is no morphological tense marker in the clause, aspect or plain NEG (*mâ*) will cause the following element(s) to occur with the N-prefix. When the clause contains a past tense

marker, it causes the following element(s) to also take the N-prefix. However, if the clause is with any of the future tense markers, no other element takes the N-prefix. Apart from the discontinuous NEG marker, one could leave this section knowing that past tense markers, aspect and negation constitute the set of preverbal elements that trigger the N-prefix while future tense markers do not trigger and also prevent other element to trigger the N-prefix. Unfortunately, as already predicted by negation, such a simplistic generalization is far from depicting the entire situation. In the section that follows, I will present peripheral cases and other elements and clause types that also trigger the N-prefix in Awing.

3.7.1 *Exceptions with the N-prefixation*

In the overall discussion on tenses, I have claimed that there are three symmetric past and future tense markers in Awing. However, I have also mentioned that the P2 *nə* marker has a variant: *kə*. This *kə* variant was deliberately left out in the discussion in the preceding section. This is because it behaves differently from the other past tense markers with respect to the N-prefixation. This can be seen in (56): while P2—*nə* triggers the N-prefix on the following aspects and verbs in (56a) and (56b), P2—*kə* does not trigger the N-prefix on the aspects in (57a) and (57b).

- (56) a. Alombah a nə m-bí m-fe ndzǒ mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM P2 N-ITE N-give beans to Tsefor
 ‘Alombah gave beans to Tsefor again’
- b. Alombah a nə n-dzá ŋ-ghenô mäteénó
 Alombah SM P2 N-HAB N-go market
 ‘Alombah often went to the market’
- (57) a. Alombah a kə pí m-fe ndzǒ mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM P2 ITE N-give beans to Tsefor
 ‘Alombah gave beans to Tsefor again’
- b. Alombah a kə zá ŋ-ghenô mäteénó
 Alombah SM P2 HAB N-go market
 ‘Alombah often went to the market’

Unlike future tense markers, the P2 variant *kə* does not prevent aspectual markers from triggering the N-prefix on the verbs. The *kə* morpheme therefore behaves like the

discontinuous NEG marker *kě...pô*. The P2 variant *kə* and the discontinuous markers are not the only irregularities. The generalisation that the N-prefix never shows up when any future tense marker is used collapses in imperative contexts like those in (58b) and (59b). The constructions in (58b) and (59b) are commands that, say, are being repeated or transmitted. Such commands can be achieved by having the conjunction *ηgə* ‘that’ in sentence-initial position. Examples (58a) and (59a) remind us of the normal pattern, namely the absence of the N-prefix on the verb.

- (58) a. Aghetse a yí twáamə móonə
 Aghetse SM F1 carry child
 ‘Aghetse will carry the child’
- b. ηgə Aghetse a yí n-twáamə móonə
 that Aghetse SM F1 N-carry child
 ‘That Aghetse should come and carry the child’
- (59) a. Tsefor a yó yĩ nə məló’ə
 Tsefor SM F2 come with wine
 ‘Tsefor will bring wine’
- b. ηgə Tsefor a yó η-gĩ nə məló’ə
 that Tsefor SM F2 N-come with wine
 ‘That Tsefor should bring wine’

Assuming that the *ηgə* ‘that’ morpheme in the above examples semantically plays the role of an imperative mood, it is interesting to see that the subjunctive mood which also occurs in sentence-initial position triggers the N-prefix on the verb within the clause, see (39) and (40a) repeated below as (60a) and (60b), respectively. Mood could therefore be added to the set of elements that trigger the N-prefix. However, it appears that not all moods have the capacity to trigger the N-prefix on the verb. As shown in (61), N-prefix is not present on the verb despite the verb occurring immediately after the so-called certainty (CERT) mood.

- (60) a. əghâtsə Neh a yó η-gĩə məsânə
 COND Neh SM F2 N-come morning
 ‘Maybe Neh will come in the morning’

- b. támbo' Neh a yó ŋ-gǎ məsâṇə
 COND Neh SM F2 N-come morning
 'Neh can come in the morning'
- (61) a. Tsefor a ?(yí) pé láṅə aṅwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor SM F1 CERT pass book DEF
 'Tsefor will surely pass the exams'
- b. Neh a ?(yó) pé yǎ məsâṇə
 Neh SM F2 CERT come morning
 'Neh will surely come in the morning'

The question signs used before the brackets on the future tenses in (61) indicate that omitting these tense markers will render the sentence (mildly) ungrammatical. In other words, it seems to be the case that the CERT mood is inherently procrastinating something in the future which has to be obligatorily projected by a morphological tense in the clause (also see the discussion in section 3.6.3, where the CERT mood is said to lose the certainty meaning when combined with past tense markers). Such an obligation, plus the fact that the other morphological moods occur in sentence-initial position, distinguish the CERT mood from the others. The absence of the N-prefix on the verb following the CERT mood could be explained from the understanding that the CERT mood is restricted to future tense clauses and future tenses can bleed the N-prefix within the entire clause. But this cannot be the whole story given that in clauses having past tense markers the *pé* morpheme neither takes nor triggers the N-prefix, see examples (42a) and (43a), repeated below as (62a) and (62b), respectively.

- (62) a. Tsefor pe' pé láṅə aṅwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F1 AUX pass book DEF
 'Tsefor would have passed the exams' (e.g., if something had happened or did not go wrong)
- b. Tsefor nə m-be' pé láṅə aṅwá'rə yíwə
 Tsefor F2 N-F1 AUX pass book DEF
 'Tsefor would have passed the exams' (e.g., if something had happened or did not go wrong)

Moreover, it cannot be maintained that (sentence-initial) moods (always) trigger the N-prefix on the verb. Such a conclusion is obscured with data like that in (63), where the future tense

markers are omitted and the imperative and subjunctive moods in sentence-initial position do not trigger the N-prefix on the verbs within the clause.

- (63) a. ɲgə́ Aghetse a twáamə moonə
 that Aghetse SM carry child
 ‘That Aghetse should carry the child’
- b. əghâtsə Neh a yǐə mäsânə
 COND Neh SM come morning
 ‘Maybe Neh will come in the morning’
- c. támbo’ Neh a yǐə mäsânə
 COND Neh SM come morning
 ‘Neh can come in the morning’

So, it is not solely the presence of the sentence-initial mood in (60) that triggers the N-prefix on the verb but rather the presence of the mood in combination with the future tense within the clause. Moreover, it is not the case that only moods in combination with future tenses trigger the N-prefix on the verb. The examples in (64) and (65) show that when a verb is placed before the subject we have the same scenario with moods, that is, the verb within the clause takes the N-prefix when the future tense is used (64a) through (64c), and the N-prefix is omitted when the tense is not used (65a) and (65b).

- (64) a. me’tə Tsefor a yí m-fúgə
 allow Tsefor SM F2 N-remove
 ‘Allow Tsefor to remove it’ (later today)
- b. wáamə mó yíə a yí m-fê ɲkeebə mə
 hold child that SM F1 N-give money my
 ‘Bring that child so he can pay my money’
- c. me’tə Tsefor a yó m-fúgə
 allow Tsefor SM F2 N-remove
 ‘Allow Tsefor to remove it’ (tomorrow or after)
- (65) a. me’tə Tsefor a fúgə
 allow Tsefor SM remove
 ‘Allow Tsefor to remove it’ (now)

- b. wáamə mɔ́ yíá a fê ŋkeebə mə
 hold child that SM give money my
 ‘Bring that child so he can pay my money’

We can therefore conclude that sentence-initial elements viz. moods and verbs in combination with future tenses play the same role in triggering the N-prefix on the verb within the clause. What such a role is, is still not obvious. What actually makes the data more intriguing is the fact that future tense markers prevent the N-prefix on the verb in simple declarative clauses but when a morphological mood or verb is used before the subject the same future tense markers necessitate the N-prefix on the verb. One possible direction is to follow Tamanji’s (2014:33) analysis on Bafut and assume that the N-prefix is a ‘participle’, that is, “treat the nasal consonant as an inherent property of verbs which requires following verbs to occur in the infinitive form”. Before we see how or if this reasoning is applicable to the Awing data, it is important to know that serial verbs also trigger the N-prefix on the following verb(s) in Awing, examples are provided in (66).

- (66) a. Tsefor a fe’ ŋ-ghenô mɔ́teenó
 Tsefor SM leave N-go market
 ‘Tsefor left and went to the market’
- b. Alombah a ghen m-fé mɔ́zɪ mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM go N-give food to Tsefor
 ‘Alombah has gone and given food to Tsefor’
- c. Ngwe a ku n-twamə mɔ́ m-fé mbo ndú yá
 Ngwe SM enter N-carry child N-give to husband her
 ‘Ngwe went in, carried the child and gave to her husband’
- d. Alombah a lê n-do ŋ-ghenô afoonə
 Alombah SM sleep N-up N-go farm
 ‘Alombah slept, got up and went to the farm’
- e. Ngwe a ghen n-chwa’ məkɔ́wɔ n-ghəbə mbo pəlɪm píə
 Ngwe SM go N-gather rice N-share to relatives his
 ‘Ngwe went in, carried rice and shared it to his relatives’
- f. Alombah a (nyaanə) (n-)tséebə n-do ŋ-ghenô n-twáamə
 Alombah SM slowly N-talk N-stand N-go N-carry

məló' ñ-nó m-fe yí mó yó
 wine N-drink N-give AM child his

'Alombah is (slowly) speaking, standing from his seat, going and getting wine to drink and also giving some to his son'

While some of the above examples take just two verbs (66a) and (66b), example (66f) takes up to six verbs where four of them occur in a row. It does not matter whether the verbs are separated or not by the object, all of the verbs have the N-prefix except the first one, showing that it is the first verb that triggers the N-prefix on the subsequent ones. For completeness, also see that parallel to canonical SVO sentences, future tense markers will bleed the N-prefix in the entire clause:

- (67) a. Ngwe a yí ku twamə mó fé mbo ndú yó
 Ngwe SM F1 enter carry child give to husband her
 'Ngwe will enter and carry the child and give to her husband'
- b. Alombah a yó zánkə lê lo ghenê afoonə
 Alombah SM P2 quickly sleep up go farm
 'Alombah will sleep early to get up and go to the farm'

Finally, we can also see in (68) that the past tense marker *kə* does not trigger the N-prefix on the following verb or adverbial element. As expected, the N-prefix shows up on the other verbs that do not immediately precede the *kə* marker. Recall that unlike the future tense markers, the P2 *kə* marker does not prevent N-prefixation within the entire structure.

- (68) a. Alombah a kə zánkə n-dê n-do ŋ-ghenê afoonə
 Alombah SM P2 quickly N-sleep N-up N-go farm
 'Alombah slept early, got up and went to the farm'
- b. Alombah a kə lê n-do ŋ-ghenê afoonə
 Alombah SM P2 sleep N-up N-go farm
 'Alombah slept early, got up and went to the farm'

Recapitulating: Awing preverbal elements have the order: SM-Tenses-NEG-ASP(ASP/mood)-V. The homorganic nasal prefix can show up with verbs, aspects, and NEG but not with tenses (except the P3 which is a composite of P2 and an adverbial, where P2 triggers the N-prefix on the adverbial element). The SM has no role as far as the N-prefix is

concerned. Not only do all future tense markers lack the ability to trigger the N-prefix they also prevent other elements from triggering the N-prefix in canonical SVO and serial verb constructions. Past tense markers trigger the N-prefix except the P2 variant *kə* which, parallel to the discontinuous NEG marker *kě...pô*, neither triggers nor prevents aspects and other verbs to trigger the N-prefix on other N-prefix bearers. Plain NEG *mâ*, aspects and verbs take and also trigger the N-prefix on the following N-prefix bearer(s). Thus, keeping aside the discontinuous NEG and the P2 *kə* marker, we know that all other past tense markers (including the P2 *nə* variant), aspectual markers, preverbal adverbials, plain NEG *mâ* and verbs trigger the N-prefix in simple canonical SVO and serial verb constructions.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, other than Tamanji (2014), the use of this N-prefix in the verbal domain has not yet been (thoroughly) described in the Grassfields languages that sporadically (i.e., few written or oral sentences) attest their usage. According to Tamanji, categories that do not trigger the N-prefix in Bafut are: mood markers, negation markers, future tenses and the P2 marker. It is interesting to note that the P2 in Bafut does not trigger the N-prefix, similar to the P2—*kə* in Awing. Also, just like Awing, Bafut does not have the N-prefix in canonical SVO clauses with future tense markers. The crucial aspect of Tamanji's discussion on Bafut is that he considers only verbs or auxiliaries that still preserve verbal traits to have the ability to trigger the N-prefix on the following verb. Tamanji summarizes his argument in Bafut thus:

It is thus a property of the language that when two or more verbs occur in the same construction, one after the other, the first verb functions as an auxiliary while the second (and subsequent verbs) occur in the participle form... At an earlier stage in the evolution of the language, the structure of the verb group was therefore **Aux -Verb** where **Aux** marked tense. Tamanji (2014:24)

Awing and Bafut exhibit some similarities with respect the N-prefix. For example, in both languages the future tense markers do not trigger and prevent other elements from triggering the N-prefix. In addition, there is a P2 marker in both languages that differs from the other past tense markers. According to Tamanji the P2 morpheme in Bafut has undergone an advanced grammaticalization process so much that it has lost all verbal traits and as such cannot trigger the N-prefix. To explain why mood and negation do not trigger the N-prefix in Bafut, Tamanji maintains that studies on the evolution of grammatical elements in Bantu

languages (e.g., Bybee et al. 1995; Heine et al. 1991 and Batibo 2005) indicate that many mood and negation markers are not derived from verbs.

There are, however, striking dissimilarities between Awing and Bafut. Firstly, unlike in Bafut, plain negation in Awing triggers the N-prefix and aspectual markers do too. Moreover, in Awing, the F1 and F2 are the only tense markers that still maintain morphological forms and semantic contents with the verbs they are derived from. These verbs are *yĩə* ‘come’ and *lo* ‘(get/stand) up’, for F1 *yí* and F2 *y/ló*, respectively. Tamanji’s conclusion on Bafut cannot be immediately extended to Awing given that the only tense markers that clearly still share morphological forms and meaning with the verbs they are derived from are those that prevent the N-prefix in normal circumstances. Although data like verb serialization speaks in favour of Tamanji’s conclusion, I believe that it only tells part of the story, in Awing. Given that some elements within a category (i.e., negation and past tense markers) trigger the N-prefix while others do not, coupled with the fact that a category (i.e., future tense markers) prohibits the N-prefix in one context and appears to be the trigger of the prefix in another context, it might be profitable to begin by investigating the semantics and evolution of these (individual) elements/categories and how they might change in meaning contextually. For example, it has been argued that the CERT mood is expressed in combination with future tenses. This might explain, to an extent, why it neither takes nor triggers the N-prefix, unlike aspectual markers that occur in, presumably, the same position. Unfortunately we will have to end the discussion on the N-prefix at this stage hoping that a morpho-semantic approach may shed more light on the subject.

3.8 Verbal extensions

Verbal extensions are elements that are suffixed to the verb stem to modify the verb’s meaning. Unlike in Southern Bantu languages, not only are verbal extensions limited in Bantoid (Grassfields) languages, these languages lack passive and applicative extensions (Watters 2003:245). Moreover, extensions are said to be less productive: having a limited set of verbs in Grassfields (see, e.g., Leroy 2007; Nurse 2008). Another issue that sometimes arises, and that the Awing data clearly illustrates, is how to differentiate homophonous suffixes. The classification of these extensions in Awing in what follows generally relies on naming concepts available in the literature but I sometimes base on the derived meanings. This is because while some of the meanings, for example, causative (CAUS) and reciprocal

(REC) are easy to identify, others are semantically less obvious. The following are verbal extensions that can be identified in Awing.

3.8.1 *The causative (CAUS) suffix: -kə*

The *-kə* suffix can be used to indicate that someone/something is the cause of the action. It is one of these suffixes that increases verbal valency: In examples (69) and (70), the suffix modifies the verb's argument(s) (i.e., object and subject) by demoting the subjects in (69a) and (70a) to the object (position) in (69b) and (70b), respectively. As such, a new subject/agent that is responsible for the action is introduced.

- (69) a. Ayafor a pe' m-bee məlo'ə
 Ayafor SM P1 N-drunk wine
 'Ayafor was drunk'
- b. Tsefor a pe' m-bee-kə Ayafor
 Tsefor SM P1 N-drunk-CAUS Ayafor
 'Tsefor caused Ayafor to get drunk'
- (70) a. mənḡóḃ mə kwunə məm ndê
 chickens SM enter in house
 'The chickens have entered the house'
- b. mówúmó a kwun-kə mənḡóḃ məm ndê
 hawk SM enter-CAUS chickens in house
 'A hawk made/frightened the chickens to enter the house'

3.8.2 *The spontaneous (SPONT) suffix: -kə*

When this suffix is added to a verb, the interpretation can either be that the action is not caused by a discernible agentive force/subject (71b), or that the action occurs in a 'scattered' manner (71c). The term distributive could also be used here but I reserve it for another suffix (in section 3.8.6).

- (71) a. Neh a pə' seḡə ndónḡə
 Neh SM P1 break cup
 'Neh broke the cup'

- b. ndónə ʔ pə' saŋ-kə
 cup SM P1 break-SPONT
 'The cup broke into pieces'
- c. Neh a pə' saŋ-kə ndónə
 Neh SM P1 break-SPONT cup
 'Neh broke the cup into pieces'

3.8.3 *The reciprocal (REC) suffix: -nə*

When added to the verb, the action is understood as being done by two or more participants. The participants function at the same time as the theme and the agent of the same action. Examples can be seen in (72) and (73). The comitative subject can be omitted in both (72b) and (73b), in which case the SM functions as a pronoun.

- (72) a. Ayafor a kəŋə Tsefor
 Ayafor SM love Tsefor
 'Ayafor loves Tsefor'
- b. (Ayafor po Tsefor) po kəŋ-nə
 Ayafor with Tsefor SM love-REC
 'Ayafor and Tsefor/they love each other'
- (73) a. Ayafor a fɪə Tsefor
 Ayafor SM resemble Tsefor
 'Ayafor resembles Tsefor'
- b. (Ayafor po Tsefor) po fi-nə
 Ayafor with Tsefor SM love-REC
 'Ayafor and Tsefor/they resembles each other'

3.8.4 *The persuasive (PERS) suffix: -nə*

I use the term persuasive here to describe a derived meaning suggesting that the action ought to be carried out in a (more) hasty manner: The use of the suffix gives the impression that the action is pressing or urgent. The examples in (74) and (75) demonstrate.

- (74) a. pen kəə n-túə ŋkap yíwə
 we run N-pay money DEF
 'We should hurry and pay the money'

- b. pen kəə-nə n-túə ŋkap yíwə
 we run-PERS N-pay money DEF
 ‘We should hurry up and pay the money’
- (75) a. Tsefor láŋə n-chwarə məjîə pəkwuuna piə
 Tsefor pass N-search food pigs his
 ‘Tsefor is passing and searching for his pig’s food’
- b. Tsefor láŋ-nə n-chwarə məjîə pəkwuuna piə
 Tsefor pass-PERS N-search food pigs his
 ‘Tsefor is going up and down searching for his pig’s food’

3.8.5 *The reversal (REV) suffix: -kə*

The *-kə* suffix reverses the meaning of the verb by implying its opposite, thus changing the thematic role of the subject. As shown in (76), the subject assuming the patient/theme role in (76a) becomes the agent in (76b). In the same way, the subject in (77a) which functions as the recipient (received the money) becomes the agent (gives out the money) in (77b).

- (76) a. Pizo a yí núŋnə ndu əkwunó
 Pizo SM F1 lie on bed
 ‘Pizo will lie on the bed’
- b. Pizo a yí núŋ-kə ndu əkwunó
 Pizo SM F1 lei-REV on bed
 ‘Pizo will lay it on the bed’
- (77) a. Alombah a pə’ n-tso’ə ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM P1 N-borrow money from Tsefor
 Alombah borrowed money from Tsefor’
- b. Alombah a pə’ n-tso’-kə ŋkeebə mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM P1 N-lend-REV money to Tsefor
 ‘Alombah lend money to Tsefor’

3.8.6 *The distributive (DIST) suffix: -tə*

This suffix is attached to verbs that inherently suggest a two way division to indicate that the act is accomplished in a triple or multitude manner. It can also be used to indicate that the action is meant for many individuals; consider the following examples.

- (78) a. Alombah a gheebə əlí’ə
 Alombah SM share farm
 ‘Alombah has shared the farm’ (perhaps in two)
- b. Alombah a ghab-tə əlí’ə
 Alombah SM share-DIST farm
 ‘Alombah has shared the farm’ (i.e., in many pieces; for different people)
- (79) a. Tsefor a pə’ n-séenə ŋkwóŋ yiwə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-split wood DEF
 ‘Tsefor split the wood’
- b. Tsefor a pə’ n-san-tə ŋkwóŋ yiwə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-split-DIST wood DEF
 ‘Tsefor split the wood’ (i.e., into many pieces)

The distributive suffix also suggests that the action is repetitive or occurring spontaneously, see example (80) below. On the discussion of so-called spontaneous suffix it was mentioned that it could also be called distributive. The meanings of these two categories seem to overlap; however, they are separated since they are not homophonous and appear to select different verb categories.

- (80) a. mbəəmə mə a chí’ə
 body my SM shake
 ‘My body is shaking’
- a. mbəəmə mə a chí’-tə
 body my SM shake-DIS
 ‘My body is shaking everywhere or itching’
 OR—Idiomatic: ‘I am eager/anxious to do something’

3.8.7 *The diminutive (DIM) suffix: -tə*

The diminutive prefix's role is to reduce the quantity or manner of accomplishing the action. Examples are provided in (81) and (82). The use of the suffix in (81b) and (82b) demands the person undertaking the action not to be excessive.

- (81) a. kó məlo'ə nó
take wine drink
'Take wine and drink'
- b. kó məlo'ə nó-tê
take wine drink-DIM
'Take wine and taste' (i.e., you must drink very little quantity).
- (82) a. kwelê məghólə ndu wə
pour oil on it
'Pour oil on it'
- b. kwε'-tə məghólə ndu wə
pour-DIM oil on it
'Sprinkle oil on it'

3.8.8 *The frequent (FREQ) suffix: -tə*

The suffix suggests that the action occurs or is performed time after time. It could be that it is the habit of the person undertaking the action or that it is something that occasionally happens to the person:

- (83) a. Aghetse a waamə mə-ghóbə mə
Aghetse SM catch PL-chicken my
'Aghetse has caught my chickens'
- b. Aghetse a waam-tê mə-ghóbə mə
Aghetse SM catch-FREQ PL-chicken my
'Aghetse has been catching/stealing my chickens'
- (84) a. Tsefor a ghoonə (tэшúnə)
Tsefor SM sick very
'Tsefor is (very) sick'

- b. Tsefor a ghon-tê (táshúnó)
 Tsefor SM sick-FREQ very
 ‘Tsefor is sickly/ often (very) sick’

There are basically three verbal suffixes: *-tə* *-nə* and *-kə* that have different meanings depending on the type of verbs that they occur with. Thus, it is difficult or impossible to determine the meaning of any of them in isolation. Moreover, notice that none of them is presented with a tone. This is, however, an oversimplification: although it can be argued that these extensions have no underlying tones (as in Mankon; Leroy 2007), they occur with falling and low tones depending on the tones that the verb to which they are attached to bear. Finally, recall that Awing verbs end with a final schwa. As such, it is not certain whether the verb extensions are merely C(onsonants) which are infixes between the stem and the final schwa or they have a CV structure where the final schwa is deleted, as I seem to claim.

3.9 Negation

Niger-Congo languages generally use morphological markers to express negation (Miestamo 2005:302) and Awing is no exception. There are basically two ways to form negative constructions in Awing. The first is by using the monopartite negation marker *má*, which occurs in a position preceding the verb:

- (85) Ngwe a nə m̀-má n-t́ m-fónjə aŋwa're
 Ngwe SM P2 N-NEG N-PROG N-read book
 ‘Ngwe was not reading a book’

The second and complex strategy is the usage of the bipartite negation marker *kě...pô*. The first particle of this bipartite marker appears to sit in the same templatic position as the monopartite marker: immediately follows the tense marker. The second particle always shows up in sentence-final position. Sentence order, that is, SVO or SOV will depend whether the aspectual category is present or not.⁹ Thus, when an aspect comes after the first negation

⁹ This tendency is not unique to Awing; Kandybowicz (2008) notes that aspectual and (some) tense markers can alter word order in some West African languages (e.g., Gungbe: Aboh 2005 and Vata: Koopman 1984, among others). The Nupe example (West Africa) in (iv) below is extracted from Kandybowicz (2008).

- (iv) a. *Musa si d̀̀k̀̀n.* (VO)
 Musa buy pot
 ‘Musa bought a pot.’

particle, the word order can either be SVO, or SOV, as shown in (86a) and (86b), respectively. However, when there is no aspectual marker the SVO order (86c) is ungrammatical.

- (86) a. Ngwe a nə n-kě tá n-fóŋə aŋwa're pô
 Ngwe SM P2 N-NEG PROG N-read book NEG
 'Ngwe was not reading a book'
- b. Ngwe a nə n-kě aŋwa're tá n-fóŋə pô
 Ngwe SM P2 N-NEG book PROG N-read NEG
 'Ngwe was not reading a book'
- c. *Ngwe a nə n-kě fóŋə aŋwa're pô
 Ngwe SM P2 N-NEG read book NEG
 'Ngwe was not reading a book'

Parallel to declarative sentences, adverbial materials, for example, prepositional phrases and time adjuncts may occur in any order in negative clauses.¹⁰ This is shown in (87). Notice that the word order is *S...NEG-ASP-V...NEG*. As earlier mentioned, this word ordering—SVO is licensed by the presence of any aspectual element—as indicated by the asterisks on the parenthesis with the habitual aspect. There is no semantic difference between these sentences. However, pragmatically, it appears that the phrase which immediately comes after the verb, apart from the canonical direct object, receives a 'salient' interpretation. Thus, example (87b)

-
- b. *Musa ya dükùn yin sí.* (OV)
 Musa begin pot prt buy
 'Musa began to buy a pot.' Kandybowicz (2008:22)

¹⁰ While the direct object always follows the verb (explaining the ungrammaticality of (vc) and (vd) below), the indirect object and a time adjunct can swap positions in both declarative and negative clauses:

- (v) a. Mofor nə (ŋ-kě zá) m-fě məjîə məsânə mbo Ayafor (pô)
 Mofor P2 N-NEG HAB N-give food morning to Ayafor NEG
 'Mofor (didn't often) give/gave food to Ayafor in the mornings'
- b. Mofor nə (ŋ-kě zá) m-fě məjîə mbo Ayafor məsânə (pô)
 Mofor P2 N-NEG HAB N-give food to Ayafor morning NEG
 'Mofor (didn't often) give/gave food to Ayafor in the mornings'
- c. *Mofor nə (ŋ-kě zá) m-fě mbo Ayafor məjîə məsânə (pô)
 Mofor P2 N-NEG HAB N-give to Ayafor food morning NEG
 Int: 'Mofor (didn't often) give/gave food to Ayafor in the mornings'
- d. *Mofor nə (ŋ-kě zá) m-fě məsânə məjîə mbo Ayafor (pô)
 Mofor P2 N-NEG HAB N-give morning food to Ayafor NEG
 Int: 'Mofor (didn't often) give/gave food to Ayafor in the mornings'

might imply that Ngwe was not going ‘with a cutlass’ to his farm during the dry season; although it was expected for people to be with their cutlasses in the farm during that time. In the same way, (87c) can suggest that it is during the dry season that Ngwe was not going with cutlass to the farm; although he usually went with it during the rainy reason.

- (87) a. Ngwe nə η-kě *(zá) η-ghenô afoonə nɔ́ ηwiŋə əghâ-alú pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG HAB N-go farm with cutlass time-dry NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t often go to the farm with a cutlass in the dry-season’
- b. Ngwe nə η-kě *(zá) η-ghenô nɔ́ ηwiŋə afoonə əghâ-alú pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG HAB N-go with cutlass farm time-dry NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t often go to the farm with a cutlass in the dry-season’
- c. Ngwe nə η-kě *(zá) η-ghenô əghâ-alú nɔ́ ηwiŋə afoo pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG HAB N-go time-dry with cutlass farm NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t often go to the farm with a cutlass in the dry-season’

The flexibility of postverbal adjuncts is also observable when the verb overtly occurs immediately before the second negation particle in sentence-final position: *S...NEG...V-NEG*. Note that whenever the verb occurs in the lower position, it shows up with the aspectual marker. The information structure of the examples in (88) can be paralleled to those in (87); the difference being that ‘saliency’ is attributed to elements that immediately follow the first negation particle, for example, the phrase ‘with a cutlass’ in (88b).

- (88) a. Ngwe nə η-kě afoonə nɔ́ ηwiŋə əghâ-alú (zá) (η)-ghenô pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG farm with cutlass time-dry HAB N-go NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t (often) go to the farm with a cutlass in the dry-season’
- b. Ngwe nə η-kě nɔ́ ηwiŋə afoonə əghâ-alu ghenô pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG with cutlass farm time-dry go NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t go with a cutlass to the farm in the dry-season’
- c. Ngwe nə η-kě əghâ-alú afoonə nɔ́ ηwiŋə ghénə pô
 Ngwe P2 N-NEG time-dry farm with cutlass go NEG
 ‘Ngwe didn’t go with a cutlass in the dry-season to the farm’

As the previous examples illustrate, the second negation particle always occurs in sentence-final position. This is also the case in serial verb constructions (89), and in an embedded context (90).

- (89) Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě məló' mbo ndú yé twá m-fê pô
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG wine to husband her carry N-give NEG
 'Aghetse didn't carry the wine and give her husband'
- (90) Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě súŋ ŋgó a yó ghenô á Yaoundé mäsânə pô
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG say that SM F2 go to Yaoundé morning Neg
 'Aghetse didn't say that she will go to Yaoundé in the morning'

However, it is possible to have a 'because adjunct clause' come after the second negation particle, as shown in (91a).

- (91) a. Alombah nə ŋ-kě ŋkwè (pô) t́ mbəŋ
 Alombah P2 N-NEG N-return NEG because rain
 'Alombah did not return because of rain' (Rain was the cause of his not returning).
- b. Alombah nə ŋ-kě ŋkwè t́ mbəŋ pô
 Alombah P2 N-NEG N-return because rain NEG
 'Alombah did not return because of rain' (Something else, i.e. not rain was the cause of his returning).

Observe that the scope of negation is not same in the above examples: 'rain' occurs after the second negation particle in (91a) and is parsed out of the scope of negation. Conversely in (91b), 'rain' precedes the second negation particle and falls within the scope of negation since it is construed as not being the cause of Alombah's return, e.g., he did not return because of rain but because he forgot something. Finally, let me briefly indicate a difference between serial verb constructions and 'simple' negative clauses with respect to word ordering. We have seen that in negative clauses the SVO word order can be licensed by an aspectual marker. This is not the case with serial verb constructions. To illustrate, consider the data in (92). For simplicity, let us consider/name the verb *twá* 'carry' as the first verb and *fê* 'give' as the second one, just as they occur in (92a); recall that (92a) is the declarative construction, where the object comes immediately after the first verb. In (92b), that is the negated counterpart of (92a), the first verb shows up in sentence-final position where it still precedes the second verb. Example (92c) is the same as (92b), only that it takes an aspectual marker. Example (92d) illustrates that unlike in declarative clauses (92a), the first verb cannot occur in the higher position where it will follow the first negation marker; even if there is an

aspectual marker, such a verb order is not possible (92e). The last example in (92f) shows that in sentence-final position, the first verb must precede the second one.

- (92) a. Aghetse a nə n-twá məló' m-fê mbo ndú yá
 Aghetse SM P2 N-carry wine N-give to husband her
 'Aghetse carried the wine and gave to her husband'
- b. Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě məló' mbo ndú yá
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG wine to husband her
 twá m-fê pô
 carry N-give NEG
 'Aghetse did not carry the wine and give to her husband'
- c. Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě məló' mbo ndú yá
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG wine to husband her
 tá n-twámə m-fê pô
 PROG N-carry N-give NEG
 'Aghetse was not carrying wine and giving to her husband'
- d. *Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě twá məló' m-fê
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG carry wine N-give
 mbo ndú yá pô
 to husband her NEG
 Int: 'Aghetse did not carry the wine and give to her husband'
- e. *Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě tá n-twá məló' m-fê
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG PROG N-carry wine N-give
 mbo ndú yá pô
 to husband her NEG
 Int: 'Aghetse was not carrying wine and giving to her husband'
- f. *Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě məló' mbo ndú yá
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG wine to husband her
 fê n-twá pô
 give N-carry NEG
 Int: 'Aghetse did not carry the wine and give her husband'

The first part of this section has presented the two main negation strategies used in declarative sentences. The following sub-sections will present other non-canonical clause types like imperatives, conditionals, questions and then negative polarity items and finally end with a note on the difference between the main two negation strategies: monopartite: *má* and bipartite: *kě...pô* which will have to do with scopal and (in)dependency differences.

3.9.1 Other negative forms

Let us begin with questions. The first observation is that the sentence final negation particle is disallowed in questions. (93a) shows the sentence with both particles expressing sentential negation. Example (93b) is a question where the verb occurs in sentence-final position with a rising intonation, and the final-negation particle is banned. The example in (93c) is formed with a final-question morpheme; the second negation particle can neither precede nor follow the question morpheme.

- (93) a. Aghetse a pe' n-kě mǎjî mǎsân ʒí pô
 Aghetse SM P1 N-NEG food morning eat NEG
 'Aghetse didn't eat in the morning'
- b. Aghetse a pe' n-kě mǎjî mǎsân ʒí-í † (*pô)
 Aghetse SM P1 N-NEG food morning eat-Q NEG
 'Did Aghetse not eat in the morning?'
- c. Aghetse a pe' n-kě mǎjî mǎsân ʒí (*pô) éé (*pô)
 Aghetse SM P1 N-NEG food morning eat NEG Q NEG
 'Did Aghetse not eat in the morning?'

The asterisks within the brackets in examples (93b) and (93c) show that of the two elements that constitute the discontinuous negation marker, question formation makes use of only the preverbal particle. Since there is a monopartite negation, namely the *má* morpheme, it is reasonable to think that it would be a good candidate for negative question formation. Contrary to such an expectation, the monopartite preverbal negation marker cannot be used to form questions. The example in (94) below shows that no matter whether we are dealing with plain or an echo question, the monopartite negation marker is disallowed in question formation. An echo question is formed by raising the sentence intonation towards the end of the construction and omitting the sentence-final question word *éé*.

- (94) *Aghetse a pə' má n-dʒí məjĩə (éé)
 Aghetse SM P1 NEG N-eat food Q
 Int: 'Did Aghetse not eat?'

In imperative contexts, where there is no subject, a(nother) monopartite negation marker is realized before the aspectual templet, as shown in the examples in (95).

- (95) a. kǎ pí ŋá' ntsoo ghó
 NEG ITE open mouth your
 'Do not say a word again'
 b. kǎ tó ŋígnə mə
 NEG PROG annoy me
 'Stop joking with me'

In most cases the subject is omitted in imperative context. However, the subject can be present in which case the negation marker precedes it:

- (96) a. kǎ a yĩə ʒfɛ
 NEG SM come here
 'S/he shouldn't come here'
 b. kǎ ŋgáŋ-mbəwĩŋə pó pí n-dáŋə ndu nə
 NEG people-Awing SM ITE N-pass road this
 'The Awing people should not pass through this road again'

There are two strategies used to negate conditional clauses. First, the conditional morpheme *támbo'* is used in sentences-initial position simultaneously with the bipartite negation marker:

- (97) támbo' Tsefor a pə' ŋ-kě ŋgəsáŋ yíwu ʒú pô, O fi'tə mə
 COND Tsefor SM P1 N-NEG maize DEF buy NEG you inform me
 'If Tsefor didn't buy the maize, let me know'

The second strategy consists of still having the conditional morpheme in sentence-initial position, but unlike in (97), the bipartite preverbal particle (*kě...*) is replaced with another morpheme which apparently sits in the same preverbal position. The other negation particle, as usual, shows up in clause-final position:

- (98) *támbo'* Tsefor a pe' *(*chíə*) ηγəsáη yíwu ʒú pô, O fí'tə mə
 COND Tsefor SM P1 ? maize DEF buy NEG you inform me
 'If Tsefor didn't buy the maize, let me know'

At this point, two queries need to be addressed. The first concerns the categorial status of the *chíə* morpheme used in place of the first negation particle in example (98), and the second has do with the (in)dependent nature of the bipartite negation particles. Thus far, we have seen that the preverbal particle can be used without the sentence-final particle, namely in question formation. The example in (98) above also indicates that the sentence-final particle can also be used without the preverbal one; however, with a morpheme that seems to occupy the same position that the latter is realized in. Before we probe into the status of this morpheme, let us first examine whether there can be, in any context, the sentence-final negation particle without the preverbal one. The examples in (99) show that it is not possible to negate a clause with only the second negation marker. Examples (99a) and (99b) show the impossibility with conditional constructions, while (99c) and (88d) show it with declarative constructions.

- (99) a. **támbo'* Tsefor a pe' ηγəsáη yíwu ʒu pô (O fí'tə mə)
 COND Tsefor SM P1 maize DEF buy NEG you inform me
 Int: 'If Tsefor did not buy the maize, (let me know)'
- b. **támbo'* Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu ηγəsáη yíwu pô
 COND Tsefor SM P1 N-buy maize DEF NEG
 Int: 'If Tsefor did not buy the maize,...'
- c. *Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu ηγəsáη yíwu pô
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy maize DEF buy
 Int: 'Tsefor did not buy the maize,...'
- d. *Tsefor a pe' ηγəsáη yíwu ʒu pô
 Tsefor SM P1 maize DEF buy NEG
 Int: 'Tsefor did not buy the maize,...'

As can be seen in the examples in (99), it doesn't matter whether we are dealing with a conditional or declarative sentence, the sentence-final negation marker has to depend on something, for example in declarative sentences, the first particle occurring before the verb, and in a conditional sentence, the *chíə* morpheme. However, full clauses might not be a good move to test if the second negation particle can occur alone. Collins et al. (2017) use data like that in (100) to argue that the second negation particle in Ewe is structurally higher than the

preverbal one. That is not our worry for now. Nevertheless, the Ewe data, extracted from Collins et al. (2017:17), where (100b) is an elliptical answer to the question in (100a), and (100c) is the non-elliptical form, demonstrate that the second negation particle can be used in Ewe without the preverbal one. Now, when we compare the Ewe examples against the Awing data in (101), we see the exact opposite; (101a) is the question and (101b) is the non-elliptical response. (101c) shows that the preverbal negation particle must be used in the elliptical version while (101d) illustrates that forming the ellipsis with just the sentence-final negation particle is ungrammatical in Awing.

- (100) a. ame-ka-é ne-kpô
 person-which-FOC 2SG-see
 “Who did you see?”
- b. ame áǎǎǎ *(o)
 person any NEG2
 “Nobody”
- c. nye-mé-kpô ame áǎǎǎ o
 1SG-NEG1-see person any NEG2
 “I didn’t see anybody.”

Collins et al. (2017:17)

- (101) a. o pe’ n-dzəənə wə
 You P1 N-see who
 ‘Who did you see?’
- b. m̀ pe’ ŋ-kě nwun-tsə zəə pô
 I P1 N-NEG person-IND see NEG
 ‘I did not see any person’
- c. *(kě) nwun-tsə
 NEG person-IND
 ‘Nobody’
- d. *nwun-tsə pô
 person-IND NEG
 Int: ‘Nobody’

So while the preverbal negation particle can be used without the sentence-final negation particle, the reverse is impossible. Returning back to the status of this *chíə* morpheme, the examples in (102) suggest that it is an auxiliary verb. Notice that it acts as the sole verb in

these examples. Moreover, in the question in (102a), it occurs in sentence-final position with a rising intonation, parallel to what was shown with the interrogative construction with a lexical verb in example (93b).

- (102) a. Tsefor a kě ndé chí-í↑
 Tsefor SM NEG house be Q
 ‘Is Tsefor not at home?’
- b. Tsefor a kě ndé chí pô
 Tsefor SM NEG house be NEG
 ‘Tsefor is not at home’
- c. a chíə fú
 he be where
 ‘Where is he?’

If *chíə* is an auxiliary verb, as I claim, the question then is: can it occur with another verb in a declarative sentence? The construction in (103) shows such a possibility.

- (103) Tsefor a nə chí mǎ-ʒú-nǎ ndé yíwə
 Tsefor SM P2 be INF-buy-INF house DEF
 ‘Tsefor wanted to buy the house’

Moreover, (103) can be negated with both the monopartite and bipartite negation markers as in (104a) and (104b), respectively.

- (104) a. Tsefor a nə mǎ-chí mǎ-ʒú-nǎ ndé yíwə
 Tsefor SM P2 N-NEG N-be INF-buy-INF house DEF
 ‘Tsefor did not want to buy the house’
- b. Tsefor a nə ŋ-kě ndé yíwə chí mǎ-ʒú-nǎ pô
 Tsefor SM P2 N-NEG house DEF be INF-buy-INF NEG
 ‘Tsefor did not want to buy the house’

The *chíə* morpheme is therefore an auxiliary verb which can be used as, say, a ‘negative polarity item’. The data can be summarized thus: Awing grammar has five negation strategies: 1) the bipartite *kě...pô* is used in declarative sentences to mark sentential negation; 2) the monopartite preverbal *mǎ* is used in declaratives constructions, too; 3) the preverbal *kě* is used to form interrogative constructions; 4) the dependent sentence-final *pô* is used in

conditional clauses and; 5) the *kǎ* marker is used in imperative constructions. The sentence-final negation marker in conditional clauses cannot negate a sentence by itself.

Thus far, we have seen one particular difference between the monopartite *má* and bipartite *kě...pô* negation markers, namely the possibility to use the latter and not the former in question formation. However, we haven't said anything substantial in relation to their categorial scopes, that is, if they mark sentential and/or phrasal negation. This is an intricate issue given that negation in Awing is not a 'free' morpheme that can be freely attached to any phrasal category. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, it appears that both morphemes are used for sentential negation and distinguishing their semantics seems to be a non-trivial business. Nonetheless, the examples in (105) below show that the bipartite marker can either be used to negate the entire sentence: taking scope over the quantificational phrase 'everybody', or in an appropriate context, the verb phrase. Conversely, the quantificational phrase 'everybody' cannot be used as the subject of a clause negated by the monopartite negation marker, as shown in example (106).

- (105) a. $\eta w \acute{u} n - t s \acute{e} m \acute{e}$ pe' $\eta - k \check{e}$ $ndz \acute{o}$ $k \acute{o}'$ $p \acute{o}$
 person-all P1 N-NEG beans eat NEG
 Immediate interpretation: 'Not everybody ate beans'
 Contextually possible: 'Everybody did not eat beans'

- (106) * $\eta w u n - t s \acute{e} m \acute{e}$ pe' $m - m \acute{a}$ $\eta - k \acute{o}'$ $ndz \acute{o}$
 person-all P1 NEG N-eat beans
 Int: 'Not everybody ate beans'

The ungrammaticality of (106) suggests that the monopartite marker is reserved for clauses with verbal negation. However, since the verb always has some sort of inherent scope over its arguments (especially subject), the monopartite marker is parsed in many cases, if not always, in the same manner as the bipartite marker, that is, expressing sentential negation. Thus, if the *má* morpheme is reserved for verbal negation, as I am claiming, why is the construction in (106) ungrammatical, even in a scenario where negation does not scope over the quantificational phrase—(everybody did not eat beans)? Unfortunately, I cannot provide an answer to this question at this point. However, as earlier mentioned, even with the bipartite negation particle, such a reading is not readily available. To achieve this type of

interpretation, the construction has to be reformulated as in example (107), where the ‘person’ takes an indefinite suffix resulting to a negative version of the universal quantifier in (107).

- (107) η wun-tsə pe’ η -kě ndzô kə’ pô
 person-IND P1 N-NEG beans eat NEG
 ‘Nobody ate beans’

The conclusion is that both negation markers are generally used to express sentential negation but the monopartite marker can be used contextually to express VP negation. In order to express any postverbal constituent negation, the bipartite negation marker is used and the LE morpheme (a focus operator) structurally precedes the targeted constituent, exemplified in (108). In case the subject alone needs to be negated, it is preferably done via clefting (109).

- (108) a. Alombah a pe’ kě ló məlú’ mbo Ayafor fê pô
 Alombah SM P1 NEG LE wine to Ayafor give NEG
 ‘It is not wine that Alombah gave to Ayafor’
 b. Alombah a pe’ kě məlú’ ló mbo Ayafor fê pô
 Alombah SM P1 NEG wine LE to Ayafor give NEG
 ‘It is not to Ayafor that Alombah gave wine’

- (109) ló kě Alombah pá’a a pe’ n-fê məlú’ə mbo Ayafor pô
 LE NEG Alombah that SM P1 N-give wine to Ayafor NEG
 ‘It is not Alombah who gave wine to Ayafor’

The verb can be negated by doubling it and having the LE morpheme precede the second copy:

- (110) Tsefor a kě məlú’ tó m-finê ló fi-nə pô
 Tsefor SM NEG wine PROG N-sell LE sell-INF NEG
 ‘Tsefor is not SELLING wine’ (he is actually buying it)

Let us now have some few paragraphs on negative polarity items to conclude the description on negation.

3.9.2 Negative polarity items

Collins et al. (2017:1) define negative polarity items' (NPIs) as expressions 'that only appear in certain contexts, prototypically those that are negative'. Words that may qualify as typical NPIs in Awing are rare. Actually two specific morphemes will fall under this category: *kě* 'nothing' and *kə* 'yet'. Examples can be seen in (111) and (112) below. While the *kě* morpheme is used in a negative construction in example (111a), its usage in the affirmative counterpart in (111b) renders the sentence ungrammatical. The same situation can be observed in (112) with the *kə* morpheme.

- (111) a. Tsefor a nə ŋ-kě kě tá' ndónj məló' no pô
 Tsefor SM P2 N-NEG nothing one cup wine drink NEG
 'Tsefor didn't drink even a cup of wine'
- b. *Tsefor a nə kě nó tá' ndónj məló'
 Tsefor SM P2 nothing drink one cup wine
 Int: 'Tsefor drank no/a cup of wine'
- (112) a. Tsefor a kě (mətá) kə ghen pô
 Tsefor SM NEG market yet go NEG
 'Tsefor have not yet gone (to the market)'
- b. *Tsefor a kə ghenô məteenó
 Tsefor SM yet go market
 Int: 'Tsefor is still to go to the market'

Finally, the monopartite negation marker differs, once more, from the bipartite marker in that the former cannot be used with any of the morphemes qualified as typical NPIs:

- (113) a. *Tsefor a nə má kě nó tá' ndónj məló'
 Tsefor SM P2 NEG nothing drink one cup wine
 Int: 'Tsefor did not drink even a cup of wine'
- b. *Tsefor a má kə ghen məteenó
 Tsefor SM NEG yet go market
 Int: 'Tsefor have not yet gone to the market'

The discussion on negation brings us to the end of the description on the verb and its various inflections/categories; howbeit, given that adverbs play an important role in the interpretation

of verbs, too, the remaining few paragraphs of this chapter will familiarize the reader on how adverbial phrases are expressed in Awing.

3.10 Adverbial phrases

Although adverbs are used, among others things, to modify verbs, their characteristics heterogeneously differ from the other verbal categories that we have seen in Awing. Just like adjectives, genuine adverbs are very few in Awing. To bridge this gap, Grassfields languages use derived substantives (see, e.g., Tamanji 2009). We will be concerned here with adverbials that are used to describe the manner in which a predicate is executed. Such elements generally occur in a postverbal position as prepositional phrases. Before we see how postverbal adverbials are realized, it should be mentioned that there are some (few) elements that occur before the verb and function as adverbs. Examples can be seen in (114) below; while ‘quickly’ and ‘slowly’ appear to be genuine adverbs, the word *lyáyə* in example (114c) is the verb ‘hide’ which is used as an adverb.

- (114) a. Aghetse a nə n-dzánkə n̄-naŋnə məʒí míwə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-quickly N-cook food DEF
 ‘Aghetse cooked the food quickly’
- b. Aghetse a nə m-bó’nə n-tséebə mbo mə yó
 Aghetse SM P2 N-slowly N-talk to mother her
 ‘Aghetse was slowly talking to her mother’
- c. Aghetse a nə n-dyáy ŋ-kwáa ŋkap yíwə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-hide N-take money DEF
 ‘Aghetse collected the money secretly’

The word *pyádnə* ‘well’ can also be used before the verb as in (115a). This also seems to be a genuine adverb. The postverbal nominalized morpheme *əshí’nə* ‘good’ in (115b) can be interpreted in the same way as the example in (115a).

- (115) a. mə yə a yí (pí) pyádnə (*pí) shúmə yó
 mother his SM F1 ITE well ITE beat him
 ‘His mother will beat him well again’
- b. mə yó a yí shúmə yó əshí’nə
 mother his SM F1 beat him good

‘His mother will beat him well’

Notice in example (115a), for example, that aspect must precede the adverb. Recall that preverbal elements have a templatic order. Example (115a) shows therefore that if adverbs are included the order: SM>T>NEG>ASP>ADV>V must be respected. Apart from the examples in (114) and (115a), it is extremely rare to see adverbial elements that occur before the verb in Awing. Phrases functioning as adverbs usually occur after the (in)direct object. However, unlike in (115b), they are used as prepositional phrases. As such, they can exchange position with other prepositional or adverbial elements. Consider the following examples with intransitive verbs:

- (116) a. Tsefor a nə n-tseebə mbo mə yó nó aʒíə
Tsefor SM P2 N-speak to mother his with know
‘Tsefor spoke to his mother wisely’
- b. Tsefor a nə n-tsap nó aʒíə mbo mə yó
Tsefor SM P2 N-speak with know to mother his
‘Tsefor spoke wisely to the mother’
- (117) a. Tsefor a nə ŋ-kwunê məm ndé nó apóǵə
Tsefor SM P2 N-enter in house with fear
✓‘Tsefor entered the house fearfully’
*‘Tsefor brought fright into the house’
- b. Tsefor a nə ŋ-kwu nó apóǵə məm ndé
Tsefor SM P2 N-enter with fear in house
✓‘Tsefor brought fright into the house’
✓‘Tsefor entered the house fearfully’

Having the adverbial phrase immediately after the verb can result to a change or an additional meaning. Example (117) clearly illustrates: while two meanings are available in (117b) when the adverbial phrase occurs immediately after the verb, there is just one meaning for (117a) when the adverbial phrase is separated from the verb. The situation is different with transitive verbs. As shown in (118) through (120), the adverbial phrase cannot occur immediately after the verb, that is, intervene between the verb and the direct object: examples (118b), (119b) and (120b).

- (118) a. Mengui a zé'ə aŋwa'rə nǎ ɲǎǎ'
 Mengui SM study book with suffer
 'Mengui studies with difficulty'
- b. *Mengui a zé'ə nǎ ɲǎǎ' aŋwárə
 Mengui SM study with suffer book
 Int: 'Mengui studies with difficulty'
- (119) a. Aghetse a nə ɲ-ghɛbê náa yíwə nǎ lóobə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-share meat DEF with cunning
 'Aghetse shared the meat cunningly'.
- b. *Aghetse a nə ɲ-ghɛbê nǎ lóobə náa yíwə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-share with cunning meat DEF
 Int: 'Aghetse shared the meat cunningly'.
- (120) a. Aghetse a nə ñ-naŋnə məzǐ míwə nǎ məténə
 Aghetse SM P2 n-cook food DEF with force
 'Aghetse cooked the food quickly'
- b. *Aghetse a ñ-naŋnə nǎ məténə məzǐ míwə
 Aghetse SM N-cook with force food DEF
 Int: 'Aghetse cooked the food quickly'

We know now that in Awing prepositional phrases are often used as adverbials, where the preposition takes a nominalized noun. Another common method that the Awing grammar explores to express adverbial meaning is reduplication. In example (121) below, the word *ndá* 'thanks' is reduplicated to derive 'slowly'. The example in (122) is more complex because it employs reduplication plus compounding.

- (121) Alombah a pe' n-dzǐ məzǐ mîə ndá-ndá
 Alombah SM P1 N-eat food his thanks-thanks
 'Alombah ate his food slowly'
- (122) Alombah a pe' ɲ-yinə mómó-álí'ə ɲ-ghɛnê məteené
 Alombah SM P1 N-walk small-small-place N-go market
 'Alombah walked gently to the market'

In chapter two it was argued that adjectives are rare in Awing and that they are expressed via morphological processes like compounding. The purpose of this section was to show that despite the fact that Awing also lacks genuine adverbs the language has its own ways to express such notions.

3.11 Summary

Overall, we have seen the various categories that occur before the verb beginning with the SM down to verbal extensions which occur as verbal suffixes. A considerable amount of time has also been spent examining elements that trigger the homorganic nasal prefix which shows up with verbs, aspectual and negation markers. While studying the verb and its various categories, we have been familiarized with the canonical SVO sentence structure and other sentence types like imperatives, conditional, negation, among others. The next chapter will concentrate on an unusual case that the Awing grammar exhibits, namely short and long forms of nouns and verbs.

Chapter 4

Truncation

4.1 Introduction

There is a tendency in Awing to shorten or delete the final syllables or vowels of nouns and verbs. The aim of this chapter is to describe in detail the various conditions and contexts that permit such a phenomenon. Although Awing grammar seems to use word shortening to an extreme, the phenomenon has been observed in other languages, albeit with very little consensus on the rules governing their usage. As far as I know, no Grassfields language exhibits long and short forms of both nouns and verbs the way Awing does. So, before engaging with the Awing data it may be useful presenting other (non-related) languages that we were able to identify similar patterns with Awing. Also, some Southern and Eastern Bantu languages have what is referred to as disjoint conjoint verbs (see, e.g., Zulu: Buell 2005, 2009; Makhuwa: van der Wal 2011). In Awing, when the verb immediately precedes exhaustive focus it takes the truncated form. Following Féry (2013), I described this in section 4.4.2 as prosodic alignment of (a type of) focus and show that such an alignment does not apply to the verb alone. However, given that the conjoint and disjoint (or short/long) verbal alternation is (in)directly related to focusing (see, e.g., Hyman & Watters 1984 vs Buell 2005), the discussion in section 4.4.2 also highlights the (dis)similarities between the Awing data and the notion of disjoint conjoint forms in Southern and Eastern Bantu. The chapter has three main parts. The following section introduces the phenomenon in other languages and then sections 4.3 and 4.4 respectively show how it applies on nominal and verbal categories in Awing.

4.1.1 *Introducing the phenomenon*

This section will briefly introduce the type of data that we will eventually encounter in Awing. By so doing, the reader will not only be familiarized with the data but will also have a sense of the type of arguments that such data has provoked in other languages and what can be learned from such arguments.

Rotuman a language spoken on the islands of Rotuma has some nouns and verbs in two forms. There is an on-going debate (see, e.g., den Dikken 2003 and Hale & Kissonck 2009) regarding the conditioning of these forms. Examples of these forms can be seen in (1) (where the long and short forms are termed complete and incomplete phases, respectively). The data on Rotuman in examples (1) to (4) is extracted from Hale & Kissonck (2009).

(1)	Complete Phase	Incomplete Phase	Glosses	Category
	haŋa	haŋ	‘feed’	verb
	tokiri	tokir	‘roll’	verb
	mose	mös	‘sleep’	verb
	pepa	peap	‘paper’	noun
	hosa	hoas	‘flower	noun

Hale & Kissonck (2009:3) citing den Dikken (2003) note that the distinction between the forms is commonly assumed to ‘relate in some way to definiteness issues’. For instance, the final vowels that show up with the nouns in the examples in (2) below suggest that they are variants of the definite marker in this language. We will eventually see that the notion of (in)definiteness also has a say in Awing long and short forms.

(2) Some phase distinctions of *vaka* ‘canoe’ and *fisi* ‘white’:

- a. *vak* ‘canoes’ (indef. pl.) vs. *vaka* ‘the canoes’ (def. pl.)
- b. *vak fisi* ‘white canoes’ vs. *vak fisi* ‘the white canoes’

Hale & Kissonck (2009), indicate, however, that generally the alternations can be best accounted for from a phonological perspective if emphasis is laid on the forms rather than on what triggers the forms. They argue that in data like the one provided in (3), the affixation of the suffix *-mə* ‘hither’ and the causative marker *-’oki* on the verb *tole* ‘carry’ has to do with phonological rules like vowel deletion and metathesis, respectively.

- (3) a. *tole* ‘carry’+*-mə* ‘hither’ → **tolem** ‘carry hither’ [*tole*—Complete Phase]
- b. *tole* ‘carry’+*-’oki* ‘causative’ → **tol’æk** ‘to make carry’ [*tole*—Incomplete Phase]

From a phonological view, Hale & Kissonck (2009) further note that “one builds binary strong-weak feet from right-to-left, and that the vowels at the right edges of weak feet normally delete.” Thus:

- (4) a. (*to*)[*leme*] → *tolem*

b. [tole][ʔki]→ tolʔək

We are not going to get into any discussion as to whether in Rotuman the alternation is motivated by morphosyntax or ‘*syntactico-semantic conditioning*’—(den Dikken 2003), or whether they are solely phonological processes—(Hale & Kisseck (2009:6). The aim here is to introduce the phenomenon with its intricacies. Nonetheless, although it is obvious that the changes can be explained in phonological terms, it might also be advantageous to investigate whether morphosyntax and semantics also have a say in the alternations, the direction which den Dikken (2003) pursues, and which we also intend not to ignore in Awing.

Long and short forms of nouns and (some) verbs is also common in some Austro-Asiatic languages spoken in India. A case in point is Sora with what researchers in this language describe as Full Forms (FF) and Combining Forms (CF). Some examples taken from Starosta (1989) are provided below.

(5)	Sora	Full forms	Combined forms	Glosses
		əsu	su	‘illness/fever’
		aŋgaj	gaj	‘moon’
		daŋgo	daŋ	‘stick’
		k+nad	kad	‘crab’
		kaka	ka	‘crow’
		jurjan	jan	‘village’

Just like the previous language, the debate on the conditioning of these forms mainly centres on the various language sub-systems: phonology, morphology and semantics. Zide (1976) provides some morphological (e.g., reduplication as in *kaka* # *ka*) and phonological rules, e.g. infixation to derive words like *k(+)nad* ‘crab’. By using such morpho-phonological processes which are also independently attested in the language, Zide’s (1976) major preoccupation is to show that the long forms are derived from the short ones; although she nevertheless indicates that certain forms, e.g. *jurjan* # *jan* ‘village’ are ‘inexplicable’ with the rules she postulates (Zide 1976:1271). Conversely, Starosta (1989) rejects the long to short form derivation and argues that the full forms (FF) are the ones that ‘ought to be listed in the dictionary’, that is, short forms are derived from the long ones. Using the ‘*lexicalise derivational rule*’ model, Starosta (1989:81) argues that the alternation can be accounted for via featural rules such as stressing and further suggests that semantics, for example ‘referential restriction of a concept’, also has a role in the alternation of the forms. Another point which we can take from the data

and debate in Sora is the fact that even if we can explain the long and short form alternations via phonological or morphological rules, it is worth investigating how or whether the alternations are triggered by interpretative or syntactic conditions.

One language and analysis which attempts to tackle the issue ‘holistically’ is Kenstowicz’s (1985) paper on Tangale. In general, most African languages exhibit word shortening, albeit it is simplistically described as final vowel deletion with very little or no further explanations. However, Kenstowicz’s (1985) analysis of the phenomenon in Tangale is an interesting piece as it sets the path to tackle the notion from a phono-syntactic view. First, Kenstowicz (1985:81) notes that ‘close syntactic relations between the first word and the second one’ triggers final vowel deletion. In this respect, nouns final vowels are deleted, for example, when they occur with possessive (6a) or definite suffixes (6b). Also, verbs final vowels are deleted when they take past tense (7a) and object suffixes (7b).

- | | | | |
|-----|----|---------|-------------|
| (6) | a. | ayaba | ‘banana’ |
| | | ayab-nó | ‘my banana’ |
| | b. | tuužé | ‘horse’ |
| | | tuuž-i | ‘the horse’ |
| (7) | a. | tuké | ‘hides’ |
| | | tuk-kó | ‘hid’ |
| | b. | kasé | ‘cuts’ |
| | | kas-nó | ‘cuts me’ |

One thing which is not obvious from Kenstowicz’s (1985) paper is whether the combination of the noun with other modifiers like demonstratives or numerals also deletes the vowel of the preceding noun, and if not what does ‘*close syntactic relation*’ actually entails, specifically with respect to the nominal phrase. However, anticipating the discussion on Awing, I will argue that data like that in (6) is an indication of movement within the determiner phrase (DP). Staying for now with the Tangale data, specifically with respect to verbs, Kenstowicz notes that past tense morphemes are peculiar in Tangale as they are the only category that occur as suffixes on the verb, (the others occur between the subject and the verb as it is the case in the majority of African languages (see, e.g., Gibson 2017 for an overview). According to Kenstowicz the deletion of the verb’s final vowel in example (7b) is a reflection of movement of the verb to a higher position within the inflectional layer: in proximity to the

past tense marker. One interesting aspect that is used to argue for the movement of the verb is that the deletion is eluded when a wh-word is used in the surface position where a corresponding NP would have provoked the deletion process. The examples extracted from Kenstowicz (1985:84) in (8) below illustrate the argument.

- (8) a. Malay wa padé 'Malay will buy (it).'
- b. Malay wa pad yálam 'Malay will buy oil'
- c. Malay wa padé náŋ 'What will Malay buy?'
- d. Kay dobgó 'Kay called'
- e. Kay dobug Málay 'Kay called Malay'
- f. Kay dobgó náŋ 'Who did Kay call?'

There is a tonal process that shifts a high tone to the right (exemplified in (8e)) in this language; which is not crucial to the observation we want to deduce here. The important thing is that, unlike in (8b) and (8e), the deletion process does not apply with wh-arguments: (8c) and (8f). Kenstowicz (1985) convincingly shows that this is due to the fact that these elements have been moved to a position where they no longer enjoy the close syntactic relation with the verb, thus prohibiting the deletion rule. It is clear that this does not capture the entire paradigm of final vowel elision in Tangale but it goes a long way to illustrate how “phonological rules tell us something about the surface syntactic structure” Kenstowicz (1985:79).

The aim of this section was to introduce the reader to the kind of data we will be discussing in Awing, and how intricate it can be. As I already noted, the most appealing approach to tackle such a phenomenon would consist in taking it from a holistic perspective rather than relying on a particular language’s (sub)-system.

4.2 Truncation in Awing

I will term the phenomenon introduced in the preceding pages as truncation in Awing. Generally, truncation or word clipping is a process that cuts or bleaches part of a word. For example, the English words ‘mathematics’ and ‘examination’ are often truncated for ‘math’ and ‘exam’, respectively. Truncated words are not necessarily considered as words pertaining to a language’s lexicon; however, what I am terming as truncation in Awing is an inherent aspect of the grammar. That is, both nouns and verbs have long and short forms and their usage appears to be a process that the Awing native speaker acquires. Thus, I am using the

term truncation in a relaxed sense to simply indicate a morphological process that deletes either the final syllable, in the majority of cases, or the final vowels of both nouns and verbs. This chapter will outline the various contexts within which truncation systematically applies and then see if we can end up with some generalizations governing the phenomenon in Awing. The chapter is divided into two main parts, that is, nominal and verbal truncation.

4.3 Nominal truncation

This section will concentrate on the various contexts that provoke the Awing nouns to occur in a truncated form. The data in (9) exemplifies nouns in their long/non-truncated and truncated/short forms. Observe that while some nouns may completely change their forms, for example, *afoonə* versus *afɔ* ‘farm’, others will have only the final vowel deleted: *ŋgəsáŋə* versus *ŋgəsáŋ* ‘maize’. As we proceed, keep in mind that truncation does not apply to proper names in Awing. Also, given their structure, monosyllabic nouns, for example, *ndê* ‘house’ and *ndzɔ* ‘beans’ have only one form.

(9)	Long forms	truncated forms	glosses
	<i>afoonə</i>	<i>afɔ</i>	‘farm’
	<i>apeemə</i>	<i>apa</i>	‘bag’
	<i>apéenə</i>	<i>apá</i>	‘flour’
	<i>akoolə</i>	<i>akɔ</i>	‘toilet’
	<i>məteenə</i>	<i>mətá</i>	‘market’
	<i>məkwúnə</i>	<i>məkwu</i>	‘rice’
	<i>móonə</i>	<i>mó</i>	‘child’
	<i>ndelə</i>	<i>nde</i>	‘time’
	<i>nəəmə</i>	<i>ná</i>	‘animal/cow’
	<i>ntsoolə</i>	<i>ntso</i>	‘war’
	<i>kwúneemə</i>	<i>kwúna</i>	‘pig’
	<i>ŋgéelə</i>	<i>ŋgá</i>	‘gun’
	<i>ŋgəsáŋə</i>	<i>ŋgəsáŋ</i>	‘maize’

As earlier mentioned, the long and short forms may not be used in a haphazard manner. The truncated forms do not show up as bare-NPs, be it as subjects, objects or complements of

prepositions. The nouns in examples (10) and (11), with the (in)definite articles show that bare NPs have to occur in the non-truncated forms while the reverse holds for any NP with an article.

- (10) a. neemə/*na nə η-gwuə akoobə
 animal P2 N-fall forest
 ‘An animal fell in the forest’
- b. məteenə/*mətá nə m̀- má η-ηá’ə ηgap
 market P2 N-NEG N-open week
 ‘The market was not open last week’
- c. afoonə/*afɔ zá n-dzúmɔ əghâ-lúmə
 farm HAB N-dry time-dry
 ‘The farm is usually dry during the dry season’
- (11) a. mətá/*məteenə yiwə nə η-kě ηgap ηá’ pô
 market DEF P2 N-NEG week open NEG
 ‘The market was not open last week’
- b. afɔ/*afoonə yiwə zá n-dzúmə ghâ-lumə
 farm DEF HAB N-dry time-dry
 ‘The farm is usually dry during the dry season’
- c. na/*neemə yítsə nə η-gwuə akoobə
 animal IND P2 N-fall forest
 ‘An animal fell in the forest’

Examples (12) through (14) further show the alternation in the object position.

- (12) a. Alombah a pe’ η-gwamə neemə/*na
 Alombah SM P1 N-catch cow
 ‘Alombah caught an animal’
- b. Alombah a pe’ η-gwamə ná/*neemə yítsə
 Alombah SM P1 N-catch cow IND
 ‘Alombah caught an animal’
- (13) a. Alombah a yó kwárə ηkeebə/*ηkáp
 Alombah SM F2 take money

‘Alombah will collect money’

- b. Alombah a yó kwárə ηká/*ηkeebə yíwə
Alombah SM F2 take money DEF

‘Alombah will collect the money’

- (14) na/*neemə yítsə zutə ηgəp/*ηgəbə yíwə
animal IND kill chicken DEF

‘An animal has killed the chicken’

To conclude the generalization observed so far, namely that nouns occurring with (in)definite markers have to take the truncated forms, consider example (15) with a prepositional object.

- (15) a. Alombah a pe’ m-fug ndzǒ məm ηkeemə/*ηká
Alombah SM P1 N-remove beans in basket

‘Alombah removed beans from the/a basket’

- b. Alombah a pe’ m-fug ndzǒ məm ηká/*ηkeemə yíwə
Alombah SM P1 N-remove beans in basket DEF

‘Alombah removed beans from the basket’

At this stage, one might ask the question whether the alternation between the long and truncated forms in Awing is not solely a matter of (bare) noun phrase (NP) versus determiner phrase (DP).¹¹ The above discussion already suggests that the long and short form alternation might be due to nouns occurring with or without modifiers. Thus, the combination of nouns with other modifiers might clarify the point. Before we move on, recall that I earlier mentioned that proper names cannot be truncated. It goes same for nouns derived via morphological processes: noun class-prefixing (16); reduplication (17); compounding (18) and loan words (19).

- (16) Tsefor a tó η̄-ηwárə a-ηwarə yíwə (məm ndé)
Tsefor SM PROG N-write 7-book/letter DEF in house
‘Tsefor is writing the letter (in the house)’

- (17) Alombah a pe’ n-dzutə kígháləghálə yíwə
Alombah SM P1 N-kill butterfly DEF

¹¹ I am using these terms here in the most basic sense: abstracting at this stage from the debate as to whether the determiner or the noun heads the phrase. Rather, I use NP to mean bare nouns and DP to refer to nouns that occur with any modifier: articles, demonstratives etc.

‘Alombah killed the butterfly’

- (18) Neh a zǐə acha'tə-əsê yíwə
Neh SM know greeting-God DEF
‘Neh knows the prayer’

- (19) Alombah a yí zúnə mantələsə yíwə
Alombah SM F1 buy mattress DEF
‘Alombah will buy the mattress’

As the above examples show, deverbatives, reduplicated, compound and borrowed words cannot be truncated. We have seen that when the noun is combined with a marker expressing (in)definiteness, the long form is banned. The examples with the demonstrative determiners ‘that’ and ‘this’ in examples (20) and (21), respectively, further suggest that short forms are used to form DPs.

- (20) a. apa/*apeemə zǎ ghá'ə
bag that big
‘That bag is big’
b. Ngwe a yí zúnə apa/*apeemə zǎ
Ngwe SM P1 buy bag that
‘Ngwe will buy that bag’
- (21) a. ηgá'/*ηgeelə zê yí wûə məm akoolə
gun this F1 fall in toilet
‘This gun will fall into the toilet’
b. Alombah a yí zórə ηgá'/*ηgeelə nê
Alombah SM F1 steal gun this
‘Alombah will steal this gun’

The overall observation thus far that DPs are used with the truncated forms while the long forms are reserved for (bare) NPs seems to be quite fine, at least till this point. However, once possessives determiners enter the stage, the generalization apparently collapses:

- (22) a. kwúneemə/*kwúna mə nə m-biηə á məteenə
pig my P2 N-lose in market
‘My pig was missing in the market’

b. Ngwe yí zúnə kwúneemə/*kwúna mə
 Ngwe F1 buy pig my
 ‘Ngwe will buy my pig’

(23) a. ɲgeelá/*ɲgá’ mə yí wûə məm akoolə
 gun my F1 fall in toilet
 ‘My gun will fall in the toilet’

b. Alombah a yi zórə ɲgeelá/*ɲgá’ mə
 Alombah SM F1 steal gun my
 ‘Alombah stole my gun’

It is not the case, however, that all possessive determiners are used with the non-truncated forms: Only the first person singular *mə* ‘my’ takes the long forms. This can be seen from row 1 to 9 in the table provided in (24).

(24)

	1 st Pers.Sing. ‘my’	2 nd Pers.Sing. ‘your’	3 rd Pers.Sing. ‘his/her’	1 st Pers.Plur. ‘our’	3 rd Pers.Plur. ‘their’	Glosses
	<i>Long forms</i>	<i>Short forms</i>	<i>Short forms</i>	<i>Short forms</i>	<i>Short forms</i>	
1	ɲkéebə mə	ɲkáp zo	ɲkáp jíə	ɲkáp zo	ɲkáp zóobə	money
2	əkunə mə	əku (gh)o	əku yǐə	əku zo	əku zóobe	bed
3	ɲgwubə mə	ɲgwup zo	ɲgwup jíə	ɲgwup zenə	ɲgwup zóobə	shoe
4	móonə mə	mó (gh)o	mó yǐə	mó wəgə	mó wóobə	child
5	ndúmə mə	ndú (gh)o	ndú yǐə	ndú wəgə	ndú wóobə	husband
6	məjǐə mə	məjǐ mo	məjǐ míə	məjǐ menə	məjǐ mobə	food

7	məkwúnə mə	məkwú mo	məkwú míə	məkwú menə	məkwú móobá	rice
8	mbəəmə mə	mbɪ zo	mbɪ jíə	mbɪ ménə	mbɪ móobá	body
9	néemə mə	ná zo	ná jíə	ná zénə	ná zóobá	meat
10	apéenə mə	apéenə zo	apéenə jíə	apéenə zénə	apéenə zóobá	flour

The last (highlighted) column shows that some nouns reject the truncated form with all possessive determiners. Actually, all nouns beginning with the class 7 prefix (*a-*) (e.g. *akoobá* ‘forest’; *atsə’á* ‘dress’; *apéenə* ‘flour’; *apeemə* ‘bag’ etc) do not occur in the truncated forms when used with possessive determiners, further consider the data in (25) and (26).

- (25) a. *apeemə/*apa jíə ghá’ə*
 bag his big
 ‘His bag is big’
- b. *Ngwe a yí zúnə apeemə/*apa jíə*
 Ngwe SM P1 buy bag his
 ‘Ngwe will buy his bag’
- (26) a. *akoobá/*akɔp zóobə kélə*
 forest their burn
 ‘Their forest got burned’
- b. *Tsefor nə n-toonə akoobá/*akɔp zo*
 Tsefor P2 N-burn forest your
 ‘Tsefor burned your forest’

While the class 7 prefix rejects the truncated forms of nouns, the plural for class 7, that is class 8 (*ə-*), parallel to other nominals, must take the truncated forms:

- (27) a. *əpeemə/əpa píə ghá'ə
 bag his big
 ‘His bags are big’
- b. Ngwe yí zúnə *əpeemə/əpa píə
 Ngwe P1 buy bag his
 ‘Ngwe will buy his bags’
- (28) a. əkəp/*əkoobó zóobə kélə
 forest their burn
 ‘Their forests got burned’
- b. Tsefor nə n-toonê əkəp/*əkoobó zégó
 Tsefor P2 N-burn forest our
 ‘Tsefor burned our forests’

Summarising the description thus far, we have seen that truncated forms are not used as bare NPs, whether as subjects, objects or adjuncts. It has been shown that, with the exception of the first person possessive determiner, all nominal modifiers (i.e., articles, demonstratives and possessives) take the truncated forms of nouns. We also know that truncation does not apply to all nouns: proper names and nouns derived via morphological processes cannot be truncated. Moreover, while class 7 nouns can be truncated with other nominal modifiers, they resist truncation with all possessive determiners. Curiously, the plural of class 7, that is, class 8 must be truncated in the same contexts that the singular class 7 nouns resist, namely with possessive determiners. The question then is what is peculiar with the first person singular pronoun *mə* ‘my’ (which does not take truncated noun forms) and the class 7 (singular) prefix (which does not take truncated nouns with any possessive determiners). For the first query, if it were the case that the class 7 prefix resists truncation with all nominal modifiers, one could conjecture that the ban of the truncated forms with derived nouns over generates and circumscribes nouns with the class 7 prefix, given that Awing uses to a large extent the class 7 prefix to derive nouns from verbs (see chapter two section 2.1.2). Unfortunately, this cannot be the whole story, as I already noted the nouns in examples (11b) and (12a), repeated below as (29a) and (29b), respectively, have the class 7 *a-* prefix but when used with a demonstrative or an article they occur in the truncated forms.

- (29) a. apa/*apeemə zǎ ghá’ə
 bag that big
 ‘That bag is big’
- b. afə/*afoonə yíwə zá n-dʒúmə ghá-lumə
 farm DEF HAB N-dry time-dry
 ‘The farm is usually dry during the dry season’

Thus, it is not the case that nouns with the class 7 prefix cannot be truncated; rather, it is the case that the nouns with the class seven prefix cannot be truncated with possessive determiners. Returning to the first person singular possessive determiner which systematically takes long forms, the first thing to note is that parallel to nouns in general, some determiners have two forms and the first person possessive determiner is one of such.¹² There is another morpheme: *may* which can be used as the first person possessive determiner, that is, when the speaker wants to emphasize on the ownership. An example with this emphatic possessive determiner is given in (29).

¹² The proximate demonstrative does not only have two forms but also demonstrates the long and truncated alternation in all noun classes. As shown in chapter two section 2.3.5, there are three demonstratives determiners/pronouns in Awing which can be distinguished depending on the physical location of the addresser and/or addressee to the object which is being referred to. The first termed proximate exhibits the two forms shown below.

(i)

Class	this/these (prox.) Long	that/these (prox.) Short
1	ghenó	nô
2	pəənó	pɛ
3	ghenó	nô
5	zəənó	zɛ
6	məənó	mɛ
7	zəənó	zɛ
8	pəənó	pɛ
9	zəənô	zɛ

The main difference between the long and short forms is that while the latter functions as a modifier/determiner the former has to be used as a pronoun. These differences can be captured in the main and subordinate clauses in the examples provided below; note that these functions cannot be substituted.

- (ii) a. ɲgəsájɲ nô kě yá pɔɲ pô, a yí lógə ghenó
 maize this NEG him good NEG he F1 take this
 ‘He does not like this maize, he will take this’
- b. a-tsə’ zɛ kě yá pɔɲ pô, a yí lógə zəənó
 7-dress this NEG him good NEG he F1 take this
 ‘He does not like this dress, he will take this’

- (29) a. Tsefor a pe' η-ghenê a lí'ə *məteenə/mətá maŋ
 Tsefor SM P1 N-go to place market my
 'Tsefor went to MY shop'
- b. Ngwe a núŋnə *mbəəmə/mbɪ maŋ
 Ngwe SM lie body my
 'Ngwe is on MY body'
- c. Tsefor neŋ ηkéebə *apeemə/apa maŋ
 Tsefor put money bag my
 'Tsefor has put money in my bag'

As can be seen in (29), the class 7 noun 'bag' is truncated when used with the emphatic possessive determiner. Notice, however, that all the examples in (29) are postverbal objects. This is because the emphatic possessive determiner cannot be used with a noun in the subject position, as shown in (30a) and (31a).

- (30) a. *mbɪ maŋ tɛ n-dzáŋə
 body my PROG N-pain
 'My body is paining'

Has to be:

- b. mbəəmə mə tɛ n-dzáŋə
 body my PROG N-pain
 'My body is paining'

- (31) a. *apa maŋ ɔ ghá'
 bag my SM big
 Int: 'My bag is big'

Has to be:

- b. apeemə mə ɔ ghá'
 bag my SM big
 'My bag is big'

The reason why the emphatic possessive determiner is not allowed in the subject position may be due to the fact that it is homophonous with the first person subject pronoun 'I', see example (32) below.

- (32) maŋ ghénê mæteenó
 I go market
 ‘I am going to the market’

Thus, it is conceivable to think that using it with another noun in the subject position creates a sort of ambiguity which is not tolerated by the grammar. However, it could also be argued that the prohibition of the emphatic or focalized possessive determiner *may* in the subject position is due to a focus constraint on the subject position (Hyman PC). It is unlikely that this could be the (main) reason given that Awiing subject position can take a focus exclusive element like ‘only’ and also wh-subjects (see chapter 6 section 6.4). Thus, keeping aside the class 7 prefix, it appears that the long and truncated form alternation within the nominal domain is mainly a matter of bare NPs versus DPs. Recall that all determiners take the truncated forms except the non-emphatic first person singular possessive determiner. Now, notice that in all examples that we have had till this point the modifiers (i.e. possessives, demonstratives and articles) come after nouns. However, other nominal modifiers, namely colours and ‘quantifiers’ (including elements like ‘only’ and the cardinal number one) have to precede the noun. In this latter scenario, the nouns cannot be truncated, see the data in (33) through (35).

- | | | | | |
|------|----|--------------|----|-----------------------|
| (33) | a. | tá’ moonə | b. | nda’ moonə |
| | | one child | | lone child |
| | | ‘One child’ | | ‘The lone/only child’ |
| | c. | tsó’ ŋkéebə | d. | ala’ peenó |
| | | only money | | many people |
| | | ‘Only money’ | | ‘many people’ |

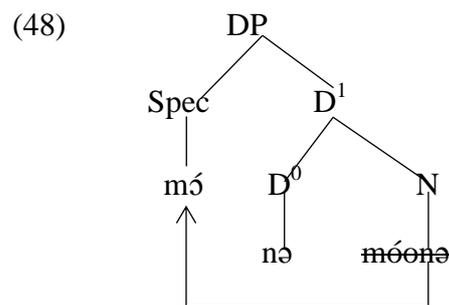
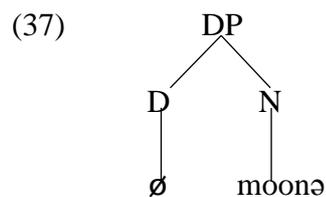
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|------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| (34) | <i>Colours</i> | <i>Nouns</i> | <i>Glosses</i> |
| | paŋpaŋ | ŋgwubə | ‘red shoe’ |
| | paŋpaŋ | ndəsó | ‘red ground’ |
| | paŋpaŋ | məŋgyě | ‘red woman’ |
| | shíshí | apeemə | ‘black bag’ |
| | shíshí | akájə | ‘black pan’ |
| | fúfú | məghólə | ‘white oil’ |

- | | | | | | | |
|------|------|----------------------------------|--------------|------|------------------|--------|
| | fúfú | néemə | ‘white meat’ | | | |
| (35) | a. | (a-)təsê | məngyǎ | b. | apəpəgə | ntóəmə |
| | | tall | woman | | fragmented | heart |
| | | ‘A tall woman’ | | | ‘A broken heart’ | |
| | c. | asóələ | ŋgwûə | d. | atsəgə | ŋgwûə |
| | | castrated | dog | | sour | dog |
| | | ‘A castrated dog’ | | | ‘A wild dog’ | |
| (36) | a. | Tsefor | ghe’ | ŋgwû | (*a-)tsəgə | |
| | | Tsefor | make | dog | wicked | |
| | | ‘Tsefor made the dog to be wild’ | | | | |
| | b. | Tsefor | yí | zúnə | tá’ə/páŋpáŋə | |
| | | Tsefor | F1 | buy | one/red | |
| | | ‘Tsefor will buy one/red’ | | | | |

An attentive reader might have noticed that while the final vowels of both ‘quantifiers’ and colours are deleted in (33) and (34)—compare with (36b), that of adjectives are not deleted in (35). The reason could be that pre-nominal adjectives generally take the class 7 noun class prefix—compare the data in (35) against (36a). So in some sense they behave like deverbals. In chapter two (section 2.2.1) it was argued that the *a*-prefix is the most common prefix used to derived nouns from verbs. It is the same prefix that shows up with adjectives and, curiously, the same prefix (i.e., class 7 nouns) that does not take the short form of nouns with possessive determiners. There is therefore something mysterious with this prefix that prevents nouns and adjectives to be truncated in positions that they were normally supposed to be truncated. Apart from that, what we can gather from the data in (33) through (35) is that truncation generally occurs when the noun precedes the modifier.

Before we proceed, I should note that till this point the implicit assumption has been that truncated forms are derived from the long forms. On the other hand, one could assume that the short forms are the underived ones. For instance, we know that almost all nouns, even borrowed nouns, end with the schwa. It is therefore logical to think that the occurrence of the schwa, for instance in example (36b), is just the tendency that the grammar has to have nouns/adjectives end with a vowel. The problem will be with (the majority of) nouns that have two forms where the truncated forms do not only omit the final vowel but actually cuts a

larger portion of the word (e.g., *mbəəmə* vs *mbt* ‘body’; *apémə* vs *apa* ‘bag’ *ɣkéebə* vs *ɣkap* ‘money’ etc.). It does not appear to me that such truncated forms are the underived ones; besides, you will never hear an Awing speaker ‘taxonomising’ or showing something to a kid with the intention to teach him/her the name of such a thing and using the truncated forms. Thus, although there are some peripheral cases with nominal truncation, specifically with the class 7 prefix, its application, as I already suggested, seems to be triggered by the combination of the noun with a modifier (what I call a DP) and, crucially, when the noun has to precede the modifier. With that in mind, assume that a noun is always accompanied (or headed) by a determiner (in the spirit of Abney 1987). This means that what I have referred to thus far as (bare) NP will have a skeletal structure parallel to that in (37), where the determiner is null.¹³ On the other hand, what I have so far referred to as DPs will constitute cases that exhibit overt determiner or modifier. The crucial point is that if the noun moves to precede the modifier, it will occur in the truncated form, as the movement of *móonə* ‘child’ within the DP (*mó nə* ‘this child’) in (48) shows.



Another case that seems to favour this line of reasoning is associative noun phrases, i.e., noun phrases that take two elements (which could be both nouns or a noun and an adjective) and are linked/associated with either a covert or an overt linker termed the associative marker (AM). In associative noun phrases, the noun preceding the associative marker has to be in the truncated form (39); this also includes all associative noun phrases that are formed with plural cardinal numbers, where the number is introduced by an associative marker, as in (40), for example.

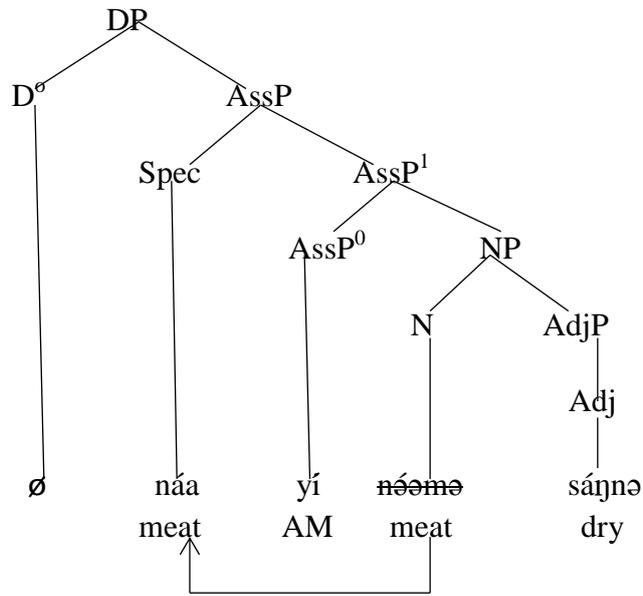
¹³ Null elements, also known as empty or phonetically unrealized elements, can be traced back to Chomsky’s (1981) empty category principle (ECP). While some linguists hold that empty categories are indispensable in syntax (see for example Featherston 2001), others argue that the generative framework can do without such notions (see, e.g., Hornstein et al 2012). The idea which I pursue here is that elements with semantic content within a given phrase or sentence can be phonetically omitted, as in a sentence like: *They think (that) you are coming*; where the complementizer ‘that’ can be freely dropped.

(39)	<i>Nouns</i>	<i>AM</i>	<i>Nouns/Adjectives</i>	<i>Meanings</i>
	náa	yí	mbáŋnə	‘red meat’
	náa	yí	sáŋnə	‘dried meat’
	mə́lú’	mə	fúə	‘white wine’
	atsə’	yí	fiə	‘new dress’
	apá	yí	fiə	‘new bag’
	ŋgəsáj	yí	fiŋŋə	‘fresh corn’
	ŋkáp	mə	mənémə	‘money from the sale of cattle’
	ná’	ø	pájə	‘yellow sauce’

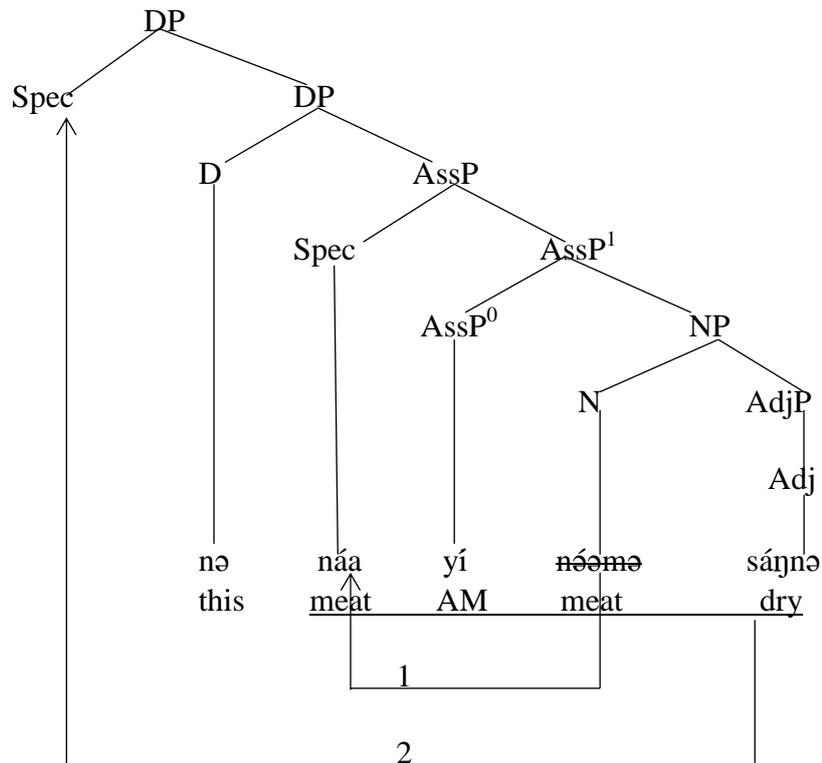
- (40) a. pí/*pəənə pən pĕ
 people AM two
 ‘Two people’
- b. mə-náa/*neemə mən nəkwa
 PL-cow AM four
 ‘Four cattle’
- c. pə-kwúna/*kwúneemə pən nəkwa
 PL-pigs AM four
 ‘Four pigs’

The fact that the AM agrees with the preceding nouns in both (39) and (40) could also be seen as an indication that there is a movement mechanism that permits such an agreement within the DP system. Leaving aside the discussion whether the noun stops at the head of the associative phrase, we can note that parallel to the DP structure in (38), the noun moves in (41) to a higher position, say SpecAssP and occurs in the truncated form. The diagram in (42) is a follow-up of (41), where the DP head is phonetically realized.

(41)



(41)



Example (42) further differs from (41) in that after the noun moves to SpecAssP (indicated as movement 1), a second movement applies where the entire AssP and its complement, namely AdjP, moves to SpecDP in order to respect the DP order: N(Ass-N/Adj)→Dem.

Another context that seems to further straighten the analysis being pursued here is the form of bare plural nouns. It has been shown that bare (singular) nouns do not occur in the truncated forms in postverbal positions (but see section 4.4.3, where truncation is used as a means to form yes-no questions); yet, the data in (42b) through (45b) show that bare plural nouns systematically take the truncated forms when used as subjects. The immediate question is: will these nouns occur in the truncated forms in the object position when they take a plural prefix? As shown, for example in (42c) and (42d), it will depend on the clause type (to be discussed further in section 4.4.3). The short answer for now is that if the speaker intends to type the clause as interrogative (42d), the noun will be truncated; conversely, if the intent is to have an affirmative sentence, the pluralized noun will have to remain in the non-truncated form, although this will affect the form of the verb—see section 4.4.1.

(42) a. ∅-kwúneemə a pe' m-ferə akeeló
 1-pig SM P1 N-leave fence
 ‘A/the pig left the fence’

b. pə-kwúna pə pe' m-ferə akeeló
 2-pig SM P1 N-leave fence
 ‘Pigs left the fence’

c. Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu pə-kwúneemə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy PL-pig
 ‘Tsefor bought pigs’

d. Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu pə-kwúna
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy PL-pig
 ‘Did Tsefor buy pigs?’

(43) a. a-tíə pe' n-gwǔə laaŋə
 7-tree P1 N-fall road
 ‘A tree fell on the road’

b. mə-tí pe' ŋ-gwǔə laaŋə
 6-tree P1 N-fall road
 ‘Trees fell on the road’

(44) a. ∅-néemə yó wǔə akoobə
 3-animal F2 fall forest

‘An animal will fall in the forest’

b. **mə-ná** yó wǔə akoobə

6-animal F2 fall forest

‘Animals will fall in the forest’

(45) a. a-peemə gha’ tsélə yé

7-bag big pass him

‘The bag is bigger than him’

b. ə-pa gha’ tsélə yé

8-bag big pass him

‘The bags are bigger than him’

One could conjecture that truncation of the plural nouns in the above examples is a result of having them move to a (higher) plural phrase within DP.

I have argued that nominal truncation could be accounted for by assuming a DP analysis where the truncated noun indicates movement within the determiner phrase. Such a proposal however faces some challenges which must be highlighted. Apart from the fact that class 7 nouns in combination with possessive determiners constitute the major problem to this proposal, integrating the non-emphatic first person possessive determiner ‘my’ within the analysis also seems to be nontrivial since this latter has to occur with non-truncated nouns. Nevertheless, it has been shown that the first person emphatic possessive determiner occurs with truncated nouns. Such data (e.g. **mbəmə/mbt may* ‘my body’) fits the analysis proposed here. Moreover, emphasis is not limited to the first person possessive determiner: it is applicable to all possessive determiners, exemplified in (46b) through (50b).

(46) a. məʒîə mə

food my

‘My food’

b. əmâ məʒîə

my food

‘My own food’

(47) a. moonə mə

child my

‘My child’

b. əghâ moonə

my child

‘My own child’

(48) a. məʒî(*ə) mǎgǎ

food our

b. əmǎg məʒîə

our food

		‘Our food’		‘Our own food’
(49)	a.	mə ghóobə	b.	əghóp moonə
		child their		their child
		‘Their child’		‘Their own child’
(50)	a.	ná zíə	b.	əzǐ néemə
		cow his		his cow
		‘His cow’		‘His own cow’

Note that unlike the (postverbal) first person emphatic possessive *may* ‘my’, all the DP phrases in (46b) through (50b) can be used in subject and object positions. Moreover, as expected, given that the emphatic possessive determiners precede the nouns, the latter cannot be truncated. Also see that as usual the nouns in (46a) and (47a) do not take the truncated forms with the first person non-emphatic possessive ‘my’. This is not the only (persisting) problem in the above data with the movement analysis that I propose to account for nominal truncation. In effect, although examples (46b) to (50b) favor the argument that when nouns do not precede the modifier, they take the long forms, examples (48b) to (50b) seem to constitute a setback to such an argument given that the determiners themselves must take the truncated forms. That is, if it is the case that (nominal) truncation is a result of movement, why are the determiners in such examples obligatorily truncated? Is it then the case that they have also been displaced within the DP system? The answer to this query might be found with the *a*-prefix that these emphatic possessive determiners obligatorily take when they precede the nouns. Recall that while the class 7 *a*- prefix does not truncate with possessives, its plural—the class 8 *a*- prefix automatically takes the truncated forms. Hence, it could be that just like the class 7 prefix or its homophones prevent truncation, so too does the class 8 prefix or its homophones trigger truncation in contexts that generally do not apply truncation. But another avenue could also be explored, namely that the possessive determiners in (46b) to (50b) actually move to a higher phrase for emphatic reasons (see, e.g., Aboh 2004); the nature of the phrase and the movement triggering factor would then constitute a debate which I leave for another time.

In concluding, we have seen that the movement analysis account for nominal truncation to a large extent. Due to the peripheral cases, especially the *a*-prefix, one could simplify the claim by stating that when two elements, for example a noun and its modifier form a constituent, a ‘phonologically closeness’ in the form of truncation often occurs; similar to Kenstowicz

(1985:81) idea in Tangale that “close syntactic relations between the first word and the second one” triggers final vowel deletion. Although this might seem vague at first thought, proper consideration might reveal some veracity. For example, I have shown that bare singular nouns in canonical SVO constructions do not take truncated forms. Nonetheless, one still observes bare singular nouns in serial verb constellations like those provided in (51) below obligatorily truncated.

- (51) a. Ngwe ku n-twamə mɔ́/ *móonə m-fé mbo ndú yá
 Ngwe enter N-carry child N-give to husband her
 ‘Ngwe went in, carried the child and gave to her husband’
- b. Ngwe ghen n-chwa’ məkwu(*nə) n-ghebə mbo pəlim píə
 Ngwe go N-gather rice N-share to relatives his
 ‘Ngwe went in, carried rice and shared it to his relatives’

It is therefore not farfetched to assume that there is a syntactic mechanism, perhaps movement for closeness or dependency purposes that is responsible for the truncation of the ‘shared objects’ in such constructions. Unfortunately we cannot get into the depth of such reasoning at this stage since that will first entail a proper syntactic analysis of verb serialization. Nonetheless, that serialization which entails object sharing (by the serial verbs) is responsible for the truncated forms of the objects in the above constructions is evident in the construction in (52) below where, once more, the bare objects cannot be truncated. The difference between (52) and serial verb constructions is that each object has a licensing verb in (52) contrary to the latter type where a single object acts as the complement of different verbs.

- (52) Ngwe pə’ m-fe móonə/*mɔ́ mə-twa-nɔ́ ŋkéemə/*ŋká
 Ngwe P1 N-give child INF-carry-INF basket
 ‘Ngwe gave the child (in order) to carry the basket’

I have argued that nominal truncation can be best accounted for by assuming that the noun moves at some point within the DP system. As the summary in (53) indicates, class (CL) 7 nouns occurring with all possessive (POSS) determiners and all nouns occurring with the non-emphatic 1st person singular (SG) possessive determiner take the non-truncated forms. These are the exceptional cases that deserve future clarification. The first scenario in (53) with bare nominals is the default case which, according to the proposal, depicts non-movement within the system. The next section takes on verbal truncation.

(53) Summary of (non)-truncated nouns within the DP system:

DP type	Truncated nouns	Non-truncated nouns	Examples
Bare nouns	✗	✓	<i>moonə/*mɔ</i> ‘child’
CL-7 N + (all) POSS	✗	✓	<i>apémə/*apa zo</i> ‘your bag’
(All) N + 1 st person non-emphatic SG. POSS	✗	✓	<i>kwúneemə/*kwúna mə</i> ‘my pig’
(All) N + 1 st person emphatic SG. POSS	✓	✗	<i>apa/*apémə maŋ</i> ‘my bag’
CL-8 N + (all) POSS	✓	✗	<i>apa/*apémə/ po</i> ‘your bags’
N + (other) POSS	✓	✗	<i>mɔ wóobə</i> ‘their child’
N + (in)definites	✓	✗	<i>mətá/*mátéenə yíwə</i> ‘the market’
N + DEM	✓	✗	<i>apa/*apémə zâ</i> ‘this bag’
Associative NPs	✓	✗	<i>apá/*apémə yí fiá</i> ‘new bag’

4.4 Verbal Truncation

Unlike nominal truncation, contexts that condition the form of the verb are easy to determine. However, parallel to nominal truncation, specific conditions within such contexts may prevent common generalizations. Before we get to the various contexts, consider some verbs in the long and short forms in (54). We saw in chapter 3 that the Awing verb in its infinitive form takes a prefix and a suffix. The data in (54) show that the truncated verbal forms are identical to the infinitive forms, that is, when they are stripped of the infinitive circumfix.

(54)	Finite/long forms	Finite/short forms	Infinitive forms	Glosses
	<i>lónə</i>	<i>lɔ</i>	<i>má-lɔ-né</i>	‘(to) beg’
	<i>póomə</i>	<i>pɔ</i>	<i>má-pɔ-né</i>	‘(to) build’
	<i>zəərâ</i>	<i>zə</i>	<i>má-zə-né</i>	‘(to) steal’
	<i>sóobə</i>	<i>sɔp</i>	<i>mə-sɔb-né</i>	‘(to) stab’

zá'ə	zá'	mə- zá'-nə	'(to) borrow'
ʒúŋə	ʒú	mə-ʒú-nə	'(to) buy'
límmə	lim	má-lim-nə	'(to) turn'
kəəlô	kəə	mə-kəə-nə	'(to) run'
ghelô	ghe'	má-ghē'-nə	'(to) do'
ghɛnê	ghɛn	má-ghɛn-nə	'(to) go'
kwárə	kwá	má-kwá-nə	'(to) take'
tóəmə	ntí	má-ntí-nə	'(to) stand'
finê	fi	mə-fi-nə	'(to) sell'
shúmə	shúm	mə-shúm-nə	'(to) beat'

Given that the infinitive forms without the infinitive circumfix are identical to the truncated forms, one could argue from a morphological perspective that these truncated forms are the actual roots of the Awing verbs. This will imply that just as an infinitive context necessitates the use of the infinitive circumfix, so too is the use of the final parts of the non-truncated forms conditioned by certain contexts. From such a view, the quest will not be to identify the rules/contexts governing the truncated forms but rather those governing the non-truncated ones. For the simple reason already advanced with regard to nominal truncation, namely that truncated words are not used in citation (and are also not written in the (preliminary) Awing English dictionary/English Awing Index—compiled by Alomofor 2007), I will continue to assume that truncated forms are derived from the long ones. So let us get to the various morphological elements and syntactic structures that cause the verb to take the truncated forms.

4.4.1 *The conspiracy between the verb and the direct object*

The first context that conditions the verb to take either the truncated or non-truncated form is the kind of object that the verb occurs with. As we proceed, keep in mind that tense marking, at least morphological markers, play no role in the form of the verb, as the data in (55) illustrate.

- (55) a. Ayafor a yí ʒu(*nə) ndzǒ (á mətēenə)
 Ayafor SM F1 buy beans in market
 'Ayafor will buy beans (in the market)'

- b. Ayafor a yo ʒu(*nə) ndzǒ (á mǝteenǎ)
 Ayafor SM F2 buy beans in market
 ‘Ayafor will buy beans (in the market)’
- c. Ayafor a pe’ n-dʒu(*nə) ndzǒ (á mǝteenǎ)
 Ayafor SM P1 N-buy beans in market
 ‘Ayafor bought beans (in the market)’
- d. Ayafor a nə n-dʒu(*nə) ndzǒ (á mǝteenǎ)
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy beans in market
 ‘Ayafor bought beans (in the market)’

Now, see in (56) and (57) that while the objects in (56b) and (57b) necessitate the use of the truncated forms, those in (56a) and (57a) occur with non-truncated verbs.

- (56) a. Ayafor a pe’ n-dʒu*(nə) ø-ŋgəsáŋǎ (á mǝteenǎ)
 Ayafor SM P1 N-buy 9-maize in market
 ‘Ayafor bought maize (in the market)’
- b. Ayafor a pe’ n-dʒu(*nə) ø-ndzǒ (á mǝteenǎ)
 Ayafor SM P1 N-buy 9-beans in market
 ‘Ayafor bought beans (in the market)’
- (57) a. Ayafor a yí kǝrǝ/*kǝ’ akǝká
 Ayafor SM F1 eat 7-koki
 ‘Ayafor will eat koki¹⁴,’
- b. Ayafor a yí kǝ’/*kǝrǝ mǝkwúnǝ
 Ayafor SM F1 eat 6-rice
 ‘Ayafor will eat rice’

Notice that both nouns functioning as the direct objects in (56) belong to the same noun-class; indicating that the noun class reference of the verb’s object may not constitute the reason why some verbs take truncated forms and others do not. That noun class reference is not the issue is further evident in (56b) and (57b), where both objects do not belong to the same noun class but have to be realized with the truncated forms of the verbs. This means that the verb’s form primarily depends on the ‘semantic nature’ of its object. Actually, the truncated verb form is

¹⁴ Koki is an African traditional dish made from cowpea seeds.

used with uncountable nouns. The data in (56) and (57) obscure this fact given that maize and beans are grains that, depending on the quantity, can be counted. However, unlike beans, it will appear that maize is generally conceived by Awing speakers as countable nouns; perhaps because it is harvested on staples which can, and are often, easily counted. When we compare example (58) below, where the object is ‘maize seeds’, against (56a), the logic becomes obvious.

- (58) Ayafor a pe’ n-dʒu(*nə) mbi-ŋgəsáŋǎ
 Ayafor SM P1 N-buy plant-maize
 ‘Ayafor bought maize seeds’

The problem with maize and beans is further unmasked when verbs occur with genuine uncountable nouns, as shown in (59a) through (61a).

- (59) a. móonə a yí kwá(*rə) məghələ mbo tă yǎ
 child SM F1 take oil from father his
 ‘The child will take oil from his father’
 b. móonə a yí kwá*(rə) mǎ-ŋwíŋǎ mbo tă yǎ
 child SM F1 take small-cutlass from father his
 ‘The child will take a knife from his father’
- (60) a. Aghetse a nə m-fí(*nə) ŋgwáŋə (alí’ə-nəwúə)
 Aghetse SM P2 N-sell salt place-death
 ‘Aghetse sold salt (at the death ceremony)’
 b. Aghetse a nə m-fí*(nə) əkwúnə (alí’ə-nəwúə)
 Aghetse SM P2 N-sell bed place-death
 ‘Aghetse sold a bed (at the death ceremony)’
- (61) a. Mbíwiŋə pǎg(*ə) mələ’ mə tyantânə
 Awing-people fear wine AM strong
 ‘The Awing people are afraid of alcohol’
 b. Mbíwiŋə pǎg*(ə) ŋwan-tsoolə
 Awing-people fear man-war
 ‘The Awing people are afraid of a soldier’

The (b) examples in (59) through (61) simply demonstrate the difference between mass and countable nouns. The interesting fact is that if these nouns are pluralized, the verbs will systematically take the truncated forms, compare (59b), (60b) and (61b) against (62), (63) and (64), respectively.

(62) móonə a yí kwá(*rə) pɔ-pə-ŋwíŋə mbo tǎ yə
 child SM F1 take small-PL-cutlass from father his
 ‘The child will take knives from his father’

(63) Aghetse a nə m-fí(*nə) məkwúnə (alí’ə-nəwûə)
 Aghetse SM P2 N-sell bed place-death
 ‘Aghetse sold beds (at the death ceremony)’

(64) Mbíwiŋə pɔg(*ə) ŋgaŋ-tsoolə
 Awing-people fear people-war
 ‘The Awing people are afraid of soldiers’

The above data is reminiscent of the plurality concept we encountered with nominal truncation, where bare plural subjects occur in truncated forms. As I mentioned then, and evident in the above data, plural nouns condition the verb to take the truncated form. So, from a morpho-semantic view point, plurality in Awing behaves like genuine mass nouns. According to Link (1983), this is because plurals come with the same underlying lattice structure as mass nouns. What needs to be further clarified is why the objects in (62) through (64) do not (systematically) occur in truncated forms, parallel to plural subjects. This and other related questions will be clarified in section 4.3.1, when discussing truncation as a means to form questions. At this stage, we could conclude that one of the reasons why the Awing verb occurs in a truncated form in sentences is due to the ‘lattice structure’, i.e., plurality and mass interpretation, of its direct object. However, there is an exception to this generalization. This has to do with mass nouns that begin with the (class 7) *a*-prefix (which is once more reminiscent of nominal truncation). As the data in (65) through (69a) demonstrate, when the direct object begins with the *a*-prefix, the verb obligatorily takes the non-truncated forms. Notice that examples (66) through (68) are with mass nouns; so the data in (65) through (69) shows that the ban of the truncated forms of the verb is systematic when the verb’s direct object begins the *a*-prefix.

- (65) Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) apéemə
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy bag
 ‘Ayafor bought a bag’
- (66) Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) apéenə-(ŋgəsájǎ)
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy flour-maize
 ‘Ayafor bought (maize) flour’
- (67) Mbíwíŋə pɔg*(ə) akəpoglǎ
 Awing-people fear dust
 ‘The Awing people are afraid of dust’
- (68) móonə a yó kwá*(rə) achǎ mbo tǎ yǎ
 child SM F2 take blood from father his
 ‘The child will collect blood from his father’
- (69) a. Alombah a yó fi*(nǎ) a-li’ǎndəsê
 Alombah SM F2 sell 7-place-ground
 ‘Alombah will sell a piece of land’
- b. Alombah a yo fi>(*nǎ) ə-li’ǎndəsê
 Alombah SM F2 sell 8-place-ground
 ‘Alombah will sell some lands’

Another interesting fact is that when the plural of the class 7 prefix (the class 8 ə-prefix) is used, exemplified in (69b), the verb takes the truncated form. At this stage, I cannot provide any explanation why the *a*-prefix systematically blocks truncation of the verb. This is however reminiscent to the conclusion reached in the previous section with regard to nominal truncation, namely that the (class 7) *a*-prefix is peculiar and so should be considered (in whatsoever generalizing) as peripheral. The *a*-prefix is not the only element that prevents truncation. As shown in the beginning of this section, morphological tense markers play no role in the form of the verb. On the other hand, aspectual marking can cause the verb to take a non-truncated form when the verb’s direct object necessitates the use of the truncated form. In chapter 3 section 3.4, we saw that aspectual marking can either be realized solely at the suprasegmental level; that is, by modifying the verb’s tone(s), or with an additional preverbal aspectual marker. As a reminder consider example (70), where the verb takes a high-high tone

to express the imperfective state of the action and a low-low tone indicating that the action is in a perfective state.

- (70) a. Alombah yó/nə (n)-shúmə móonə
 Alombah F2/P2 N-beat child
 ‘Alombah (will) beat the child’
- b. Alombah a (tǎ) (ŋ)-shúmǎ móonə
 Alombah SM PROG N-beat child
 ‘Alombah is beating/beats the child’
- c. Alombah a shumə móonə
 Alombah SM beat child
 ‘Alombah has beaten the child’

Given that the verb’s final vowel can be attributed a high tone, as in (70b), in order to express habitual (or progressive action), one would expect a situation whereby aspectual marking prevents truncation in order to dock a high tone on the verb’s final vowel. Such an expectation is borne out, albeit with dubious judgements—not on the grammaticality of the sentences but rather on the semantics/interpretation of the aspects. Consider the data in (71) and (72) below. Recall that plural or non-count objects occur with truncated verbs—(71a) and (72a).

- (71) a. Ngwe a yí/pe’ (m)-fí(*nə) ŋgwájə (á mǎteenə)
 Ngwe SM F1/P1 N-sell salt in market
 ‘Ngwe will sell/sold salt (in the market)’
- b. Ngwe a tǎ m-fí(né) ŋgwájə (á mǎteenə)
 Ngwe SM PROG N-sell salt in market
 ‘Ngwe is selling salt (in the market)’
- c. Ngwe a zá m-fí(nǎ) ŋgwájə (á mǎteenə)
 Ngwe SM HAB N-sell salt in market
 ‘Ngwe is selling salt (in the market)’
- (72) a. moonə a yó/nə (n)-tǎǎ/*tóonǎ mǎndǎŋǎ
 child SM F2/P2 N-burn bamboos
 ‘The child will burn/burned bamboos’
- b. moonə a tǎ n-tǎǎ/n-tóonǎ mǎndǎŋǎ
 child SM PROG N-burn bamboos

‘The child is burning bamboos’

- c. moonə a zá n-tóɔ/n-tóonó məndəŋó
child SM HAB N-burn bamboos

‘The child often burns bamboos’

The data in (71) and (72) show that aspectual marking can render the use of the truncated and non-truncated verbal forms optional. As I already noted, this optionality largely depends on the manner in which the action is conceived. Take (71b) for example, while the sentence expresses a progressive aspect (marked by the PROG morpheme), the use of the non-truncated verbal form with the additional high tone on the final vowel suggests that not only is Ngwe selling salt but she is currently performing the act. In other words, while the aspectual marker with the truncated form merely communicates the fact that Ngwe is selling salt, that with the non-truncated form further implies (as if the speaker is with, or can see) that she is currently serving a customer at the time of the utterance. Recall that the progressive aspect does not necessarily mean that the unfolding of the action is bound to the time of reference; however, this is precisely the notion that the non-truncated form with the final rising tone seems to imply. A related question could be asked concerning the possible interpretations in (71c) and (72c) with the habitual aspect. I cannot tell from personal intuition whether there is any difference in such cases and the attempt to get the differences from other speakers met conflicting opinions which had to do with how the action is conceived. Without getting into the depth of such differences, I must note that not all speakers that I consulted on the issue (including my own native intuition), readily go for the non-truncated forms when aspectual marking is involved. Actually, the manipulation of prosody in such contexts is complex to grasp and it appears that the optionality of the forms is also mediated at the prosodic level. I already mentioned in the previous chapter while discussing aspectual marking via tonal modification that the manner in which tone (or perhaps intonation) is used in contexts like those in (71) and (72) is more complex than the way I put it. Nonetheless, such contexts illustrate a tight connectivity between the verb, aspectual marking and the verb’s internal argument—the direct object. It is not surprising that aspectual marking can also influence the verb’s form given that it can condition the position of the verb in negative clauses (see chapter 3 section 3.9). In conclusion, it can be stated that there is a constituency conspiracy between the verb and the direct object conditioning the verb to take a truncated form when the object expresses some kind of plurality. Such a conspiracy can be overridden by the *a*-prefix and

aspectual marking. The next section will discuss another context that causes elements, including the verb to occur in the truncated form.

4.4.2 *Truncation as a focus alignment mechanism*

Focalization, which is commonly considered as that part of a sentence that conveys new or contrastive information will be discussed in greater details in the following chapters. In intonation languages like English or German, focalization can be achieved, among other means via prosody; for example, by stressing the focalized word/constituent within the sentence. This is not the case in (most) tonal languages like Awing. However, there is a prosodic mechanism, namely the notion of truncation that applies in focus contexts. That is, when the *lá* (LE) morpheme - an exhaustive focus operator (Fominyam & Šimík 2017) - occurs in certain syntactic positions, the element that precedes it gets truncated. This section will describe how truncation and focusing works in Awing and then briefly juxtapose the Awing data with the notion of conjoint disjoint verbal forms described in some Southern and Eastern Bantu languages.

As I already noted, focalization, among other notions, is related to new information. It is no gospel that wh-words seek new information and as such they constitute one of the main target/test in achieving focus. As the data in (73) show, wh-words in Awing can be realized in their canonical positions where they can be optionally preceded by the focus operator LE. What is of interest for now is that whenever the LE morpheme is used, the element immediately preceding it has to take the truncated form. This is what obligatorily happens to the verb in (73c), the direct object in (73d) and the indirect object in (73e). The LE morpheme is absent in examples (73a) and (73b) and as such the verb and the direct object take the non-truncated forms in these examples.

- (73) a Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) kə məteenó
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy what market
 ‘What did Ayafor buy in the market?’
- b. Ayafor a nə n-dʒunə ŋgəsáj*(ó) fó
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy maize where
 ‘Where did Ayafor buy maize?’
- c. Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) ló kó məteenó
 Ayafor SM P2 N-buy LE what market

‘What did Ayafor buy in the market?’

d. Ayafor a nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋ(*ɔ̃) lɔ́ fɔ́ (mɔ́teenɔ́)

Ayafor SM P2 N-buy maize LE where market

‘Where did Ayafor buy maize (in the market)?’

e. Ayafor a nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋɔ́ mɔ́teenɔ́/*mɔ́tá lɔ́ fɔ́

Ayafor SM P2 N-buy maize market LE where

‘Where did Ayafor buy maize in the market?’

The fact that truncation applies only when the LE morpheme is used suggests that there is a focus type that triggers truncation. In other words, what provokes truncation in the above examples is not the wh-word but rather the presence of LE morpheme. Now, note that a question like that in (73c), for example, can be answered as in (74a) or (74b).

(74) a. Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) ɲgəsáŋɔ́ mɔ́teenɔ́

Ayafor SM P2 N-buy maize market

‘Ayafor bought maize in the market’

b. Ayafor a nə n-dʒu*(nə) lɔ́ ɲgəsáŋɔ́ mɔ́teenɔ́

Ayafor SM P2 N-buy LE maize market

‘It is maize that Ayafor bought in the market’

For the moment, the interpretation of the LE morpheme in such questions/answer pairs is not the concern (this will be developed in chapter 6 section 6.3). What is important to take from here is that the use of the LE morpheme conditions the preceding element to take the truncated form. This is merely a descriptive observation. As I already noted, truncation seems to be conditioned by the type of focus which in turn is induced by the presence of the LE morpheme. A(nother) context that illustrates this point is the focusing/questioning of the subject in a postverbal position. In such contexts, exemplified in (75), the verb is doubled (see Fominyam 2018 for details) and the (wh)-subject is sandwiched between the two copies of the verb:

(75) a. lɔ́ zu*(nə) wə n-dʒu*(nə) ɲgəsáŋɔ́ (mɔ́teenɔ́)

LE buy who N-buy maize market

‘Who bought maize (in the market)?’

b. lɔ́ zu*(nə) Ayafor n-dʒu*(nə) ɲgəsáŋɔ́ (mɔ́teenɔ́)

LE buy Ayafor N-buy maize market

‘It is Ayafor who bought maize (in the market)’

What is interesting in examples like those in (75) is that not only are such constructions necessarily introduced by the LE morpheme, the occurrence of the subject in the postverbal position necessitates the first copy of the verb to take the truncated form. If you compare the translations provided for examples (74b) and (75b) against (74a), for instance, then the assertion that truncation is triggered by a type of focus induced by the LE morpheme makes sense. Apart from the focus type in question—which will be clarified in the following chapters, other questions relating to why only one of the verb’s copy take the truncated form and why, or if such constructions always have the same copy of the verb doubled may arise. As already hinted, the first verbal copy immediately precedes the (wh)-subject which is the focal part of the sentence making it the perfect candidate for truncation. Concerning the obligatory occurrence or not of the two verbal copies, note that the second copy of the verb is obligatory in transitive constructions like the ones in (75); see (76) below where the second copy is banned with an intransitive verb—(see Fominyam 2018, for more details).

(76) lǎ kiŋ(*ə) Ayafor *ŋ-kiŋə
LE cry Ayafor N-cry
‘It is Ayafor who cried’

Given that the occurrence of the second verbal copy is conditioned by the direct object, its form can also be determined by the latter. For instance we know that objects like ‘beans’ take the truncated form. This means that if the object in (75) is changed to ‘beans’, both verbal copies will occur in the truncated form:

(77) lǎ zu(*nə) Ayafor n-dzu(*nə) ndzô (mæteenó)
LE buy Ayafor N-buy beans market
‘It is Ayafor who bought beans (in the market)’

Another important aspect that needs to be mentioned here is the N-prefix. Notice that this homorganic nasal prefix shows up with the second verbal copy in examples like (77). This is curious because we know (from chapter 3 section 3.7) that this prefix is triggered by past tense, aspectual and negation markers, which is not the case in (75) through (77). The question then is why does this prefix occur with the second verbal copy whereas the first copy of the verb does not bear it? This question can be answered if we consider double verb constellations like the ones here parallel to serial verb constructions. Recall (see precisely chapter 3 section 3.7.1) that in serial verb constructions the first verb obliges the second and

subsequent verbs to take the N-prefix. Without getting into much detail, I will assume that it is the same mechanism at play here. Note that, again parallel to serial verb constructions, if the sentence is constructed with a future tense marker none of the verbal copies take the N-prefix, as shown below.

- (78) ló yó zú(*nə) Ayafor/wə zú(*nə) ndzô
 LE F2 buy Ayafor/who buy beans
 ‘(It is Ayafor) who will buy beans (?)’

The remaining query would be how aspectual marking affects the form of the verb when the latter needs to be truncated because it is preceded by the LE morpheme. The same scenario described for what I termed as ‘verb object plurality conspiracy’ applies in focalization contexts. That is, when the direct object occurs with the LE morpheme, in which case the verb needs to be truncated, truncation can be overridden by aspectual marking (79); in the same way, when the subject is focus marked in the postverbal position and the verb needs to be truncated, aspectual marking can prevent the truncation process (80).

- (79) a. Ayafor a tó n-dzú(nə) ló kə (məteenə)
 Ayafor SM PROG N-buy LE what market
 ‘What is Ayafor buying (in the market)?’
 b. a tó n-dzú(nə) ló ŋgəsáŋə (məteenə)
 SM PROG N-buy LE maize market
 ‘It is maize that he is buying (in the market)?’

- (80) ló zá n-dzú(nə) Ayafor/wə n-dzú(*nə) ndzô
 LE HAB N-buy Ayafor/who N-buy beans
 ‘(It is Ayafor) who often buys beans (?)’

Recapitulating: there are two contexts that condition the Awing verbs to take truncated forms. The first is specific to the verb and we have described it as a plurality conspiracy between the verb and its internal argument—direct object. The second is a general phenomenon where a type of focus is aligned at the prosodic level by having the element immediately preceding it take a truncated form. In both contexts, truncation of the verb can be overridden by aspectual marking; albeit with (yet to be determine) precise prosodic/tonal modifications and the exact semantic entailment of the aspects. We have also seen that nouns beginning with the *a*-prefix generally prevent truncation. Once more the examples in (81b) and (82b) below further

illustrate that the *a*-prefix prevails in focus contexts by not permitting the verb to take the truncated forms.

- (81) a. ló wũ(*ə) Tsefor
 LE fall Tsefor
 ‘It is Tsefor who has fallen’
- b. ló wũ*(ə) atəndó’ə
 LE fall ball
 ‘It is a ball that has fallen’
- (82) a. ló laŋ(*ə) móonə ndzəm ndê
 LE pass child behind house
 ‘It is a child that passed behind the house’
- b. ló laŋ*(ə) akəfələ ndzəm ndê
 LE pass wind behind house
 ‘It is wind that passed behind the house’

The following sub-section will briefly introduce the phenomenon of conjoint disjoint verbs in other Bantu languages.

4.4.2.1 *Truncation in Awing and the ‘disjoint conjoint’ phenomenon*

The phenomenon of disjoint conjoint verb forms (distinguished by their segmental morphology, sentence final-distribution and tonal pattern on the object (van der Wal 2011)) in some Eastern and Southern Bantu languages suggests that the choice of a particular verb form may predict the information category of the following element. For example the verbs in Zula (83a)—extracted from Buell (2005), and Makhuwa (84a)—extracted from van der Wal (2011), obligatorily take the conjoint (CJ) verb forms with *wh*-words.

- (83) a. CJ Ba- dla-á- phi?
 1.SBJ- play-FV where
- b. DJ *Ba- ya- dlal-a- phi?
 1.SBJ ya play-FV where
 ‘Where are they playing’ (Buell 2005:144)
- (83) a. CJ ashinuni yiir-al’ esheeni?
 2.DIM.birds 2SM.PAST.do-PERF.CJ 9.what

- ‘what did the birds do?’
- b. DJ ashinuni yaahi-vava
 2.DIM.birds 2SM.PAST.PERF.DJ-fly
 ‘The birds flew’ (*van der Wal 2011:1738*)

To an extent, the data in (83) and (84) is similar to wh-questioning in Awing given that wh-words with the LE morpheme also opt for a particular verb form. If the conjoint verb in these languages is considered as a truncated form (since they show less phonemes than the other form), we can note that wh-questioning in both Awing and these languages opt for the truncated/short verbal forms. However, unlike what is depicted in (83) and (84) for Zulu and Makhuwa respectively, the truncated form, (or conjoint verb form, if one may employ the term for Awing) is not realized with bare wh-questions. Rather, it is a type of interpretation induced by the use of the LE morpheme with both a wh-word and the corresponding answer in Awing that permits the verb to take the truncated form. The situation seems to be different in Makhuwa (*van der val 2011*), where the conjoint verb form determines the interpretation of the focus; consider the example in (85)—extracted from *van der Wal (2011)*.

- (85) a. CJ ki-n-thúm’ étomati paáhi
 1SG.SM-PRES.CJ-buy 10.tomatoes only
 ‘I buy only tomatoes’
- b. DJ *ki-náá-thúma etomátí paáhi
 1SG.SM-PRES.DJ-buy 10.tomatoes only (*van der Wal 2011: 1739*)

What is peculiar with the conjoint form in Makhuwa is that it takes exclusive focus as the direct complement. Commenting on the example in (85), *van der Wal (2011:1739)* notes, “the exclusive interpretation of the element following a CJ verb form is also present without the use of the focus particle only”. So while the verb can determine the type of focus in Makhuwa-Enahara, it is a type of focus that can determine the form of the verb, or any postverbal category in Awing. But if the short verbal form in this language is (merely) a reflex of exclusive interpretation, the situation in Awing and Makhuwa would be somehow paralleled in the sense that the verbs in both languages take the ‘truncated’ form in exhaustive/exclusive focus contexts. So the main point of divergence between Awing and the conjoint disjoint phenomenon would be in the Zulu data in (86), where in wh-question answer contexts, not only is the conjoint verb form necessarily but the wh-/focalized constituent has to be realized immediately after the conjoint verb form (but see *Buell 2009* for possible

exactions in Zulu). The example in (86)—extracted from Buell (2009), shows that if an adverbial phrase is questioned, it will move leftward to precede the direct object (86b).

- (86) a. *U-theng-e ingubo entsha nini? JVP
 2S-buy-PERF 9.dress 9.new when
- b. U-yi-theng-e nini JVP ingubo entsha?
 2S-9-buy-PERF when 9.dress 9.new
 “When did you buy a new dress?”
- c. Ngi-yi-theng-e izolo. JVP
 1S-9-buy-PERF yesterday
 ‘I bought it/one yesterday.’ (Buell 2009:1)

The conclusion then is that parallel to the notion of disjoint conjoint verb forms, the Awing verb can take a truncated verb form (similar to a conjoint verb form) in certain focus contexts/interpretations. The main difference is that LE+focus in Awing triggers truncation on other forms than the verb, unlike in Bantu proper. This could have to do with the fact that Awing no longer has an immediate after verb focus position, as the Zulu data in (86) demonstrates. This means that truncation is used in focus contexts in Awing as a general means to align (in terms of Féry 2013) a type of focus. The type of focus in question will be clarified in chapters 6 and 7. The next section will conclude this chapter by showing how truncation can be used to form yes-no questions.

4.4.3 *Truncation as a means to form questions*

We saw in section 4.4.1 that the verb and the direct object show a tight relationship to the extent that nouns expressing plurality can condition the verb to take a truncated form. In the discussion on nominal truncation, it was also shown that while singular subjects have to take the non-truncated forms, plural ones show up with the truncated form; re-consider example (42) repeated below as (87). See that the plural subject in (87b) takes the truncated form, which is not optional. However, the examples in (87c) and (87d) illustrate that truncating a plural object is optional, although the verb has to take the truncated form when the object is pluralized.

- (87) a. Ø-kwúneemə a pe’ m-ferə akeeló
 1-pig SM P1 N-leave fence
 ‘A/the pig left the fence’

- b. pə-kwúna pə pe' m-ferə akeeló
 2-pig SM P1 N-leave fence
 'Pigs left the fence'
- c. Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu pə-kwúneemə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy PL-pig
 'Tsefor bought pigs'
- d. Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu pə-kwúna
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy PL-pig
 'Did Tsefor buy pigs?'

Now notice the difference between (87c) and (87d). The Truncation of both the verb and the object results in an interrogative clause. This is one of the ways that Awing speakers use to form yes-no questions—the main preoccupation of this section. But before we see more examples and how this actually works, it is important to note that intonation also plays a vital role in yes-no questioning.

4.4.3.1 *Using intonation and/or truncation to form interrogatives*

Generally, yes-no questions and simple declarative sentences in Grassfields Bantu (seem to) have the same morpho-syntactic structures. The main difference between these two clause types is usually at the level of prosody and in order to determine the exact manner in which prosody is used to type sentences as interrogative, adequate research may be needed in each language. For example, Tamanji (2009:155) notes that four factors in Bafut can be used to “distinguish yes-no questions from declarative sentences: (i) suspension of downdrift, (ii) a general suspension of boundary L tone docking, (iii) a general rise in intonation, and (iv) a faster delivery rate”. Without getting into such detail, it will seem that interrogation in Awing can be achieved by combining three of the factors described for Bafut, namely absence of downdrift, a faster realization rate and the insertion of a H boundary tone; consider examples (88) and (89) below.

- (88) a. pó pe' ŋ-ghɛnê bâ
 they P1 N-go bar
 'They went to a bar'
- b. pó pe' ŋ-ghénó bá
 pó pe' ŋ-ghɛnê bar

‘Did they go to a bar?’

- (89) a. Neh a yí náŋ ndzǒ
Neh SM yí cook beans
‘Neh will cook beans’
- b. Neh a yí náŋ ndzó
Neh SM yí cook beans
‘Will Neh cook beans?’

(88a) and (89a) are the declarative sentences and (88b) and (89b) are the interrogative ones and both pairs have the same word order with differences at the level of tones/intonation. As I have mentioned on several occasions, the manifestation of the exact tones or the intonation process cannot be accurately represented in a work like this: the high tones in the (b) examples represent a kind of upward progressive intonation which (naturally) changes the default tones to high (or higher) ones. Also, as already noted, such constructions are realized in a faster delivery rate. Such phonological details, however, should not be of much concern for now. What is important to note is that the Awing speakers resort to such general conditions (that other Bantu (Grassfields) languages use) only when truncation is not applicable. Recall that single syllabic words like the objects in (88) and (89) cannot be truncated. We also know that objects/nouns that occur with the *a*-prefix generally prevent the verb to take the truncated forms. This also means that yes-no questions will be formed via the faster delivery rate in combination with an upward progressive rising intonation (represented by the high tones), as in (90b).

- (90) a. Tsefor a pe’ m-finê ali’ôndôsê
Tsefor SM P1 N-sell place-ground
‘Tsefor sold a piece of land’
- b. Tsefor a pe’ m-fínó ali’ôndôsé
Tsefor SM P1 N-sell place-ground
‘Did Tsefor sell a piece of land?’
- c. Tsefor a pe’ m-fi(*nê) əli’ôndôsé
Tsefor SM P1 N-sell place-ground
‘Did Tsefor sell lands?’

Now, notice that the verb has to occur in the truncated form in example (90c). This is because the verb can be truncated in this example thanks to the class 8 ə-prefix (but the object cannot be truncated because it is a compound word). This, crucially, also means that in cases where both the verb and the direct object can be truncated, interrogation will be achieved by simply truncating both of them and dispensing with the other mechanisms. The following examples illustrate. Observe that it doesn't matter whether the direct object is followed by other elements. In other words, truncation as such does not necessarily need to be in sentence-final position. Notice also that aspectual markers can be used in such questions.

- (91) a. Alombah a pe' η-koolə fóolə (məm ndê)
 Alombah SM P1 N-catch rat in house
 'Alombah caught a rat (in the house)'
- b. Alombah a pe' mbí η-koo fóo (məm ndê)
 Alombah SM P1 ITE N-catch rat in house
 'Did Alombah catch a rat again (in the house)?'
- (92) a. Alombah a pe' η-kwarə ηkéébə (zi)
 Alombah SM P1 N-take money his
 'Alombah collected his money'
- b. Alombah a pe' η-kwa ηkáp (zi)
 Alombah SM P1 N-take money his
 'Did Alombah collect (his) money?'
- c. Alombah a zá η-kwa ηkáp (zi)
 Alombah SM HAB N-take money his
 'Does Alombah often collect (his) money?'

As I already mentioned, the use of truncation to form yes-no questions as in (91) and (92) disposes of notions like upward rising intonation and fast delivery rate. In fact, there is an audible pause after the verbs indicated by a falling intonation (and marked by low tones on the verbs) in the interrogative constructions in (91) and (92). Such a falling intonation is not perceivable in the declarative sentences in (91a) and (92a).

Let us conclude this section with the following questions: what happens if: 1) the subject and the verb are truncated; 2) the subject and object excluding the verb are truncated and; 3) the subject, verb and the object are all truncated? We have seen that verbal truncation can be

conditioned by three factors, namely the direct object, a (kind of) focus context and polar questions. Thus, it is impossible to think of having a question via truncation without the verb being truncated. As to whether just the subject and the verb can be truncated without the object to obtain an interrogative clause, we have also seen that bare singular subjects do not occur in truncated forms. On the other hand, if the subject is plural, then the subject, the verb and the object will show up in the truncated form if the intention is to form a yes-no question. So, as far as interrogation is concerned, truncation is primarily a matter between the verb and the direct object, meaning that Q(uestion)-formation would take place at the core VP-level. We have also seen that there are different mechanisms that the Awing grammar can make use of to form yes-no questions. However, once the verb and the direct object have their way viz. truncation, they will dispense with the other mechanisms; otherwise the grammar will use such mechanisms, in particular, a fast deliver rate and a rising intonation to type the clause as interrogative. On a final note, it should be borne in mind that the language can use a separate final-question morpheme to form yes-no questions (93); and there are other technics that the grammar employs to form other question types (see Fominyam 2015 for an overview).

- (93) Alombah a pe' ŋ-kóolə fóolə məm ndé éé
 Alombah SM P1 N-catch rat in house QM
 'Did Alombah catch a rat in the house?'

4.5 Summary

This chapter aimed to provide all contexts/conditions that permit the use of long and truncated forms of both nouns and verbs in Awing. Beginning with nouns, it has been argued that nominal truncation can be best accounted for if we assume that the noun phrase always has a determiner projection which the noun moves to. When this happens, the noun shows up in the truncated form. Such a proposal had some challenges, specifically with nouns beginning with the (class 7) *a*-prefix and possessive determiners. Hence, the discussion on serial verb constructions, where the 'shared object' obligatorily shows up in a truncated form was used to simplify the proposal by stating that when two elements, for example a noun and its modifier form a constituent, a 'phonologically closeness' in the form of truncation occurs; similar to Kenstowicz (1985:81) idea on Tangale that 'close syntactic relations between the first word and the second one' triggers final vowel deletion. 'Closeness' can be considered in the discussion on nominal truncation in Awing as an indicator of movement. With verbal truncation, we saw three contexts that cause the verbs to take the truncated forms, namely when the direct object expresses plurality; when the verb immediately precedes a focus type

and when the verb and the direct object are used to form polar questions. Parallel to nominal truncation, mass nouns beginning with the *a*-prefix, unlike all other mass nouns, systematically prevent the verb to occur in the truncated form. The *a*-prefix is therefore a peculiar case with both nominal and verbal truncation, given that it prevents both the noun and the verb from taking the truncated forms in contexts that they generally occur in truncated forms. Aspectual marking can also prevent a verb from taking a truncated form. However, the overall prosodic/tonal patterns of the verbs and the meaning of the aspects are still not clear.

As mentioned from the onset of this chapter, Awing grammar is peculiar from other Grassfields languages, given that it is the only language that has both nouns and verbs in two forms, as shown here. Although the contexts governing the phenomenon cannot be fully generalized at this point, due to the various peripheral conditions, in particular the *a*-prefix, it is important to provide such context so that when the reader encounters long or truncated forms in this work (or elsewhere in Awing), they will have an idea on what is going on. Lastly, it can be noted that the overall discussion on truncation in Awing shows the systematic nature of language. For example, if the movement analysis I propose to account for nominal truncation is on the right track, then the phonological process involved is indeed informing us of a syntactic mechanism at play. The notion of focus alignment also suggests that the use of the LE morpheme to express a semantic type of focus activates the phonological component to instruct the element immediately preceding the focus to take a certain form. Thus, the most promising account for such a phenomenon (in Awing and beyond) will be that which tackles it from a holistic view; keeping in mind that language is systemic. The next chapter will concentrate on the LE morpheme which has been introduced here as a ‘kind of focus inducer’.

Chapter 5

The LE morpheme

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters described aspects of the Awing nominal and verbal morphology. This second part will be dealing with information structure (IS), with particular attention on focalization in Awing. A number of works (Fominyam 2015 Fominyam & Šimík 2017 and Fominyam 2018) have dealt with focalization in Awing. Thus, chapter 6 will take on the syntax and IS of wh-constructions and chapter 7 will summarize the findings on focalization with, emphasis on verb focusing which has received less attention in previous works.

In chapter 4 (section 4.4.2) we were introduced to the *lǎ* (LE) morpheme, specifically on the notion of focus alignment. The LE morpheme actually constitutes the core of information structure in Awing. Hence, before focusing on its usage in wh-constructions (in chapter 6) and as a focus operator (in chapter 7), it is important to indicate that this morpheme is multifunctional. This chapter will therefore highlight the various contexts that the LE morpheme occurs in and then concentrates on the use of this morpheme in copular clauses. Another construction type that will also be analysed here is what, for lack of a better term, I will refer to as the ‘topic-focus partitioned construction’. This construction and copular clauses are of particular interest because their information status differ from canonical SVO sentences in that the NP occurring as the ‘subject’ is, or can be parsed as, (a kind of) ‘topic’, and that which occurs as the ‘object’ is read as (a kind of) ‘focus’. The data in (1) through (9) show the various uses of the LE morpheme. It is crucial to mention, however, that neither this chapter nor the entire work aims to provide an analysis for all the data in (1) through (9). Nonetheless, it is important to present them for two reasons: first, most of them will resurface in the arguments to be developed here(after). Moreover, I am of the opinion that most of the so-called focus markers in Bantu literature are not used only in focus contexts and this,

unfortunately, is not often a matter of interest to many linguists interested in focus marking and interpretation in these languages. However, ignoring the multidimensional facet of such items can influence theoretical stands, something which should be avoided (Matić & Wedgwood 2013; Fominyam & Tran 2019).

Concentrating on Awing, examples (1) and (2) will constitute the main priority of this chapter. After presenting the various copular constructions and elements that act as copulas in Awing in section 5.2, section 5.2.1 will outline the differences between two candidates that may be considered as the copular verb in Awing. Section 5.2.2 will be investigating the specific role of the LE morpheme in copular clauses (like the example in (1)). The main preoccupation in the section will be to determine whether the type of focus in copular clauses can be equated to exhaustive focus (Fominyam & Šimík 2017) in non-copular clauses (like those in (4)) that make use of the LE morpheme, too. It will be shown that the LE morpheme does not perform the same semantic role in copular and non-copular clauses. Section 5.4 will argue that in examples (1), the copular clause, and (2), the so-called ‘topic-focus partitioned construction’, the LE morpheme functions as a type of ‘Relator’ in the sense of den Dikken (2006). As such, we will conclude that the morpheme does not only act as a subject predicate mediator but extends to the realm of what I am referring to as a ‘topic-focus partitioner’. The examples in (3) and (4) will constitute the main concerns of chapters 6 and 7, respectively. Example (9) is an excerpt of an audio narrative of the Awing migration history. The final lines of the excerpt exhibit another function of the LE morpheme which I believe is not the same in the other examples and which I will label it as ‘background indicator’.¹⁵

(1) *A copula?*

Alota ló ndí'-məjjiə

Alota LE work-food

‘Alota is a farmer’

(2) *Topic-focus ‘partitioner’?*

ŋgəsáŋə (mbo Ayafor) ló pe' m-fé Tsefor (mbo Ayafor)

maize to Ayafor LE P1 N-give Tsefor to Ayafor

‘It is Tsefor who gave the maize (to Ayafor)’

OR

¹⁵ The migration history was narrated by Fai Achu Emmanuel, a retired secondary school teacher living in the Awing village and considered by most as one of the most skillful Awing speakers. The data was collected in 2017 during a field trip in the village.

'The maize (to Ayafor) was given by Tsefor'

(3) *Wh-pronoun operator:*

a. Ngwe a pe' naŋ ló kó (Object wh-question)

Ngwe SM P1 cook LE what

'What did Ngwe cook?'

b. ló wə pá'a a pe' n-naŋ məkwúnə (Subject wh-question)

LE who REL SM P1 N-cook rice

'Who cooked rice?'

(4) *(An exhaustive) focus operator:*

a. Ngwe a pe' n-naŋ ló məkwúnə (Direct object focus)

Ngwe SM P1 N-cook LE rice

'It is rice that Ngwe cooked'

d. ló pe' n-naŋ Ngwe n-naŋnə məkwúnə (Subject focus)

LE P1 N-cook Ngwe N-cook rice

'It is Ngwe who cooked rice'

c. Ngwe a pe' n-naŋnə məkwú ló n-náŋnə (Verb focus)

Ngwe SM P1 N-cook rice LE N-cook

'Ngwe COOKED rice' (She did not sell it)

(5) *To form alternative questions:*

Alombah a pe' ŋaŋ ló mətó' kó ndzô

Alombah SM P1 cook LE potatoes or beans

'Did Alombah cook potatoes or beans?'

(6) *To form pseudo-cleft:*

əzu pá'a Ngwe a pe' naŋ məsânə ló (pe' m-bə) məkwúnə

thing that Ngwe SM P1 cook morning LE P1 N-be rice

'The thing that Ngwe cooked in the morning is/was rice'

(7) *An adversative conjunction:*

Alombah a kəŋ ŋkáp ló mbeenə afá'ə

Alombah SM love money LE hate work

'Alombah loves money but hates to work'

(8) *A contrastive topic operator:*

Alombah ló, Tsefor pe' η-kó m-fě ηgəsáηó mbo yé

Alombah LE, Tsefor P1 N-also N-give maize to him

'How about Alombah, did Tsefor also give him the maize?'

(9) *As a 'background indicator':*

An excerpt of Awing migration history

- a. Mbəwinə ló əlá'a fé' ndí ságə. ηyinô naanə ní əlí'ə pə-nənə...
Awing LE village come road far trek sit in place PL-many
'Awing is a village coming from a very faraway place. While migrating they settled in many different locations...'
- b. á kě nó pó kú'nə pô. Pó ló-əsiə mbónə kúplə,...
It NEG to them suitable NEG they get-up again change
'which did not fit them, so they will often leave and change location...'
- c. nyinô ndzôηné mbənə ngáptə ηgwúə nkó' tá nkù'ə təsəηə,...
trekking quarrelling again dividing falling climb PROG reach town
'They were often quarrelling, which led to divisions and deaths until they climbed and reached a town...'
- d. əlí'ə pá'à pé fúηnə ngə Mankon ló, ndó wú ké mbə ngáptə,...
place that they call that Mankon LE leave there also again divide
'The place, which is called Mankon, where they also separated again...'
- e. pí pítsə pó zá' ηghenô ndu Mbəmbáη, pítsə zá' ndú ndèèmə...
people some they cross go towards Nkwen some cross towards Mendankwen
'Some crossed over to Nkwen while others went towards Mendankwen...'

The narration continues till this point where the LE morpheme becomes very frequent:

- f. ndó əlí'ə wú ló, ηyinô ló, pó nə mbignə mfe' ló, mféló ló,...
leave place there LE trekking LE they P2 start leave LE leaving LE
'Leaving these places, as they were migrating, giving the time that they left, while leaving...'
- g. ηgyíə ló, nyinô ló, ndzá fə' nó əlí'ə pəp ló, mbə pə-fó pə-fó.
arrive LE trekking LE often leave of places their LE be PL-fon PL-fon
'As they arrived, while trekking, often while leaving their destinations, each person had the status of a chief...'
- h. mbə pə-fó pə-fó ló, ηwunə tsùg jîə kwə'fó...
be PL-fon PL-fon LE person have his sorcerer-bag
'Having each the status of a chief as such, each person had his own protection bag...'

The LE morpheme is used 10 times in the excerpt in (9). The first instance in line (a) seems to be same as in the copular clause in (1). The second instance is in line (d) after Mankon (the capital of the North West region). In lines (f) down to (h), the morpheme occurs 8 times. In all instances, the speaker uses it after a phrase or concept that he has previously mentioned in the discourse. The only two constituents that the LE morpheme does not show-up after are the underlined ‘new’ information. Interestingly, when the first underlined one in line (g) is repeated in the beginning of line (h), the LE morpheme comes immediately after it. I will not go further here than saying that what the speaker is doing is using the LE morpheme to signal information that he believes is (actively) known to the hearer. Perhaps this also explains why he uses it with Mankon (although it is not previously mentioned in the text): he assumes that his audience knows that Mankon is the capital city of the North West region of Cameroon. This is what I call background indicator which to an extent mimics the (contrastive topic) role in (8) in the sense that in both contexts LE syntactically occurs immediately after information that is shared/known by both speaker and listener. Using a focus operator/marker to highlight background information has also been documented in other languages, for example, Malay¹⁶ (Hopper 1979) and Gùrùntùm¹⁷ (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2009). Curiously, we will see that the LE morpheme performs a similar function in copular clauses by restricting new information and morphological elements like pronouns from occurring immediately to its left. It might also be of interest to mention that in alternative questions like that in (5), pseudo-clefts like that in (6), and in adversative conjunction constructions as in (7), what precedes LE is kind of shared information and what comes after it is the ‘new’ or ‘updating’ part of the discourse. This is just an observation (for now); as I mentioned already, I will not be analysing all of these constructions in this work. The next section takes on the copular clause.

5.2 The copular clause in Awing

This section will present the copular clause in Awing, with special attention to the various elements that may be qualified as the copula. The overall objective is to identify the exact role of the LE morpheme in copular clauses, and not to provide any kind of taxonomy of copular clauses in this language. As such we will not be concerned, from a semantic point of view, whether equative clauses do exist (in Awing) (den Dikken 2006). However, for presentational purposes, I will follow the common practice (Higgins 1979) and categorize such clauses into specificational, equative, etc. A copular clause can basically be viewed as a construction that

¹⁶ Malay is a Malayo-Polynesian language from the Austronesian phylum that is spoken mainly in Malaysia and Indonesia.

¹⁷ Gùrùntùm is a West Chadic language spoken in Bauchi State in Nigeria.

connects two expressions/constituents with the help of a linker, or the copula. Most copular clauses link a subject (typically a referential expression) with a nominal predicate; the two expressions being linked can still have the same syntactic category and semantic type, e.g., equative clauses. In natural languages, the linker or copula is often, but not necessarily a verbal category. While predicational copular clauses of type *NP-copula-Adjective* can be realized with a zero copula in Awing, different elements show up in other copular clauses and it is not immediately obvious which one is the actual copula. In the following examples, the LE morpheme must be used to link the ‘subject’ and the predicate. Until we get to section 5.4, where the subject of a copular clause will be formally identified, the term ‘subject’ will be used to refer to the first NP in the copular clause, that is, the NP preceding the LE morpheme as in (10) through (13).¹⁸

(10) *Specificational:*

- a. ɲgáɲ-ndê mə lɔ́ Ayafor
 person-house my LE Ayafor
 ‘My husband is Ayafor’
- b. əfó-pə-əfó lɔ́ əsê-nəpóolə
 fon-of-fon LE God-heaven
 ‘The fon of fons is the heavenly God’

(11) *Identificational:*

- a. mɔ́-mbyáɲnə nê lɔ́ ndzímə mə
 child-man this LE brother my
 ‘This boy is my brother’

¹⁸ In linguistic theory two basic notions of ‘subject hood’ can be distinguished. A thematic subject (technically the external argument of the verb—Williams 1980; Larson 1998) will correspond to Alombah in (ia); and a grammatical subject which occurs in the ‘subject position’ corresponding to ‘maize’ in (ib).

- (i) a. Alombah a nɔɲnə ɲgəsáɲɔ́
 Alombah SM cook maize
 ‘Alombah has cooked maize’
- b. ɲgəsáɲ lɔ́ ɲaɲ Alombah
 maize LE cook maize
 ‘It is Alombah who cooked maize’

- b. ηwuηə wə́ ló Ayafor
 person that LE Ayafor
 ‘That man is Ayafor’

(12) *Equative:*

- a. ηwuη ló atətsá’ə
 person LE mud
 ‘Man is mud’
- b. əpu-mbî ló fəláwa
 things-earth LE flower
 ‘Riches are flowers’

(13) *Predicational:*

- a. ntɛ-mbiə mə́ ló apéelə
 pass-ahead my LE mad
 ‘My elder brother/sister is (a) mad (person)’
- b. Aghetse ló ajîə
 Aghetse LE wisdom
 ‘Aghetse is clever’
- c. Alota ló ndí’-məjíə
 Alota LE work-food
 ‘Alota is a farmer’

Observe that the adjective *péelə* ‘mad’ in (13a) has been nominalized with the help of the *a-* prefix (*a-péelə*). This is because the LE morpheme cannot be used to link adjectival predicates—adjectives that cannot be nominalized:

- (14) a. ntɛ-mbiə mə́ (a) (*ló) kəmkə
 ntɛ-mbiə mə́ SM LE short
 ‘‘My elder brother is short’
- b. sáambaηə (ə) (*ló) ghá’ə
 loin SM LE big
 ‘A/the lion is big’

Given that the subject marker can occur with adjectival predicates like those in (14) and that the LE morpheme cannot show up in such copular clauses, it is reasonable to assume that either such clauses have a null copula or that the subject marker optionally plays the role of the copula. The first hypothesis, namely that of a null copula, is quite robust in natural languages, in particularly with adjectival predicates (see Pustet 2003). As far as Bantu is concerned, Gibson et al. (2017) note that the Bantu languages Digo¹⁹ and Swahili have predicative copular constructions that use (only) the subject marker as the copula (see examples in footnote 4).²⁰ That the subject marker may function as the copula to adjectival predicates as those in (14) may not be completely excluded. In fact, the subject marker is obligatory with class 6 nominals, as shown in (15).

- (15) a. məʒí *(mə) pəgə
 food SM bad
 ‘The food is bad’
- b. məghó’ *(mə) sénə
 oil SM black
 ‘The oil is black’

So we can note that parallel to languages like Swahili, the SM can serve as a linker in adjectival predicate copular clauses in Awing. Now notice that all the examples in (10) to (14) are in the present tense and just observing them one might conclude that the LE morpheme is the copular verb in this language. That is, if we assume that a copula is whatever links the ‘subject’ and the predicate. Nonetheless, when such constructions occur with an explicit tense morpheme, the *pe* morpheme (which becomes *m-bə* when preceded by a past tense marker) shows up. This *pe* morpheme is literally construed as the English copular verb ‘be’. As shown in (16) and (17), when the tense marker is present both the *pe* and the LE morphemes are obligatory. Observe also that the SM can be used in these constructions.

- (16) Alombah (a) nə *(m-bə) *(lɔ́) ndí’-məjjiə
 Alombah SM P2 N-be LE work-food

¹⁹ Digo is spoken in East Africa specifically in Kenya and Tanzania.

²⁰ The examples below from Digo and Swahili are extracted from Gibson et al. (2017).

- (ii) Chi-tabu **chi** tayari.
 7-book SM7 ready
 ‘The book is ready.’ Digo (Nicolle 2013:289)
- (iii) Nyumba **i** tupu.
 9.house SM9 empty
 ‘The house is empty.’ Swahili (Ashton 1947:93)

‘Alombah was a farmer’

- (17) Alombah (a) yó *(pə) *(lǎ) ndzərə
Alombah SM F2 be LE thief
‘Alombah will be(come) a thief’

The data in (16) and (17) suggest that tense marking requires an overt verbal category and LE is not a verbal element. Now, we already saw that the LE morpheme cannot be used with adjectival predicates that are not nominalized. This is also the case with the *pə* ‘be’ morpheme; this can be seen in the examples in (18) below, where neither LE nor the *pə* morpheme is allowed.

- (18) a. mǎzǐ mə pe’ (*m-bə) (*lǎ) m-bəgə
food SM P1 N-be LE N-bad
‘The food was bad’
- b. aláŋə Bamenda ǎ pe’ (*m-bə) (*lǎ) ŋ-kəmkə
road Bamenda SM P1 N-be LE N-short
‘The Bamenda road was shorter’
- c. sáambaŋə yíwə ǎ nə (*m-bə) (*lǎ) ŋ-ghá’ə
lion DEF SM P2 N-be LE N-big
‘The lion was big’

The data in (18) show that neither *pə* nor LE can be used with adjectives that are not nominalized. However, see that unlike in example (15), the adjectives in (18) behave like verbs by taking the N-prefix. So, in Awing adjectives are +N,+V (cf. Chomsky 1970), that is, they have both nominal (cf.(13)) and verbal (cf. (18)) features. The generalization with adjectival predicates is as follows: when the LE morpheme is used, the adjective must be nominalized. When the LE morpheme is absent and, crucially, the tense marker is also absent, the subject marker may function as the linker. When the tense marker is used, the adjective behaves like a verb by taking the N-prefix. This last characteristic could explain the absence of the ‘be’ morpheme: if the adjective actually functions as a verb, it is logical that there is no verbal copula anymore (just like it is not there with normal verbs). Also, the absence of the LE morpheme is predictable in cases like (18) on the grounds that it cannot intervene between the tense marker and a verb—cf. the example (17), repeated in (19). The reason behind the

ungrammaticality of example (19b) will become evident in section 5.4 when we will be discussing the syntax of copular clauses.

- (19) a. Alombah a nə m-bə ló ndí'-məjjə
 Alombah SM P2 N-be LE work-food
 'Alombah was a farmer'
- b. *Alombah nə ló m-bə ndí'-məjjə
 Alombah P2 LE N-be work-food
 Int: 'Alombah was a farmer'

It should also be mentioned that the LE morpheme cannot take inanimate or prepositional predicates as complements in copular clauses—exemplified in (20a). To achieve the intended meaning the verb *chîə* (literally 'stay or inhabit) will be used and interpreted as 'is'.

- (20) a. *Tsefor (nə m-bə) ló (məm) ndě
 Tsefor P2 N-be LE in house
 Int: Tsefor is/was in the house/at home'
- b. Tsefor (nə) *((n)-chîə) (məm) ndě
 Tsefor P2 N-is in house
 'Tsefor is/was in the house/at home'

The omission of the preposition in (20b) will mean "Tsefor is/was at home" and using it will imply that he is/was inside the house. It seems, therefore, that the Awing copula, whatever it is, seems to be capable of linking the 'subject' with only animate nouns. This assertion might seem incorrect, especially if we consider a copula to be whatever links the 'subject' and the predicate and further consider examples like (15) and (20b) that obligatorily make use the SM and the *chîə* morpheme as linkers. Hence, it may as well be argued that the SM and the *chîə* morpheme are the copulas of adjectival and inanimate/PP predicates in Awing, respectively. Although such a position is harmless descriptively, it should be noted that unlike the SM and the *pə* morphemes, the *chîə* morpheme behaves like lexical verbs when it co-occurs with the LE morpheme. This is captured via the cleft translation in (21a), where the prepositional phrase 'in the house' is interpreted as exhaustive—a semantic function that the LE morpheme is void of in copular clauses (to be shown in section 5.2.2).

- (21) a. Tsefor (nə) (n)-chî ló məm ndě
 Tsefor P2 N-is LE in house
 ‘It is in the house that Tsefor is/was’
- b. *Tsefor ló (nə) (n)-chî məm ndě
 Tsefor LE P2 N-is in house
 Int: Tsefor is/was inside the house’

Example (21b) further shows that the LE morpheme cannot precede the tense marker when the *chî* morpheme acts as the copula. The following sub-section will, however, show that this is a property that the LE morpheme has in copular clauses. In conclusion, we can note that even if the *chî* morpheme is used to link the ‘subject’ and the PP predicate in copular clauses, it cannot be regarded as a copular verb in Awing. Likewise, the SM may not qualify as a copular verb in Awing for reasons that will become obvious in section 5.4. Notice that these two morphemes are disqualified as copular verbs. It is sufficient to assume that they can function as specific linkers, and perhaps might become actual copulas as the language evolves. Having said that, it is still unclear which of the morphemes, that is, LE or *pə* (sometimes realized as *mbə*), is the actual copular verb in this language. The following sub-section will be examining these two candidates further in copular clauses to see which of them qualifies as the copular verb.

5.2.1 Morpho-syntactic differences between LE and *pə* in copular clauses

Here, we want to examine the morpho-syntactic differences between the LE and *pə* morphemes and what consequences such variation may have in copular clauses. As already hinted in relation to example (21b), the LE morpheme shows up in different positions in copular clauses. However, the tense marker must precede the *pə* morpheme, suggesting that there is a kind of standard syntactic relation between the *pə* morpheme and tense markers. Moreover, parallel to other preverbal categories and the verb, the *pə* morpheme can be prefixed with the homorganic nasal prefix; by contrast, the LE morpheme never takes this N-prefix. The examples in (22) and (23) demonstrate these differences.

- (22) a. ndí'-məjíə (a) nə m-bə ló Alota
 work-food SM P2 N-be LE Alota
 ‘The farmer was Alota’

b. ndí'-məji (*a) ló (*a) nə m-bə Alota
 work-food SM LE SM P2 N-be Alota
 'The farmer was Alota'

(23) a. ajú ʒê (ə) nə m-bə ló ʒíə
 thing this SM P2 N-be LE his
 'This thing was his'

b. ajú ʒê, (*ə) ló (*ə) nə m-bə ʒíə
 thing this SM LE SM P2 N-be his
 'This thing was his'

Also observe the distribution of the subject marker in examples (22) and (23). In the previous section it was claimed that the subject marker can co-occur with the LE and the *pə* morphemes in copular clauses, as can be seen in (22a) and (23a). Now, see in examples (22b) and (23b) that when the LE morpheme precedes the tense marker, the subject marker is banned. Also recall that the SM cannot be used in copular clauses that do not have an explicit tense marker, that is, when the LE morpheme alone links the 'subject' and the predicate: Subject-(*SM)-LE-(*SM)-Predicate. The generalization thus is that whenever the 'subject' immediately precedes the LE morpheme, the SM is banned. Keep this in mind as it will be crucial when we get to the syntax of copular clauses in section 5.4.

In addition to the facts that the SM cannot immediately precede the LE morpheme, and that this morpheme is void of inflectional properties (i.e., cannot take the N-prefix), its position in copular clauses has some further intriguing properties. For one, the examples in (22a) and (23a) are considered more 'natural' to those in (22b) and (23b). Observe that the final-schwa in 'farmer' is missing in (22b). Also, there is a comma (indicating a prosodic break) separating the LE morpheme and the pre-copular NP in (23b). These phonological properties actually exhibit a difference in information structure between examples (22a) and (23a), on the one hand, and those in (22b) and (23b), on the other hand—we will return to this in a while. The preference of the LE morpheme in the position following the tense and *pe* morphemes in copular clauses is further observable with pronouns. As shown in examples (24a) and (24c), it is possible to have personal subject pronouns precede the LE morpheme when the sentence is in the present tense, except the 3rd person pronoun (24b).

- (24) a. maŋ/o ló ndzərə
 I/you LE thief
 ‘I/you(singular) am/are a thief’
- b. (*a) ló ndzərə
 s/he LE thief
 ‘S/he is a thief’
- c. pɛn /pó/pí ló pə-zərə
 we/they/you LE PL-thief
 ‘We/they/you(plural) are thieves’

Unlike the other subject pronouns, the 3rd person singular pronoun, which is (coincidentally?) homophonous with the SM, cannot immediately precede the LE morpheme. Two factors may account for this: the syntactic position(s) of the NP preceding the LE morpheme and the morpho-semantic relation between the 3rd person singular pronoun and the subject marker. From a morpho-semantic view point, the ban of the 3rd person pronoun could be related to semantic ambiguity between this morpheme and the SM. That is, the grammar may not clearly distinguish the 3rd person singular pronoun from the SM and will consequently reject the 3rd person singular pronoun in example (24b) given that the SM cannot immediately precede the LE morpheme. This, however, warrants the question as to how the subject marker and the 3rd person singular pronoun actually relate. We will not delve into this question at this point. Nonetheless, Bresnan & Mchombo (1986: 287) had long observed that “one stage in the historical evolution of grammatical agreement markers from an incorporated pronoun appears to be a partial loss of referentiality, allowing the same morpheme to be used ambiguously for grammatical and anaphoric agreement”.

Syntactically, it has been argued (Fominyam & Šimík 2017; Fominyam 2018 and Fominyam & Georgi 2021) that the presence or absence of the SM is directly linked to the syntactic position of the verb’s external argument—or the ‘subject’ in the present context. To this effect, it will be shown in section 5.4 that when the SM is banned, the NP preceding the LE morpheme is base generated in a higher position above TP and it appears that the 3rd person pronoun cannot occur in this position. The asymmetry between the 3rd person pronoun and the other pronouns can further be seen in the examples in (25) below, where all the other pronouns can be topicalized as the head of a relative clause except the 3rd person pronoun (25c).

- (25) a. maŋ/gho pá'a n̄/o ne- ŋ-kwáŋ ngó Ngwe kəŋê mə/gho...
 I/you REL I/you P2 N-believe that Ngwe love me/you
 'I/you who believed that Ngwe loves me/you...'
- b. pɛn/pó/pí pá'a pɛn/pó/nə nə- ŋ-kwáŋ ngó Ngwe kwúə...
 us/they/you REL us/they/you P2 N-believe that Ngwe die
 'Us/they/you(plural) who believed that Ngwe is dead...'
- c. yá/*a pá'a a ne- ŋ-kwáŋ ngó Ngwe kəŋê yá
 he REL he P2 N-believe that Ngwe love him
 'Him who believed that Ngwe loved him...'

(25c) shows that in order to have a structure with the 3rd person singular pronoun parallel to the other pronouns, the 'strong' or object form of the 3rd person pronoun has to be used. Relating the data in (25) and that in (24), precisely (24b), it will be shown in section 5.4 that 'subjects' of copular clauses in Awing can assume two information structure functions: When the 'subject' remains within the copular clause, say in Spec/AgrP, the clause may be informally described as *Subject-focus*; and as *Topic-focus* when the 'subject' is in a higher position. The idea that the 'subject' will have to occur in a higher position at one point can be related to the observation in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the subject and the LE morpheme cannot simultaneously occur in the same side of the main verb, specifically in the preverbal position; this too will become evident in section 5.4. At this stage one might be wondering whether the form of the pronoun which occurs as the relative head in (25c) can be used as the 'subject' of the copular clause. If it is the case that the strong 3rd person singular pronoun is compatible in topicalized positions and the immediate-pre-LE position has a topic status, it should be plausible to have the yá pronoun in this position. As shown is (26), such a prediction is, however, not borne out.

- (26) (*yá) ló ndzərə
 he LE thief
 'S/he is a thief'

Examples (24b) and (26) without the 3rd person pronoun are felicitously construed as referring to an individual already introduced in the discourse, that is, the 3rd person singular pronoun is pragmatically inferred in such contexts. The reason why (26) is ungrammatical, in contrast to (25c), is not obvious, but one may conjecture that it has to do with the different clause types. Concentrating at this point on the LE morpheme's behaviour in copular clauses with pronouns

in general, the examples in (27) below show that when the tense morpheme is used, the LE morpheme, contrary to what we see in (24), cannot occur in the position where it immediately follows the pronouns; hence, the ungrammaticality of (27b) and (27d).

- (27) a. maŋ/a/o nə- m-bə ló ndzərə
 I/(s)he/you P2 N-be LE thief
 ‘I/she/you was/were a thief’
- b. *maŋ/a/o ló nə m-bə ndzərə
 I/you LE P2 N-be thief
 Int: ‘I/(s)he/you was/were a thief’
- c. pɛn /pó/pí nə m-bə ló pə-zərə
 we/they/you P2 N-be LE PL-thief
 ‘We/they/you(plural) were thieves’
- d. *pɛn /pó/pí ló nə m-bə pə-zərə
 we/they/you LE P2 N-be PL-thief
 Int: ‘We/they/you(plural) were thieves’

The discussion on pronouns, specifically why (27b) and (27d) are ungrammatical will be further clarified in section 5.4 when we must redefine what the actual subject of the Awing copular clause is and identify its syntactic position. What we can keep for now is the fact that, parallel to the other pronouns, the 3rd person pronoun can be used as the ‘subject’ when the LE morpheme structurally shows up in a position following the *pə* morpheme. Moreover, the fact that all pronouns are rejected when the tense slot is activated and the LE morpheme precedes the tense marker is a strong indication that the syntactic and pragmatic status of the element in such copular clauses differ to those in clauses that do not have overt tense markers; hence, the argument that the LE morpheme can negotiate a subject-predicate partition in one copular clause and a topic-focus partition in another one.

Now, I mentioned earlier that changing the position of the LE morpheme in copular clauses often results in pragmatic nuances. To make this point obvious, consider the constructions in (22), repeated below in (28).

- (28) a. ndí'-məjíə (a) nə m-bə ló Alota
 work-farm SM P2 N-be LE Alota
 ‘The farmer was Alota’

- b. ndí'-məji, ló nə m-bə Alota
 work-farm LE P2 N-be Alota
 'The farmer, he was Alota'

Although both constructions in (28) have the same semantic meaning, that is, the same truth-conditions, their use conditions differ: (28b) best fits a context where the 'subject' (immediately preceding the LE morpheme) is parsed as, say, an 'aboutness topic'—i.e., information that is not only accommodated by both speaker and hearer but also constitutes the main theme of the discourse. Such a definition might not be immediately clear (as it is mostly the case with topics in IS theory); however, from a syntactic angle, it will be shown in section 5.4 that the so-called 'subject' in examples like that in (28b) does not sit in the same syntactic position as in (28a). As I mentioned before, there is a phonological pause in (28b), observable by the absence of the final schwa. This interruption actually marks a topic-comment partition by signalling that the pre-LE element should be interpreted as '*what we have been talking about*'.

Summarising: we can note that while the LE morpheme seems to be concerned with the categorization of the NPs information structure, the Awing copular clause has a verbal morpheme which is literally construed (in English) as 'be'. Interestingly, there is a post-copular/verbal subject construction in Awing which, at first sight, seems to be in an intermediate stage between a copular clause and a cleft construction. Such a construction is also realized with the LE and the 'be' morphemes, where the LE morpheme shows up preceding the subject and the 'be' morpheme is the sole morpheme that links the subject and the predicate, as can be seen in (29).

- (29) a. ló (*nə) Tsefor (*nə) m-bə ndzərə
 LE P2 Tsefor P2 N-be thief
 'It is Tsefor who is a thief'
- b. ló (*nə) Manyi (*nə) m-bə mbí-póonə
 LE P2 Manyi P2 N-be deliver-children
 'It is Manyi who delivers many children'
- c. ló (*nə) ηwún ówá (*nə) m-bə ndzé'kə-ηwa'ró
 LE P2 man that P2 N-be teach-book
 'It is that man who is a teacher'

Observe that while the ‘be’ morpheme takes the N-prefix, the past tense marker, which, among other elements (see chapter 3 § 3.7) license the N-prefix on the verb, is not permitted in these examples. The constructions in (29) would express actions that are conceived in the past, present and might continue in the future and they might be equated to transitive postverbal subject constructions where the verb is obligatorily doubled: V-S-*(V)-O, that is when the object remains in the postverbal position, too, (see Fominyam 2018). This suggests that the N-prefix on the ‘be’ morpheme in (29) is triggered by a null higher verbal copy (since we know from chapter 3 that verbs trigger the N-prefix on following verbs). Actually, when the clause is constructed in the past tense, the higher verbal copy is overtly realized:

- (30) lɔ̃ nə m-bə Tsefor *(m-bə) ndzərə
 LE P2 N-be Tsefor N-be thief
 ‘It was Tsefor who was a thief’

As can be seen from the English translation, the examples in (29) and (30) are different from other copular clauses in that the postverbal subjects receive an exhaustivity interpretation which is not available in other copular clauses (to be shown in the following section). It is not clear at this point whether this focus interpretation is due to the doubling of the copular verb or something else. As we will see in section 5.4, copular clauses will be argued to have the same syntactic mechanism as SVO and VSVO sentences with lexical verbs. This means that the only difference between non-copular clauses that show up with the LE morpheme and copular clauses is that there is an exhaustive focus entailment with the non-copular clauses. The doubling of the copular verb here and the resulting focus interpretation seem to suggest that the verb may have a say in the interpretation of the focus; suggesting that the conclusion in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the LE morpheme is an exhaustive operator will have to be revised. We will address this query in chapter 7, after we show here that the LE morpheme does not have the same exhaustive interpretation in copular clauses as in non-copular ones. Returning to the dependency between the LE and the copular verb, it is interesting to note here that the ‘be’ morpheme can function as the sole copular verb in such constellations.

We can therefore conclude that the actual copular verb in Awing is the *pe* morpheme (literally construed as ‘be’). This copula is null when the copular clause is in the present tense. However, the absence (or presence) of the copular verb does not prevent the LE morpheme from showing up. In fact, if the LE morpheme is concerned in mediating the status of NPs within the copular clause, its presence will not depend on the copular verb. Why the LE

morpheme does not show up with adjectival predicate, for example, seems to be an issue with the semantics of such clause types, something which I leave open for future research. The conclusion reached here mimics results reported in other African languages, in particular Kikuyu.²¹ As can be seen in the following examples extracted from Schwarz (2007), the copula is said to be null in the present tense and an element similar to the Awing LE morpheme labelled as the focus marker (FM) obligatorily shows up (the same pattern is reported in Guruntum, Hartmann & Zimmermann 2009). Schwarz notes that “the analysis commonly adopted for this pattern [in Kikuyu] is that the underlying form (of 31a here) contains a phonologically null form of the copular verb...(cf. Bergvall 1987, Clements 1984, Schwarz 2003)”.

- (31) a. abdul *(ne) Ø mo- rutani
 A. FM COP 1- teacher
 ‘Abdul is a teacher.’
- b. abdul (ne) a- a- re mo- rutani
 A. FM SM-T- be 1- teacher
 ‘Abdul was a teacher.’
- (Schwarz 2007)

On a final note, Hartmann & Zimmermann’s (2012) analysis of Bura copular clauses, although a mirror image to the Awing data in that the focalized item is always to the right in Awing, conversely to the left in Bura, can be useful to further clarify the role of the LE morpheme in copular clauses. What is of particular interest is the term ‘focus copula’ coined by these researchers to describe a similar element in Bura copular clauses. As noted, the analysis developed for Bura in Hartmann & Zimmermann (2012) may not fully account for

²¹ There might be differences regarding which NP is focused in copular clauses in different languages, i.e., the one following or preceding the copula. This should come as no surprise given that it is a common phenomenon to either have the focused phrase/elements precede or follow the focus operators in African languages. The analysis might be different, though. In particular, one might wonder why the FM is optional in the Kikuyu past tense construction but the Awing LE morpheme is obligatory in such contexts. According to Schwarz, we may be...

“...able to explain the obligatory presence of ne [the FM in kikuyu] in third person present tense copula constructions if we make the additional assumption that the focus feature on the focused XP in in-situ focus constructions is in some way licensed by the lexical verbal head. It is commonly assumed that phonologically null heads have limited licensing capacities. Since the third person present tense form of the copula is phonologically null, it cannot license in-situ focus on the object and hence, the only way to introduce a focus in such copula sentences is to let ne do the job.”

Applying Schwarz’s conclusion on Kikuyu in Awing will not satisfactorily explain why LE is obligatory in the past tense constructions, too. That is, if it is the case that its mandatory presence is to do the work of the null copula, it is not clear why it must also be present when the copula is overt in Awing. Besides the LE morpheme is not a focus marker in Awing. As I have argued, its presence is obligatory because it mediates certain IS roles.

the Awing data²²; however, the analysis points to the dual property of ‘linkers’ in copular clauses. I argue that this dual property is explicit in Awing, that is, the morphological use of the copular verb *pə* (sometimes realized as *mbə*) and the LE morpheme. This is what we observe when the copular clause is constructed with an overt tense marker.

Now, throughout this chapter I have been claiming that copular clauses can assume a topic-focus structure. We have seen that the positioning of the LE morpheme can influence the interpretation of the pre-LE element, namely from a mere ‘subject’ to a topic-hood status. Nonetheless, it is not yet clear what type of focus we are dealing with in copular clauses and most importantly why the LE morpheme is not labelled FM, if it turns out that it has anything to do with the focus in copular clauses. It is important to note that by not (immediately) labelling LE in copula clauses as FM I have the advantage to avoid the common error in the literature on information structure (Fominyam 2012; Fominyam & Tran 2019) where elements that occur with focalized phrases/clauses are simplistically labelled FM without investigating whether the focus in question is plain, contrastive or exhaustive. Secondly, Fominyam & Šimík (2017) have argued that the LE morpheme functions as an exhaustive focus operator in Awing. However, it has not yet been shown to be the case in copular clauses. Thus, it is important to identify the type of focus we are dealing with here and examine whether the LE morpheme has any role with the focus in question. The following section will be dealing exactly with this issue.

5.2.2 *The LE morpheme and the post-copular ‘focus’*

It has been claimed that the LE morpheme can mediate both a subject-predicate and a topic-focus interpretation in copular clauses. In the preceding section we came out with what the topic is and how the LE morpheme contributes in achieving such a function. Keeping aside the division between predicate and focus, this section aims to examine whether the ‘focus’

²² For example, the usage of the FCOP is mandatory when the exclusive particle ‘only’ is employed (H&Z 2008/2012). This is not the case in Awing:

- (iv) a. Alombah a náŋ (lá) tso’ə ndzǒ
 Alombah SM cook LE only beans
 ‘It is only beans that Alombah has cooked’

It is difficult to semantically tell the difference when the LE morpheme is used or omitted with the exclusive particle ‘only’. However, there seems to be a pragmatic difference—context: there is a meeting in Alombah’s house and the invitees realized that beans is what they will be having for dinner. By using the exclusive particle ‘only’ without the LE morpheme, the addresser takes it for granted that only beans is offered. Conversely, when using the LE morpheme with the exclusive particle, the addresser seems to be surprised or dismayed that only beans is cooked; e.g., perhaps they have the habit to have a variety of dishes when meeting.

interpretation attributed to the complement of the LE morpheme in copular clauses is derived thanks to the LE morpheme.

Throughout this work, focus is considered as that expression whose interpretation evokes a set of relevant alternatives, in the sense of Rooth (1992) and (Krifka 2008). Considering focus from this angle, Fominyam (2015) and Fominyam & Šimík (2017) show that Awing grammar distinguishes two kinds of foci—plain focus which can result as an answer to a wh-question (and receives no phonological or morpho-syntactic encoding), and exhaustive focus which is expressed with the use of the LE morpheme. The idea that copular clauses in Awing have a focalized part, namely what comes after the LE morpheme, suggests that the LE morpheme might have a role in the interpretation or achieving the alleged focus. Before we proceed to see whether this is the case, it is important to first show that the focus expression is always on the right edge, that is, LE's complement. It has been long observed that predicational copular clauses have a flexible focus order (see Heycock and Kroch 2002; Heycock 2012; Mikkelsen 2006:5); that is, the focus can either occur as the pre- or post-copular NP. Consider the following English examples extracted from Mikkelsen 2006.

(32) Complement focus:

Q: Who is John?

A: John is the mayor.

(33) Subject focus:

Q: Who is the mayor?

A: John is the mayor.

(34) Contrastive focus on complement or subject:

Q: Is Sam the mayor?

A1: No, Sam is the FIRE CHIEF.

A2: No, JOHN is the mayor

The first hint that tells us that Awing grammar differs from English with respect to the order of the focus is that one cannot ask a subject question with the wh-subject pronoun preceding the LE morpheme similar to the English examples in (32) and (33):

(35) a. *wə lə Tsefor

who LE Tsefor

Int: 'Who is Tsefor?'

- b. Tsefor ló wə
 Tsefor LE who
 ‘Who is Tsefor?’

Actually, it does not matter whether one is dealing with predicational or specificational copular clauses: phrases that may qualify as focus have to occur to the right of the LE morpheme. This is not the case with the non-copular SVO constructions in (36a) below where the wh-subject pronoun immediately precedes the verb. This is another indication that the intended (subject) position for the wh-subject pronoun in (35a) cannot be equated to that in (36a). Now observe that the answer to the question posed in (36a), or its variant in (36b), can be a short answer as in (36c). If the questionee decides to use a full copular clause to answer such a question, which is not uncommon, the appropriate response will have to be (36d); (36e) will be an infelicitous answer. The same patterns hold for the complement focus in (37), where only (37b) will constitute the appropriate response to the question in (37a).

- (36) a. wó zé’kə-nó aŋwa’ró b. ló wó mbó ndzé’kə-ŋwa’ró
 who teach-INF book LE who be teach-book
 ‘Who teaches?’ ‘Who is a teacher?’
- c. ló Tsefor
 LE Tsefor
 ‘It is Tsefor’
- d. ndzé’kə-ŋwa’ró ló Tsefor
 teach-book LE Tsefor
 ‘The teacher is Tsefor’
- e. #Tsefor ló ndzé’kə-ŋwa’ró
 Tsefor LE teach-book
 ‘Tsefor is the teacher’ *OK in English but pragmatically unacceptable in Awing*
- (37) a. Tsefor fá’a kó
 Tsefor work what
 ‘What does Tsefor do?’
- b. (Tsefor) ló ndzé’kə-ŋwa’ró
 Tsefor LE teach-book
 ‘Tsefor/he is a teacher’

- c. #ndzé'kə-ŋwa'ró ló Tsefor
 teach-book LE Tsefor
 'The teacher is Tsefor'

The examples in (35) through (37) show that focus must be the complement of the LE morpheme. That focus occurs after and not before the LE morpheme does not only have to do with copular clauses but will constitute a key point in the overall analysis of focus constructions in the following chapters, in particular with subject focus. Interestingly, we can already observe from (38) that the LE morpheme is indiscriminate regarding the structural size of focus it can accommodate to its right: CP (38a); TP(38b); V(38c); PP(38d) and DP(38d).

- (38) a. Neh a pe' ŋ-súŋ ló ŋgó Tsefor a fínó aŋwa'ró yíwə
 Neh SM P1 N-say LE that Tsefor SM sell book DEF
 'What Neh said is that Tsefor should sell the book'
- b. ló pe' m-fi Tsefor m-finô aŋwa'rə yíwə
 LE P1 N-sell Tsefor N-sell book DEF
 'It is Tsefor who sold the book'
- c. Tsefor a pe' m-finô aŋwa'rə yíwə ló finə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-sell book DEF LE sell
 'Tsefor SOLD the book'
- d. Tsefor a pe' m-finô aŋwa'rə yíwə ló mbo Neh
 Tsefor SM P1 N-sell book DEF LE to Neh
 'It is to Neh that Tsefor sold the book'
- e. Tsefor a pe' m-fi ló aŋwa'rə yíwə mbo Neh
 Tsefor SM P1 N-sell LE book DEF to Neh
 'It is the book that Tsefor sold to Neh'

(38a) can be a response to a dialogue where one of the participants (completely) misconstrued what Tsefor said. Thus, pragmatically, the whole CP may be considered the focus. On the other hand, it is not a tense/inflectional category that is in focus in (38b). The point is to illustrate that LE can take both CPs and TPs as complements and that focus has to occur to the

right of the LE morpheme.²³ Having shown that, we will now examine whether the LE morpheme can attribute any focus interpretation (e.g., contrast or exhaustiveness) to the predicate in the copular clause. Let us begin such a query with the context in (39) where the LE morpheme functions as an adversative conjunction.

- (39) Alombah a kəŋ ŋkáp lə/bə mbeenə afá’ə
 Alombah SM love money LE/? hate work
 ‘Alombah loves money but/and hates to work’

It is possible to use both the LE and the *bə* morpheme (which seems to be the copula) or either of them in the example in (39). Using only the *bə* morpheme may be literally translated as ‘Alombah loves money and hates to work’. The use of the LE morpheme, with or without *bə* morpheme, evokes the contradictive entailment according to which one cannot love money but hate to work. It will appear that the LE morpheme’s interpretation in most contexts can be deduced from this function, that is either ‘contrasting’ two propositions in the same clause or ‘contrasting’ a given constituent with another discourse referent(s). Having that in mind, we can return to copular clauses.

²³ One potential contradiction to the argument that (all) copular clauses in Awing have a fixed topic-focus structure would be the use of the focus operator ‘only’ in inclusive contexts. First, note that it is impossible to merge ‘only’ with the ‘subject’ with the intent to obtain an exclusive interpretation:

Context: *You might think that I have a lot of friends*

- (v) #tsó’ə Alombah lə ŋgəənə mə
 only Alombah LE friend my
 Int: ‘Only Alombah is my friend’.

Exclusive focus comes before given information in (v), which is fine in English but not in Awing. Given information has to precede new information in Awing:

- (vi) ŋgəənə mə lə tsó’ə Alombah
 friend my LE only Alombah
 ‘My friend is only Alombah.’

However, it is possible to use example (v) in a context where ‘only’ is parsed as ‘even/also’—that is, as an inclusive operator:

Context: *You may think that only Tsefor and Mefor are my friends*

- (vii) tsó’ə Alombah lə ŋgəənə mə
 even Alombah LE friend my
 ‘Even Alombah is my friend.’

Obviously the phrase after the LE morpheme ‘my friend’ in (vii) is not new: it is contextually given. Conversely, what is new is the ‘inclusive’ ‘subject’. Thus, what we have in (vii) is a sort of Focus-LE-Topic structure, the reverse of what we have seen and claimed to be the case thus far.

It has been argued that LE is not the actual copular verb in Awing and that its presence in copular clauses is to primarily partition such constellations to topic-focus structures. A direct implication will be that the LE morpheme is not responsible for the focus status of the post-copular phrase in copular clauses, that is, if its role is merely to partition such clauses. As I earlier noted, new/plain focus (both subject and non-subject) is not marked in Awing. Thus, if LE has no role in the interpretation of the focus in copular clause, one should expect such a focus to be naturally void of any focus associative interpretation like contrast, correction or exhaustiveness. Thus far, this seems to be the most natural interpretation that one obtains in copular clauses in Awing, for example the VP focus in (37b) (below as 40b), is merely interpreted as new information. However, it has also been suggested that the LE morpheme's interpretation/function in different contexts might be deduced from the adversative conjunction which is naturally contrastive. It is therefore important to test whether and how the predicate or focus of the copular clause is contrastive.

The notion of contrast can be quite challenging as different scholars approach it in different ways (see, e.g., Repp 2010). Nonetheless, content question-answer pairs seem to constitute a good way to test whether an element/construction is contrastive. The idea is that contrast is most felicitous only in contrastive contexts and wh-questions do not provide such contexts (Destruel and Velleman 2014; Grubic et al. 2018). This means that if the copular clause were intrinsically contrastive, an example like (37b) repeated below as (40b), which hitherto has been used as an answer to a VP question, should not be a natural reply to such a question, contrary to fact.

- (40) a. Alombah a fá'á kó
 Alombah SM work what
 'What does Alombah do?'
- b. Alombah ló ndí'-məjiə
 Alombah LE work-food
 'Alombah is a farmer'
- c. Alombah a lí'ə məjiə
 Alombah SM work food
 'Alombah is farming/a farmer'
- d. #Alombah a líə ló məjiə
 Alombah SM work LE food

‘Alombah is farming’ (not eating)

If the question in (40a) evokes a set of alternative (à la Rooth 1992), the copular clause is used to update the dialogue by presenting one of the alternatives. Example (40c) is a non-copular SVO construction with the same focus (i.e., new/plain) interpretation as that in (40b). Conversely, (40d) is contextually incongruent to the question posed in (40a); morpho-syntactically, it is the occurrence of the LE morpheme preceding the direct object in (40d) that differentiates it from (40c). Note that when the LE morpheme structurally precedes the direct object in non-copular (SVO) constructions as in (40d), either the entire verb phrase or the direct object is, specifically, exhaustively focus marked. The following chapter on wh-constructions will clarify why the example in (40d) is deemed inappropriate to the wh-question. For the time being, it suffices to note that the copular clause in (40b), contrary to example (40d) (which occurs with the same LE morpheme), is a felicitous reply to the VP question. This shows that the copular clause is not a good candidate for contrast. Taking from the Roothian account of alternative focus, Neeleman and Vermeulen (2012)’s notion of contrast, which entails the denial/rejection of one or more of the alternatives evoked by the focus, is what is at stake in (40d), but not in (40b) and (40c). As already mentioned, the copular clause in (40b), analogous to the SVO construction in (40c), merely presents one of the focus alternatives. That copular clauses in Awing are not inherently contrastive does not necessarily mean that they cannot be used as correction. Consider the exchange in (41).

- (41) a. Alombah a fá’á kó
Alombah SM work what
‘What does Alombah do?’
- b. a zé’kó aŋwa’rɔ
SM teach book
‘He is a teacher’
- c. Alombah ló ndí’-məjiə
Alombah LE work-food
‘Alombah is a farmer’

Relying on the context in (41), where example (41c) refutes the answer in (41b), one might be tempted to conclude that the copular clause is contrastive and as such relates this to the claim that the LE morpheme is inherently contrastive. However, it is most likely the case that such contrast may be a mere conversational implicature; that is, (41c) is parsed as contrastive

because it replaces the alternative provided in (41b). As such, it cannot be claimed that such a contrast is marked by the LE morpheme. The contrast here basically relies on common ground knowledge (Krifa 2008; Zimmermann 2008), precisely the availability of both alternatives in context. As further shown in (42b) below, using the copular clause as an answer to the alternative question posed in (42a) may not be taken as contrast given that the predicate/focus in (42b) simply picks one of the alternatives presented in (42a). As noted by Destruel and Velleman (2014:2) when an alternative is contextually available the use of contrastive structures, e.g., a cleft in English, is not necessary. Hence, the use of copular clauses in contexts where the alternatives are explicit may not constitute a valid argument that copular clauses in Awing express contrast.

- (42) a. Alombah ló ndí'-məjiə kɪ ndzé'kə-ŋwa'ró
 Alombah LE farmer or teacher
 'Is Alombah a farmer or a teacher?'
- b. (Alombah) ló ndí'-məjiə
 Alombah LE farmer
 'Alombah/he is a farmer'

In what follows, I will maintain that LE's main function in copular clauses is that of demarking the IS status of what we have so far (simplistically) termed as 'subject', and that the focus in copular clauses is most naturally interpreted as plain focus. Nonetheless, specific contexts like those in (41) and (42), that is, where explicit alternatives are available, can result in corrective/contrastive interpretations. Contrast is not the only focus ingredient, though. In Fominyam & Šimík (2017) the LE morpheme is analysed as an exhaustive focus operator. Thus, it might be beneficial investigating whether the LE morpheme in copular clauses can in some instances be read as exhaustive, that is, with the inference that the other (relevant) alternatives are false (É. Kiss 1998). Such an endeavour, however, appears futile in Awing given that exhaustivity is an extreme case of contrast and there seems to be no inherent contrast in copular clauses (although it has been argued that exhaustivity can be achieved without contrast: É. Kiss 1998). The only focus effect that can be attributed to the predicate of the copular clause would have to do with Grice's (1975) maxim of quantity. That is, a conversational exhaustive implicature which can be related to Zimmermann's (2007) notion of 'maximal list(ing)'. Hence, where there is a maximal list of items/individuals involved, such a list ought to be exhausted. The following demonstrates this line of thought:

Context: Everybody in the village knows that Alombah is a teacher and a palm-wine trader.
John asks James: what does Alombah do? James answers:

(43) #Alombah ló ndzé'kə-ŋwa'ró

Alombah LE teach-book

'Alombah is a teacher'

The answer in (43) may be interpreted as either James is attempting to hide the information that Alombah (also) sells wine, or he is simply ignorant of this fact; in both cases the sentence is pragmatically incongruent. The exhaustivity in (43) is a weak one given that it simply requires all elements to be listed without any presupposition of exclusion. That there is no exclusion, hence no strong exhaustivity in copular clauses, is evident from the felicitous example in (43) below, where using the same context provided in (43), the embedded clause can be introduced by the additive particle *ŋkə* 'also'; and crucially, the LE morpheme may also be used in the embedded clause.

(43) Ayafor ló ndzé'kə-ŋwa'ró kə m-bó (ló) ndí'-məjɔ

Ayafor LE teacher also N-be LE farmer

'Ayafor is a teacher and also a farmer'

Following the reasoning in Krifka (1999) and experimental studies in Bade (2016); Tiemann & Bade (2016), according to which the use of additive particles like 'too' and 'also' would block covert (pragmatic) exhaustivity operator or implicature, the use of the additive marker in the embedded structure in (43) shows that LE is not an exhaustivity operator in copula clauses. Now compare example (43) and (44) below. (44) clearly shows the difference between the copular and a non-copular focus construction in relation to the type of exhaustivity involved: While it is possible to use a second predication in the copular clause in (43), this cannot be the case with the non-copular focus construction where the LE morpheme functions as an exhaustive focus operator. Notice that even if a third clause is introduced (44b) - with or without the LE morpheme - to override the additive item introduced by the second predication, the sentence will still not be pragmatically coherent.

(44) a. #Neh zu lə ŋgəsájə ŋkə n-dʒunə ló məndzô

Neh buy Exh maize also N-buy Exh peanuts

Int: 'Neh bought maize and also peanuts'

- b. #Neh zu lə ɲgəsáŋə ɲkə n-dʒunə məndzô
 Neh buy Exh maize also N-buy peanuts
 a kě (lǎ) ndzô zu pô
 SM NEG Exh beans buy NEG
 Int: ‘Neh bought maize and also peanuts; it is beans that she didn’t buy’

I have argued that the focus in copular clauses is most naturally interpreted as plain focus and that the notions of completeness or correction result from contexts. More concretely, this means that the LE morpheme in copular clauses cannot be equated to that in non-copular focus constructions where the morpheme has an independent semantic content, namely exhaustiveness. The discussion here suggests that the positioning of the LE morpheme in copular clauses will have direct consequences to the NP that immediately precedes it, rather than the post-LE complement (also see Güldemann 2016 for such a view). Hence, it will be misleading to consider the LE morpheme in copular clauses as a focus marker (Fominyam 2012) because by so doing we will be deliberately ignoring the role it plays with the pre-copular NP. Besides, it has been long observed that in copular clauses, particularly specificational clauses, the postcopular NP is ‘generally’ interpreted as focus (Higgins 1979; Declerck 1988; Mikkelsen 2005, among others). The general question then is: why will the complement of the copular clause receive a focus interpretation in the first place. The following quotation from Heycock (2012:218) suggests that this is just a normal phenomenon.

The same crucial question is left unanswered as was left unanswered in Heycock and Kroch (2002): why, given the generally free focus assignment in English, does focus have to be on the postcopular phrase at all? This may be the default placement of stress, but the peculiarity of these sentences is precisely the fact that in specificational sentences this placement of focus is not only “default” or “typical”, but required.

If it is the case that the complement of the LE morpheme is inherently ‘focus’, it will suffice to consider LE in copular clauses as a kind of topic-focus ‘partitioner’. Such a partitioning role is not restricted to copular clauses as the next section will show.

5.3 The topic-focus partitioned construction

Fominyam (2018) shows that subject inversion in Awing differs, amongst other things, from inversion in Eastern Bantu in that the object in Awing normally remains in a postverbal position. However, just like in most Bantu languages (Marten & van der Wal 2014), inverting

the position of the subject and the verb (i.e., VS) in Awing is to obtain either subject or sentence focus (45b); (45a) is the canonical SVO sentence. As I already mentioned, whenever the sentence is realized with a lexical verb the LE morpheme functions as an exhaustive operator; we will not get into the details on the exhaustivity of the LE morpheme for now (see chapter 7 and Fominyam & Šimík 2017). The aim here is to show that when a postverbal phrase shows up in a position preceding the LE morpheme, there is a clear topic-focus partition. This can be seen with postverbal subject constructions that have either the object or both the object and the adjunct(s) in sentence-initial position, as in (45c) and (45d), respectively.

- (45) a. Tsefor a pe' m-fé ηgəsájó mbo Ayafor məsânə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-give maize to Ayafor morning
 'Tsefor gave maize to Ayafor in the morning'
- b. ló pe' m-fé Tsefor m-fé ηgəsájó mbo Ayafor məsânə
 Exh P1 N-give Tsefor N-give maize to Ayafor morning
 'It is Tsefor who gave maize to Ayafor in the morning'
- c. ηgəsáj(*ó) ló pe' m-fé Tsefor mbo Ayafor məsânə
 maize Exh P1 N-give Tsefor to Ayafor morning
 'It is Tsefor who gave the maize to Ayafor in the morning'
- d. ηgəsájó mbo Ayafor (məsân(*ə)) ló pe' m-fé Tsefor
 maize to Ayafor morning Exh P1 N-give Tsefor
 'It is Tsefor who gave maize to Ayafor in the morning'

Notice that the verb is doubled in (45b) V-S-*(V)-O but not in (45c) and (45d): whenever the direct object is in the postverbal position, the verb must be doubled for some syntactic reasons (see Fominyam 2018). Phonologically (apart from proper names that cannot be truncated, cf. chapter 4 § 3), elements that immediately precede the LE morpheme are either truncated or have their final schwa omitted, as can be seen with the object and the adjunct in (45c) and (45d), respectively. This is the same phenomenon we encountered with copular clauses where the NP immediately preceding LE either gets its final schwa deleted or is followed by a pause. As already noted in the previous sections, such a phonological alignment informs the addressee that the sentence-initial phrase is not the 'logical' subject, and should be interpreted as 'topic'. Anticipating the syntactic analysis to be developed in the following section, one can question whether such a topical element is in the same clause with the rest of the

utterance. It will be argued that phrases that immediately precede the LE morpheme and are interpreted as topics sit in a higher position. However, it cannot be maintained that generally truncation or the deletion of the final segment/vowel of elements immediately preceding the LE morpheme is an indication that such elements are not in the same clause with the LE morpheme or the rest of the material in the sentence. For example, consider (46b) below from a background-focus perspective.

- (46) a. Alombah a pe' ŋ-ghɛnɔ̃ məteenɔ̃/*mətá nɔ̃ ndzô məsâñɔ̃
 Alombah SM P1 N-go market with beans morning
 'Alombah went to the market with beans in the morning'
- b. Alombah a pe' ŋ-ghɛnɔ̃ mətá/*məteenɔ̃ lɔ̃ nɔ̃ ŋgəsáŋɔ̃ məsâñɔ̃
 Alombah SM P1 N-go market Exh with maize morning
 'It is with maize that Alombah went to the market in the morning'

In (46b), the truncated object, including all material preceding it and the time adjunct which occurs after the focalized PP 'with maize', are given/background information. It is implausible to think that part of the background information, namely all of the material preceding the focalized phrase, is in one clause, while the other part, that is, the time adjunct, is in another clause. This means that the SVO example in (46) differs from the topic-focus partitioned constructions in (45c) and (45d) and that phonological deletion does not generally indicate a topic-focus partition. In other words, morpho-phonological alignment in Awing may not always be an indication of syntactic boundaries. Also, the topic-focus partition should not be understood as a scenario whereby all and only given/topical information occurs to the left of the LE morpheme while all and only 'new'/focal information occur to its right. The partitioning we are referring to here is achieved by having (a) phrase(s) that immediately precede(s) the LE morpheme interpreted as topic, and another constituent(s) occurring as the complement of LE interpreted as focus. This kind of partitioning is not restricted to transitive verbs.

5.3.1 *A broader picture on the topic-focus partition*

Inverting the object and the subject with the use of the LE morpheme can also be achieved with intransitive verbs that are transitivized via the addition of locative arguments. Some examples are provided below. The constructions in (47a) through (51a) illustrate different verb types in canonical SVO orders and the(ir) inverted counterparts are provided in (47b) through (51b). As expected, the elements preceding the LE morpheme are truncated, e.g.,

māteená ‘market’ in (47a) becomes *māta* ‘market’ in (47b) and the demonstrative pronoun *sānê* ‘this’ in (48a) has to be realized as *sə* ‘this’ in (48b). When the element immediately preceding LE cannot be truncated, it will be followed by a pause, as shown in (49). The S-V-O (a) examples serve as contexts by providing the basic information and the (b) O-LE-V-S structures topicalize the objects while the subjects are simultaneously in focus.

- (47) a. Alombah (a) kɔ’ê (á) māteená
 Alombah SM arrive in market
 ‘Alombah has reached the market’
- b. (á) mətá (*é) lɔ́ (*é) kɔ’ê Tsefor
 ? market SM Exh SM arrive Tsefor
 ‘It is Tsefor who has reached the market’
Lit: ‘(Talking about) the market, it is Tsefor who has reached there’

- (48) a. Tsefor tɔ́- n-tsé’é ndé sənê
 Tsefor PROG N-admire house this
 ‘Tsefor admires this house’
- b. á ndé sə, lɔ́ tɔ́- tsé’é Alombah
 ? house this Exh PROG admire Alombah
 ‘It is Alombah who admires this house’
Lit: ‘(Talking about) this house, it is Alombah who admires it’

- (49) a. ŋgá’ wə ghɔdkê móo nê
 gun that frighten child this
 ‘That gun frightened this child’
- b. á móo nê, lɔ́ ghɔdkê nəfəŋé
 ? child this Exh frighten thunder
 ‘It is thunder that frightened this child’
Lit: (As for) this child, it is thunder that frightened her’

- (50) a. alóŋə zəə kɔ’ê mbo Ayafor
 dress that fit to Ayafor
 ‘That (traditional) dress fits Ayafor’

- b. á mbo Ayafor ló kɔ'ê alónə zənê
 ? to Ayafor Exh fit dress this
 'It is this dress that fits Ayafor' (not that one)
Lit: (As for) Ayafor, it is this (one) dress that fits him'

- (51) a. atíə (ə) nə- ɲ-gwũə alaŋə
 tree SM P2 N-fall road
 'A tree fell on the road.'
- b. álaŋ ló nə- ɲ-gwũə ɲgɔ'ê
 road Exh P2 N-fall stone
 'It is a stone that fell on the road'
Lit: '(Talking about) the road, it is a stone that fell there'

Notice that the verbs in (48) and (49) are not actually intransitive verbs; if for example the pre-LE NPs in (48b) and (49b) were in a postverbal position, the verbs in these examples will be obligatorily doubled, analogous to transitive verbs like that in (45b). These examples are included here because they behave to an extent like intransitive verbs. Also observe that unlike in transitive clauses, the pre-LE NPs, precisely those that begin with consonants, are preceded by a certain *á* morpheme. As exemplified in (47b), the optionality of this morpheme is questionable in such sentences: while some speakers accept the sentence without it, the majority of speakers, including my own intuition, consider these constructions mildly ungrammatical without this initial *á* morpheme. I will not attempt at this moment any formal definition for this morpheme. However, the morpheme seems to correspond to the sentence-initial *á* in Limbum (Grassfields Bantu), which Driemel et al. (2017) claim to introduce an existential presupposition. Moreover, once more exemplified in (47b), note that the SM generally cannot be used in postverbal constructions; it does not matter whether the construction is with a transitive or intransitive verb. This too will be clarified in the following section.

Beginning with the idea that the LE morpheme can function as a subject-predicate and a topic-focus mediator in copular clauses, we concluded that depending on its position, its role is mainly to differentiate a mere 'subject' from a topical 'subject'. As such, the notion of predicate and focus was subsumed to just focus, arguing that such a focus in copular clauses is a natural phenomenon and that the LE morpheme neither contributes in achieving nor in its

interpretation. The implicature was that a copular clause basically has a subject-focus or topic-focus structure and that the LE morpheme's role is to mediate these functions. This section has introduced non-copular object/adjunct—verb orders where the topic-focus role is even more evident. This latter construction type is what has been termed the topic-focus partitioned construction. Despite the fact that the LE morpheme does not have the same semantic role in copular and non-copular clauses, the next and final section will show that the syntax of these constructions can be harmonised.

5.4 The syntax of copular clauses and the topic-focus partitioned constructions

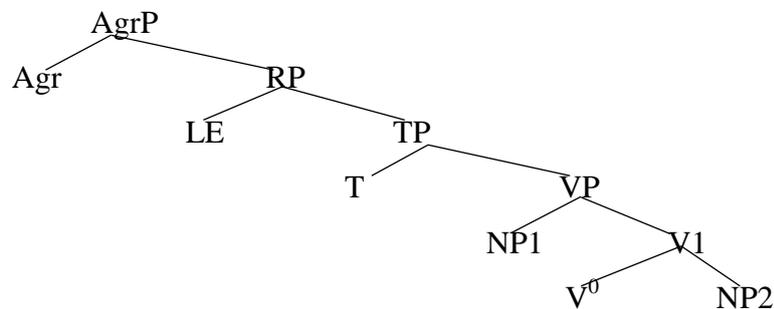
Hitherto, we have been mostly referring to the NP preceding the LE morpheme and the copular—that is, in cases where the latter is also used, as the 'subject'. In order to capture the syntactic mechanism involved in copular and so-called topic-focus constellations, let us briefly keep aside the term 'subject' (until we can formally differentiate the subject in such clauses) and refer to the phrase preceding the LE morpheme (and the copular verb) as NP1 and that following it as NP2. Also, having shown in the preceding section that the LE morpheme in copular clauses is semantically different from constructions having a lexical verb, it is important to give it a label at this point. Let us follow den Dikken (2006) and call the LE morpheme in copular clauses a Relator. The Relator will be primarily construed as “a general purpose connective between predicates and their subjects, not a particular functional or lexical category...” den Dikken (2006:29).

I should mention, though, that even if the Relator terminology may end up capturing the discussion in a better way, I am by no means pursuing the general analysis/claims in den Dikken (2006) which appears to me to waive, in some cases, basic syntactic configurations by simply replacing them with the Relator mechanism. For instance, one main difference between the path being pursued here and den Dikken's Relator is that while den Dikken's Relator can be realized by a variety of categories—prepositions, adverbials, tense, the (light) verb, topics and as an empty category in some instances—the LE morpheme as a Relator exhibits a single phonological form: *lə*. The main advantage of the Relator terminology is that apart from mediating a subject/topic or predicate/focus division in copular clauses, the LE morpheme also serves the same kind of partitioning role beyond copular clauses. Moreover, adopting the Relator projection can 'structurally assimilate predication and coordination' where there is a fundamental parallelism in that both configurations exhibit a non-directionality pattern (den Dikken 2006:55). We know already that the LE morpheme can be

used as a kind of (adversative) conjunction in Awing. More intriguing is the fact that the LE morpheme has the capacity to switch the positions of NP1 and NP2 in copular clauses and also beyond, e.g., when postverbal material(s) precede the subject to derive the topic-focus mapping. Hence, the Le morpheme will be syntactically represented as a R(elator) P(hrase) (RP) in the rest of this chapter.

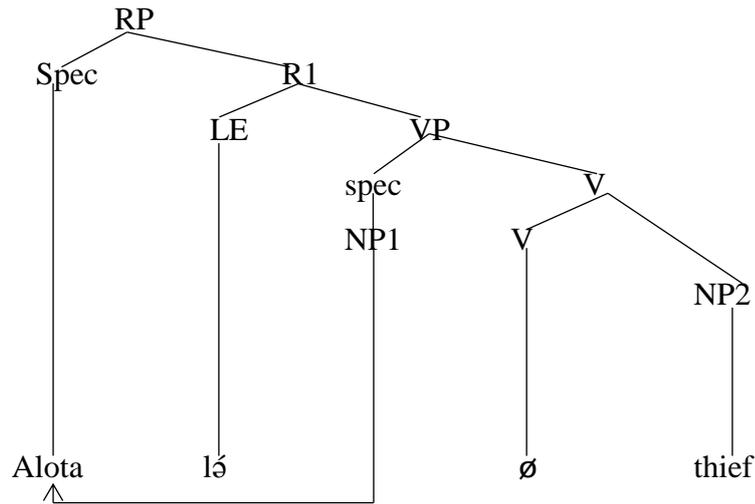
Now, assuming that the subject of the clause is base generated in the specifier position of the verb following the predicate internal subject hypothesis (and keeping aside the distinction between vP or VP), the skeletal structure of copular clauses will look like (52) below, where both NPs occur after the relator projection headed by the LE morpheme.

(52)

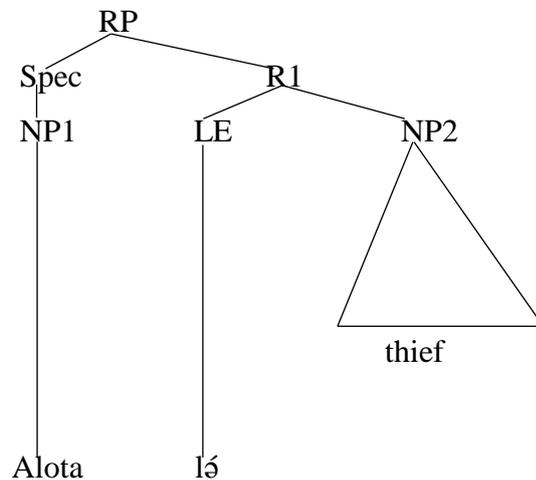


If the copular clause actually has the structure in (52), then the only difference between the copular clause and a canonical SVO sentence is the presence of the Relator Phrase (RP). Thus, in order to better understand what is going on in copular clauses, there are some basic assumptions about the Awing clause structure that need to be clarified before we proceed. These will concern the position of the LE morpheme and the use of the agreement head. The first point to note is that although LE seems to be relatively mobile in both copular and other clause types, it will be argued (in line with Fominyam & Šimík 2017) that it has a fixed position, that is, following the Agr. slot in a position where it precedes the tense marker, as captured in (52) above. Agreement: whether or not the SM is present will have direct consequences on the position of the verb's external argument (i.e., the subject) (Fominyam & Šimík 2017, Fominyam 2018, Fominyam & Georgi 2021). We will return to agreement in a while. With this in mind, copular clauses that are void of the T-slot with null copular verbs (e.g., *Alota ló thief*) can either be represented as in (53a) or in (53b).

(53) a.



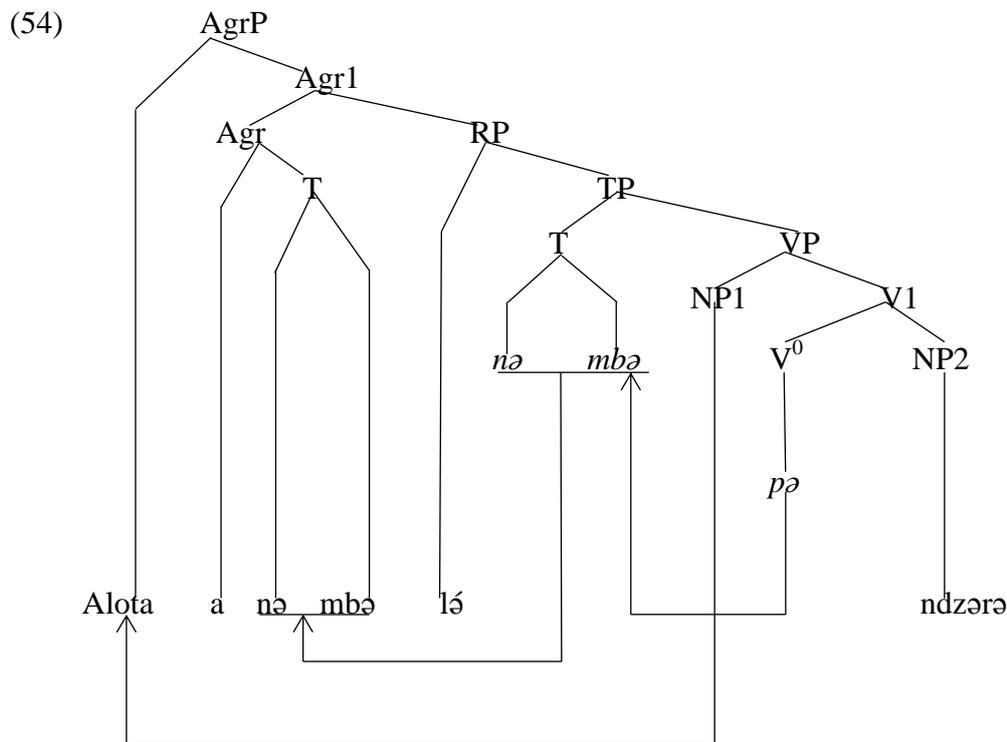
b.



The scenario in (53) show that either NP1 is scrambled to, or it is base generated in, SpecRP. Both scenarios could be possible. The only difference is that one will have to explain what triggers the movement in (53a), if the Agr. head (i.e., the SM) cannot be used in such clauses and agreement is claimed to be responsible for subject movement in Awing (Fominyam 2018). Adopting the scenario in (53b), where NP1 is generated in the specifier of the RP, one will have to speculate that in such clauses syntax is ‘freed’ from any kind of duty and all that matters is the mediation between NP1 (the subject/topic) and NP2 (the predicate/focus). In effect, Mikkelsen (2006:8) suggests that this latter scenario is possible when she questions why (specificational) copular clauses are not morpho-syntactically marked, and provides the following answers: a) “The copula does not carry any theta roles—nobody is doing anything to anyone; b) Hence, syntax is relieved of its normal argument-structure-expressing duties, and free to express information structure without morpho-syntactic marking”. This could be one way of seeing it: Recall that LE is not the copular and that its function seems to be more

IS inclined. It therefore constitutes a perfect candidate to relieve syntax from its argument-structure duty. That could also explain why the SM is banned in examples like (53), that is, if the SM is responsible for triggering the subject from Spec-vP to Spec-AgrP in Awing (Fominyam 2018).

However, that cannot be the whole story: We know that the SM can be used in copular clauses. Moreover, in some instances where the SM is banned, for example when the copular verb is doubled in a VSVO construction (e.g., *LE P2 be Tsefor be thief*—‘It is Tsefor who was the thief’), one could argue, in line with Fominyam (2018), that the copular verb is doubled for the same reason as in non-copular clauses (i.e., Case licensing). Hence, even though I will adhere to the representation in (53b), where NP1 is base generated in a higher position (for reasons that will become obvious in a while), it will be maintained that syntax performs the same role in the same way in both copular and non-copular clauses in Awing. As such, when the SM is realized the structure will look like (54) below.

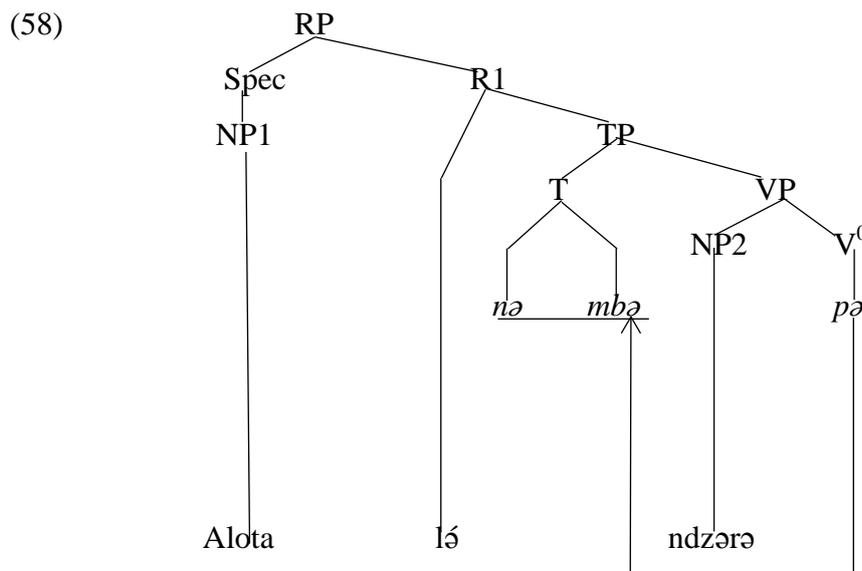


The diagram in (54) shows that the (copular) verb moves to ‘collect’ all of its prefixes (i.e., Asp-, Neg- T-) all the way to the topmost which is the SM. Such a movement is achieved by right-adjoining to the higher heads. Crucially, this movement skips the LE particle, perhaps because it is not an affix (see Bayirli 2017) or it lacks the syntactic features to attract the verb

obligatorily absent, in which case the subject becomes NP2: the subject is actually trapped in its base generated position (Fominyam 2018).

- (57) a. ηγə'ə yíwə, (*pó/ə) lə́ (*ə/pó) nə m-bə pə-əlím pîə
 problem DEF SM LE SM P2 N-be PL-siblings his
 'The problem (it) was his siblings'
- b. pə-əlím pîə, (*pó/ə) lə́ (*pó/ə) nə m-bə ηγə'ə yíwə
 PL-siblings his SM LE SM P2 N-be problem DEF
 'His siblings (they) were the problem'

Thus, if the subject is not preverbal, Agr must not be there, indicating that the projection is not there in the first place, that the verb cannot move there and therefore follows LE. This is precisely what happens in the constructions in (57); and (58) below.



Given that NP2 is the actual subject in (58)—because such clauses cannot host the Agr projection which is responsible for subject movement—NP1 will be base generated in a higher position. Recall that in examples like (58) NP1 has a topic status. I should also note that such a topic might not necessarily be in SpecRP, as depicted in (58) above. That should not constitute a burden. What might be important is to show via movement test that the topic does not actually originate from within the clause. Unfortunately, it is difficult to apply standard movement tests in copular clauses. Nonetheless, observe that when the direct object of the SVO construction in (59) occurs in sentence-initial position—that is, in the O-LE-V-S construction in (59b)—the pronoun can no longer be bound with the postverbal subject. This

is an indication that it did not originate within the lower clause and never had a binding relation with the lower subject in the first place. Also, the ungrammaticality of (60b) further shows that indefinite expressions cannot be hosted in the position immediately preceding the LE morpheme because such a position is topical and indefinite NP are not good candidates for topical interpretations.

- (59) a. Alombah_i a kɔnɔ̃ ngwe jiə_{i/y}.
 Alombah SM hit wife his
 ‘Alombah has hit his wife’
- b. a ngwe ji_{*i/y} lɔ̃ kɔŋ Alombah_i
 ? wife his LE hit Alombah
 Lit: ‘As for his wife, it is Alombah who hit her’
- (60) a. Alombah a pe’ n-dʒunə jú-yitsǎ
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy thing-IND
 ‘Alombah bought something’
- b. *a jú-yitsǎ lɔ̃ pe’ n-dʒu Alombah
 ? thing-IND LE P1 N-buy Alombah
 Int: ‘Alombah bought something’

From a phonological view, we have seen that O-LE-V-S constructions and copular clauses are phrased in the same way; that is, the pre-LE element is phrased separately. Pragmatically, it has also been suggested that the NP immediately preceding the LE morpheme is, say, an ‘aboutness topic’. These are all indications that the NP which immediately precedes the LE morpheme is base generated out of the lower clause in both copular and so-called topic-focus partitioned constructions. Let us now conclude with pronouns. Recall that while personal pronouns can be used as subjects in copular clauses when the LE morpheme occurs after the copular verb, see examples (61a) and (61c), these pronouns are not allowed in such positions when the LE morpheme precedes the copular verb and the T-slot: (61b) and (61d).

- (61) a. maŋ/a/o nə m-bə lɔ̃ ndzərə
 I/she/you P2 N-be LE thief
 ‘I/she/you was/were a thief’
- b. *maŋ/a/o lɔ̃ nə m-bə ndzərə
 I/she/you LE P2 N-be thief

Int: 'I/she/you was/were a thief'

- c. pɛn /pó/pí nə m-bó ló pə-zərə
we/they/you P2 N-be LE PL-thief
'We/they/you(plural) were thieves'

- d. *pɛn /pó/pí ló nə m-bə pə-zərə
we/they/you LE P2 N-be PL-thief
Int: 'We/they/you(plural) were thieves'

The difference between examples (61a) and (61c) on the one hand, and examples (61b) and (61d) on the other hand, is that while the former are the actual subjects of such clauses, the latter are not. This suggests that pronouns cannot assume the topic status that elements immediately preceding the LE morpheme have. Such a conclusion is however equivocal since we know from section 5.2.1 (example (25)) that pronouns in Awing can be topicalized viz. relative clauses. Another way of looking at this would be to assume that the pronouns in (61b) and (61d) are inverted predicates. On this point, consider the difference between (62) and (63) below.

- (62) a. Alombah (a) nə m-bə ló ndzərə
Alombah SM P2 N-be LE thief
'Alombah was a thief'

- b. ndzərə (ə) nə- m-bə ló Alombah
thief SM P2 N-be LE Alombah
'The thief was Alombah'

- (63) a. maŋ/a/o nə- m-bə ló ndzərə
I/she/you P2 N-be LE thief
'I/she/you was/were a thief'

- b. ?ndzərə nə- m-bə ló maŋ/yó/gho
thief P2 N-be LE I/him/you
Int: 'The thief was I/she/you'

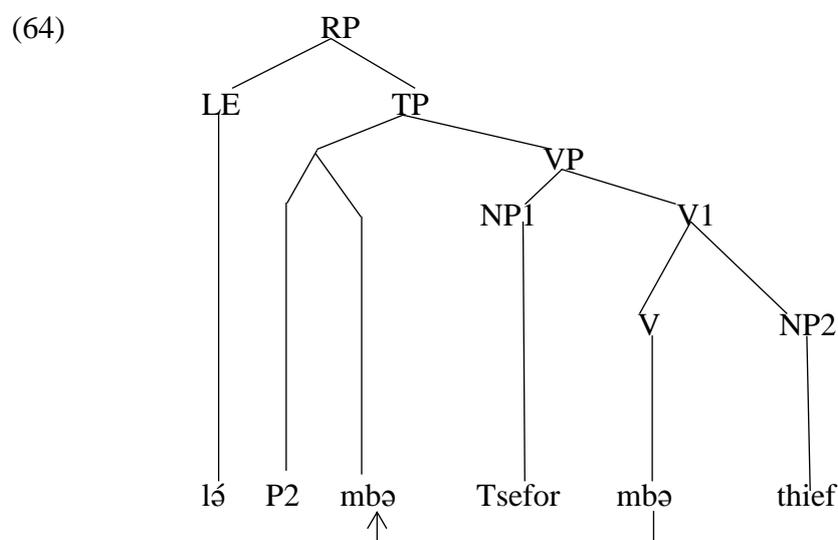
- c. pɛn /pó/pí nə m-bó ló pə-zərə
we/they/you P2 N-be LE PL-thief
'We/they/you(plural) were thieves'

- d. *pə-zərə nə m-bé lé pɛn /pó/pí
 PL-thief P2 N-be LE we/they/you
 Int: ‘The thieves were we/they/you(plural)’

Notice that while it is possible to invert the NPs in (62), such a scenario is not possible with the plural forms of the pronouns (63d). Judgements with the singular forms vary: to some speakers, including my own intuition, it is possible to have these forms as predicates, but other speakers consider (63b) an ‘immature way of communicating’. So, generally speaking, using pronouns as predicates of copular clauses in Awing constitute a problem. Now recall that the LE-Tense-V order indicates that the subject is in a post-copular position and the Tense-V-LE order shows that the subject is in a pre-copular position. As such, the initial pronouns would have to be something other than the subject, presumably predicates, and since they do not normally function as predicates in the first place (see, e.g., Coppock & Beaver 2015 for more on this), inverting them will not fix the problem in Awing. The attentive reader might have noticed that there is no SM doubling pronominal NP subjects in Awing. A reasonable query will be: if the Agr head is responsible for subject movement and it cannot show up in examples like (63a) and (63d), how do the pronominal subject NPs manage to get in such positions? I will pursue the argument in Fominyam (2018), namely that the phonological omission of the SM in examples like those in (63) does not imply total absence in such constructions. The assumption is that the Agr head is present in (63a) and (63d), just that it will be ‘semantically and phonologically assimilated’ by such categories; perhaps because it is ambiguous with the 3rd person pronoun, or it was actually derived from it. In any case, there is a tight semantic and phonological relationship between the SM and the 3rd person subject pronoun that apparently over-generates with other subject pronouns.

Summarising: It has been argued that the Awing copular clause has two information status: topic-focus and subject-focus. We have seen that when the LE morpheme occurs after the T-slot and the copular verb, the subject of the copular clause is in a pre-copular position. On the other hand, when the LE morpheme shows up preceding the T-slot and the copular, the subject is in a lower position—actually trapped in Spec VP. These different positions of the subject is mediated by the Agr head; hence, the LE morpheme has a fixed position in the Awing clause structure. In copular clauses and the so-called topic-focus partitioned constructions, LE or the Relator permits the alternation of post-verbal/copula material to occur in a higher position which has been simplistically considered as SpecRP. The syntactic analysis of copular clauses and the O-V-S topic-focus clauses here supports the conclusion

reached in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) and Fominyam (2018), namely that the subject and the LE morpheme cannot occur simultaneously on the same side of the main verb, specifically in the preverbal position. It has been argued that parallel to canonical SVO sentences, the verb moves upward right, adjoining to the T-slot and finally to the Agr head. When agreement morphology is absent, the subject is trapped in SpecVP and a topical element can be base-generated in a higher position. We have also seen that when the copular clause is void of the Agr head causing the subject to remain in SpecVP, the object can also remain in a postverbal position. In such a scenario, the copular verb is doubled, and the higher copy moves and right adjoins to the T-slot, as shown in (64).



In Fominyam (2018), I argue that verb doubling in postverbal constructions is due to Case assignment. The argument is that since the SM, which is also a Case assigner, cannot be used in constructions like that in (64), the verb will have to move to a position where it c-commands the subject and acts as a Case assigner and the lower copy takes care of the verb's internal argument's Case. Crucially, the lower copy has to be phonologically overt indicating that it is the same verb assigning both nominative and accusative Cases (see Fominyam 2018 for more details).

5.5 Summary

The LE morpheme has been presented in its various contexts in this chapter. Concentrating on the use of this word in copular clauses, I argue that although it can serve as a linker it is not the actual copular verb in this language and that the *pə* morpheme is. We have also spent a considerable amount of time investigating the semantic contribution of the LE morpheme in copular clauses and came to the conclusion that the focus interpretation in copular clauses is a

‘natural’ phenomenon. We went further to show that the LE morpheme is void of any focus ingredient (i.e., contrastive or exhaustive) in copular clauses. Its role, adopting den Dikken’s (2006) terminology, has been summarized as that of a ‘Relator’: mediating subject-focus versus topic-focus interpretations. Such a role, we have seen, extends to non-copular clauses in so-called ‘topic-focus partitioned constructions’. Distinguishing the exact role of the LE morpheme in Awing can reinvigorate the discussion across Bantu which often consider elements like the LE particle as either copulas that have become focus markers (e.g., Zerbian 2006) or focus markers that have become copulas (see, e.g., McWhorter 1994 for such a position on Swahili). The Awing data teaches us that the actual copular verb does exist just that it is absent in the present tense, a pattern that has already been observed in (non)-related languages like Kikuyu Schwarz (2007), Polish and Czech: Tajsner (2018).

Apart from the copular clause, it is largely an open question why the LE morpheme, which is argued to be a mere ‘Relator’ in copular clauses, get ‘drafted’ for information structural purposes, where it gain a stronger semantics—e.g., exhaustiveness (Fominyam & Šimík 2017). A related query would be whether we are actually dealing with the same morpheme or different morphemes having the same phonological form in the various examples provided in the beginning of this chapter. Answers to such queries will largely depend on the theoretical platform the researcher adheres to. For example, given that the LE morpheme appears to be contrastive in most of its usage, it could be argued that it is the same morpheme functioning as a contrastive/exhaustive focus operator and as a contrastive topic particle, since both can be reanalysed as contrastive foci (Wagner 2012). The type of ‘ambiguity’ observed for LE (focus, topic, and (arguably) predication) is not an exception to Awing. For instance Hartmann & Zimmermann (2007) show that the morpheme *'nee/cee'* functions both as an exhaustive focus marker with argument focus and as a copula in copular clauses in Hausa. Also, in Vietnamese (see, e.g., Fominyam & Tran 2019) and some Slavic languages, one and the same morphological device can have two information structural functions (i.e., contrastive focus marking vs. contrastive topic marking) and even be used in predications—see e.g., Talsner (2018) on Polish. Thus, solutions for such data in Awing may be applicable in these languages too. However, since this work does not aim to provide an analysis capturing the use of the LE morpheme in all contexts, we will leave such queries for another time. The next chapter will focus on *wh*-constructions in Awing, where among other things the exact role of the LE morpheme with *wh*-phrases will be provided.

Chapter 6

Wh-constructions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with interrogative constructions in Awing that are formed with the use of interrogative phrases equivalent to *wh*-words in English. The chapter begins in a descriptive style and presents general properties of subject and non-subject *wh*-questions in section 6.2. Among other things, the section discusses multiple *wh*-questions; show that *wh*-phrases in Awing cannot be used in non-interrogative contexts and how negation is realized with content questions. It is also shown in section 6.2 that *wh*-phrases can be realized with or without the LE morpheme. Section 6.3 then concentrates on the semantic component of the LE morpheme with *wh*-phrases. The section begins by showing the difference between the LE morpheme and the *tsɔ'ə* 'only' morpheme. I argue that both morphemes encode exhaustivity but they differ in that while the latter's exhaustivity is asserted, LE's exhaustivity is presupposed. With *wh*-phrases, and basing on Hamblin (1973) and Rooth's (1985) underspecified semantic notion of alternative focus, I maintain that LE's role in *wh*-questions is not to mark/encode focus. Rather, among other things, LE is considered a focus-sensitive operator with semantic import that operates on the focus alternatives by presupposing an exhaustive answer. Section 6.4 takes on an (other) observation in 6.2, namely that the subject marker (SM) cannot be used with an in-situ *wh*-subject. Using other non-referential (or non-specific) categories, it is argued (in line with Fominyam and Georgi (2021)) that the non-availability of the SM with a bare *wh*-subject is due to feature mismatch between *wh*-phrases and a subject NPs. Section 6.5 engages the syntax of *wh*-constructions in Awing and among other things, indicates the position of the LE morpheme and consequences of such a position in multiple *wh*-questions. Then section 6.6 takes on ex-situ *wh*-phrases. The section presents morpho-syntactic, semantic and phonological properties attesting that ex-situ *wh*/focused phrases are derived via a non-movement relation. Section 6.7 concludes the chapter.

Given that content questions in Awing express, to a greater extent, the same notion as their English counterparts, we will follow the tradition and refer to such phrases as wh-phrases in Awing. The Awing wh-phrases and the corresponding English wh-words are listed in (1) below.

(1)	Awing	corresponding to	English
Arguments:	əwə		‘who’
	akó		‘what’
Referential adjuncts:	əfó		‘where’
	wəónó		‘which’
	əghâ-akó		‘when’
	time-what		
Non-referential adjuncts:	ńtê-akó		‘why’
	because-what		
	ólé		‘how’

The initial vowels are perceived only when such expressions occur in isolation. Hence, as I have done in former works, they are not included in the examples.²⁴

6.2 Syntactic properties of wh-constructions

This section presents wh-constructions and the morpho-syntactic properties that characterise such constructions in Awing.

6.2.1 General properties of non-subject wh-questions

In Awing, as it is the case in most Bantu languages (see, e.g., Zentz 2016 for an overview), wh-phrases can occur in the position in which the noun phrase (NP) that corresponds to the

²⁴ Also observe that some of the Awing wh-phrases are composed of different segmental elements. The adjunct ‘when’ is a combination of an existential expression (referring to time in general) and the wh-object ‘what’. The non-referential adjunct *ńtê-aké* ‘why’, is composed of the word ‘because’ and the wh-expression ‘what’. The construction below exemplifies the use of *ńtê* ‘because’ in another context.

(i) m̀ ghénə ńtê (ɲgá) m̀ kóɲə
 I go because that I love
 ‘I am leaving because I wish to’

Thus: ‘why’ can be literally understood as ‘because what?’

wh-phrase will normally occur in declarative sentences, i.e., in-situ. In addition, both subject and non-subject wh-phrases can occur in sentence-initial position in what appears to be an English cleft-like construction. This latter construction type will be referred to as ex-situ wh-phrases. As mentioned in the previous chapters, wh-phrase can show up with the *lá* morpheme. This morpheme will be labelled as LE until its role with wh-phrases is identified in section 6.3. While ex-situ wh-phrases (both subject and non-subjects) obligatorily occur with the *lá* morpheme, the use of the *lá* morpheme with in-situ non-subject wh-phrases is optional; the *lá* morpheme cannot be used with in-situ subject wh-phrases, this will be discussed in the following section. Examples (2) through (4) illustrate the various positions that non-subject wh-phrase can be realized in Awing.

- (2) a. Ngwe (a) nə n-dʒunə ŋgəsáŋǎ
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy maize
 ‘Ngwe bought maize’ (neutral)
- b. Ngwe (a) nə n-dʒunə kǎ
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy what
 ‘What did Ngwe buy?’
- c. Ngwe (a) nə n-dʒu lá kǎ
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy LE what
 ‘What did Ngwe buy?’
- d. *(lá) kǎ *(pá’a) Ngwe (a) nə n-dʒúnǎ
 LE what that Ngwe SM P2 N-buy
 ‘What did Ngwe buy?’

See that just like in declarative SVO sentences (2a), the SM is optional in non-subject wh-constructions. Also, the preceding chapters showed that phrases that immediately precede the LE morpheme are either truncated, or they lose their final schwa. Such a phenomenon was described in chapter 4 as (exhaustive) focus alignment. Apart from this focus alignment exhibited in (2c) above, wh-constructions in Awing demonstrate other morpho-phonological patterns that can be found in other (non)-related languages. For example the verb in (2d) has a high-high (HH) tonal pattern, instead of the low-low (LL), observable in (2b). This appears to be a widespread phenomenon across Niger-Congo (see in particular Schachter & Fromkin 1968; Korsah & Murphy 2019; Amaechi 2020). We will return to this in section 6.5.3, where it will be shown that the notion of tonal modification in content questions in Awing differs

from languages like Asanti Twi and Igbo in that the modification does not apply to matrix verbs in Awing. Concentrating on the morpho-syntactic properties of these constructions, note that when a *wh*-phrase is in sentence-initial position, the LE morpheme and (what is simplistically consider for now as) the complementizer *pá'a* ‘that’ cannot be omitted (2d).

The following examples illustrate that the different question forming strategies are not only available for direct objects, but also other kinds of non-subjects. While example (3) exemplifies for (both animate and inanimate) indirect objects, example (4) shows the same pattern with a temporal adjunct. The in-situ *wh*-phrases in (3a), (3c) and (4a) optionally take the LE morpheme. Examples (3b), (3d) and (4b) are the ex-situ counterparts.

- (3) a. Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsáj(é) (lɔ́) mbo wó á məsânə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy maize LE to who in morning
 ‘Who did Ngwe sell maize to in the morning?’
- b. lɔ́ mbo wə pá'a Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsájé á məsânə
 LE to who that Ngwe SM P2 N-sell maize in morning
 ‘Who did Ngwe sell maize to in the morning?’
- c. Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsáj(é) (lɔ́) məm kó (á məsânə)
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy maize LE in what in morning
 ‘What did Ngwe sell maize in (in the morning)?’
- d. lɔ́ məm kó pá'a Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsájé (á məsânə)
 LE in what that Ngwe SM P2 N-sell maize in morning
 ‘What did Ngwe sell maize in (in the morning)?’
- (4) a. Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsájé mbo Tsefor (lɔ́) ghâ-kə
 Ngwe SM P2 N-sell maize to Tsefor LE when
 ‘When did Ngwe sell maize to Tsefor?’
- b. lɔ́ ghâ-kə pá'a Ngwe a nə m-finê ɲgəsájé mbo Tsefor
 LE when that Ngwe SM P2 N-sell maize to Tsefor
 ‘When did Ngwe sell maize to Tsefor?’

6.2.1.1 *Non-subject wh-fronting asymmetry in Awing*

Unlike (in)direct objects and the temporal adjunct ‘when’, other modifying adjuncts expressing location: ‘where’ (5); manner: ‘how’ (6) and rationale: ‘why’ (7) seem to behave

differently: while it is also fine to have this latter category in-situ with or without the LE morpheme (see examples (5a), (6a) and (7a)), having them in sentence-initial position degrades the constructions, as indicated with the question signs in (5b), (6b), and (7b).

- (5) a. Ngwe a nə n-dzunə ηgəsáj(ə) (lǎ) fó
 Ngwe SM P2 N-buy maize LE where
 ‘Where did Ngwe buy maize?’
- b. ?lǎ fó pá’a Ngwe a nə n-dzunə ηgəsájə
 LE where that Ngwe SM P2 N-buy maize
 ‘Where did Ngwe buy maize?’
- (6) a. ndzǎ yíwə a nə n-dzwítə Tsefor (lǎ) lé
 thief DEF SM P2 N-kill Tsefor LE how
 ‘How did the thief kill Tsefor?’
- b. ?lǎ lé pá’a ndzǎ yíwə a nə n-dzwítə Tsefor
 LE how that thief DEF SM P2 N-kill Tsefor
 ‘How did the thief kill Tsefor?’
- (7) a. Aghetse a nə n-shumə Tsefor (lǎ) ítê-akó
 Aghetse SM P2 N-beat Tsefor LE why
 ‘Why did Aghetse beat Tsefor?’
- b. ?lǎ ítê-akó pá’a Aghetse a nə m-shumə Tsefor
 LE why that Aghetse SM P2 N-beat Tsefor
 ‘Why did Aghetse beat Tsefor?’

The reason why this category of adjuncts behaves differently is not clear. The judgement is controversial, though: while some speakers simply stated that these sentences are ungrammatical, some said they are just weird and yet to others (including my own intuition), they can be used in contexts like when the speaker is angry or surprised—the kind of contexts that Downing & Pompino-Marschall (2013:666) consider as ‘emphatic paralinguistic’ that come into play optionally in particular focus contexts.²⁵ However, Keupdjio (2020) shows

²⁵ It might be relevant to also note that such paralinguistic conditions can contribute in (wh)-focus fronting, generally. For example consider the dialogue below:

- (ii) a. Tsefor a pe’ n-dzunə ká
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy what

that in (Grassfields) Medumba, such *wh*-phrases, including the temporal adjunct ‘when’, cannot be used in sentence-initial position. He argues that the sentence-initial position in Medumba has an exhaustive operator which excludes such function denoting categories. Assuming Awing is same as Medumba, it is unclear why the temporal adjunct ‘when’ in Awing which is also a functional and not an individual denoting element has no issues occurring in the *ex-situ* position. Besides, exhaustiveness is viewed as a morphological exponent in Awing (Fominyam & Šimík 2017), and not a syntactic position. It should be noted, however, that such an asymmetry is widespread in (West) African languages and it appears that the manner ‘how’ and rationale ‘why’ adjuncts display the *ex-situ* ban more than other postverbal categories, see, e.g., Fanselow et al. (in prep.) on Tagbana; Torrence & Kandybowicz 2015 on Krachi; Kandybowicz et al. (in prep.) on Ikpana and references cited in these works). Thus, the reason why such adjuncts are degraded in sentence-initial position in Awing will need another explanation. This might constitute an exciting research domain in Awing (and beyond), something which I leave open for future work.

-
- ‘What did Tsefor buy’
- b. a pe’ n-dzunə ɲgəsájó
SM P1 N-buy maize
‘He bought maize’
- c. a pe’ n-dzu ló ndzǒ
SM P1 N-buy LE beans
‘It is beans that he bought’ (Not maize)
- B1. a pe’ n-dzu ló ɲgəsájó
SM P1 N-buy LE maize
‘It is maize that he bought’ (Not beans)
- B2. ló ɲgəsájó pá’a a pe’ n-dzunə
LE maize that SM P1 N-buy
‘It is maize that he bought’ (Not beans)

Example (iia) poses a question and (iib) provides an answer to the question. The speaker in (iic) assumes that the answer in (ib) is not correct and uses the LE morpheme to refute the answer in (1b). Now, the speaker in (ib) wants to counteract (iic). To do so, s/he can use the same structure which (iic) uses, i.e., (iiB1) or take the focused phrase to sentence-initial position as in (iiB2). Although no study has been carried out to test which of the constructions in (iB1) and (iB2) would be used, my conjecture is that in such a scenario the majority of Awing speakers would use the (iiB2) sentence where the focused phrase is in the *ex-situ* position. In Fominyam (2012), such a move was labelled [+Semantic Strength]; which does not necessarily mean that the movement is triggered by a semantic or pragmatic feature. So, although the focus in sentence-initial position in (iiB2) does not originate from a wide focus context, the fronting may be related to Fanselow and Lenertová’s (2011:184) conclusion that *S*(ubpart) of *F*(ocus) *F*(ronting) (*SFF*) is ‘altruistic’ in the sense that it is not meant to satisfy any formal requirement of the moved phrase. The idea is that by using the sentence in (iB2), the speaker wants to indicate a sort of ‘authority’. Actually notions like: irritation, provocation, surprise or level of politeness would likely make speakers to place a *wh*-phrase or a focalized constituent in the *ex-situ* position. Such factors, however, do not count as core notions of information structure (see Chafe 1976; Krifka 2008).

We have seen that postverbal wh-phrases can be realized in three different ways: as bare wh-phrases in-situ, with the LE morpheme still in-situ, and in cleft-like constructions where the LE morpheme is obligatory. Let us now turn to wh-subject constructions.

6.2.2 *Special properties of subject wh-questions*

The subject wh-phrase can also be realized as a bare wh-phrase in-situ (8a). However, unlike non-subject wh-phrases, the LE morpheme cannot show up with the subject wh-phrase (8b). Rather, when the LE morpheme precedes the wh-subject, the latter must be followed by the complementizer *pá'a* ‘that’ (8c).

- (8) a. wə pe’ n-dʒúnə ŋgəsájó
 Who P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’
- b. *ló wə pe’ n-dʒunə ŋgəsájó
 LE who P1 N-buy maize
 Intended: ‘Who bought maize?’
- c. *(ló) wə *(pá’a) a pe’ n-dʒunə ŋgəsájó
 LE who that SM P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’

The data in (8) shows that either the wh-subject stay in-situ or it is realized in the ex-situ position. Thus, unlike non-subject wh-phrases, the wh-subject lacks the third option which is to have the LE morpheme precedes it in the in-situ position.

Moreover, another crucial observation needs to be made, namely the ‘ban’ of the subject marker (SM) when the wh-subject is in-situ and, conversely, the obligatory realization of the SM when the wh-subject is ex-situ. Consider examples (8a) and (8c) repeated in (9) below, where the use or not of the SM is indicated.

- (9) a. wə (*a) pe’ n-dʒúnə ŋgəsájó
 Who SM P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’
- b. ló wə pá’a *(a) pe’ n-dʒunə ŋgəsájó
 LE who that SM P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’

The examples in (9) shows that when a subject wh-phrase is realized in-situ in Awing the SM must be null. Conversely, an ex-situ subject wh-phrase must have the SM phonetically realized. We will return to this in section 6.5.

There is also another method used to question the subject in Awing. This is provided in (10) below where the wh-subject is sandwiched between two copies of the same verb and again the SM is banned.

- (10) ló pe' (*a) n-dzú wó (*a) n-dzúnə ŋgəsájó
 LE P1 SM N-buy who SM N-buy maize
 'Who bought the maize'

The SM cannot occur in postverbal wh-subject clauses, regardless its position. This is not peculiar to postverbal wh-subject questions: The SM never occurs in any postverbal subject clause in Awing. Thus, what is important to keep in mind for now is that the SM shows up in wh-subject constructions only when the wh-subject is in sentence-initial position, in which case, as shown in (9b), it is mandatory. Recall that the SM is not obligatory in canonical SVO constructions, or when, for example, the object occurs in sentence-initial position. Section 6.5 will be concerned with such issues.

6.2.3 Coordinating wh-phrases

This section will include coordinated wh-phrases to the description. This will not only permit us to see how such constituents are realized in Awing but also observe the distribution of the SM. Let us begin with the data in (11) and (12) which show the possibility to question both the left and right conjuncts in-situ. Example (11b) shows this possibility with the subject and (12b) with the object.

- (11) a. Tsefor pó/*nó Alombah nə ŋ-ghennô mäteénó
 Tsefor with Alombah P2 N-go market
 Tsefor and Alombah went to the market'
- b. wə pó/*nó wə nə ŋ-ghennô mäteénó
 who with/and who P2 N-go market
 'Who went to the market with whom?'

- (12) a. Alombah a naŋnə azó'ə pó/nó ndzě
 Alombah SM cook yams with/and vegetable

‘Alombah cooked yams with/and vegetable’

- b. Alombah a naŋnə (lǎ) kǎ pó/*nǎ kǎ
 Alombah SM cook LE what with what
 ‘Alombah cooked what with what?’

Notice that there are two kinds of conjunctions that can be used in such coordinated structures. The *nǎ* morpheme in (12a) signals that the conjuncts are ‘independent’, whereas the *pó* morpheme indicates accompaniment. When the conjuncts are questioned, however, only the accompaniment conjunction is allowed. This suggests that Awing uses comitative structures in such cases given that this language does not have a morpheme that actually functions in the same way as the English conjunction ‘and’ (even though the *nǎ* morpheme can be interpreted as ‘and’, for example in (12a)). This further suggests that such accompaniment coordinate structures may not be a good context to diagnose island effects in Awing.

Let us now see how things will be when one of the conjuncts is questioned. As far as the subject position is concerned, if only one of the phrases is questioned, then it must be the right conjunct:

- (13) a. *wǎ pó Alombah pe’ ŋ-ghenê mǎteenǎ
 who with Alombah P1 N-go market
 Int: ‘Who went with Alombah to the market?’
 b. Tsefor pó wǎ pe’ ŋ-ghenê mǎteenǎ
 Tsefor with who P1 N-go market
 ‘Who went with Tsefor to the market?’

Conversely, only the left conjunct can be realized in sentence-initial position. This is shown in (14) below, where (14b) and (14d) with the right conjunct in sentence-initial position renders the sentence ungrammatical; examples (14c) and (14d) questions both NPs.

- (14) a. lǎ wǎ pá’a (*a) pó Tsefor pe’ ŋ-ghenê mǎteenǎ
 LE who that SM with Tsefor P1 N-go market
 ‘Who went with Tsefor to the market?’
 b. *lǎ wǎ pá’a Tsefor pó (yǎ) pe’ ŋ-ghenê mǎteenǎ
 LE who that Tsefor with him P1 N-go market
 Int: ‘Who went with Tsefor to the market?’

- c. ló wə pá'a (*a) pó wə pe' ŋ-ghenê mæteenó
 LE who that SM with who P1 N-go market
 'Who went with whom to the market?'
- d. *ló wə pá'a wə pó (yə) pe' ŋ-ghenê mæteenó
 LE who that who with him P1 N-go market
 Int: 'Who went with whom to the market?'

The asterisk inside the brackets on the SM shows that the subject marker cannot be used in such constructions, unlike what was shown with single wh-subject constructions, where the SM is obligatory when the wh-subject phrase is in sentence-initial position. Also observe that having a resumptive pronoun in (14b) or (14d) will not circumvent the ungrammaticality. The object position exhibits the same coordinate constraints with the subject position: only the right conjunct can be questioned in-situ (15b), and only the left conjuncts can be questioned in sentence-initial position (15d); the examples in (15e) and (15f) mimic the same ex-situ constraint when both NPs are questioned.

- (15) a. *Alombah a naŋnə kó nó/pó ŋgəsájó
 Alombah SM cook what with maize
 Int: 'Alombah cooked what and maize'
- b. Alombah a naŋnə ŋgəsájó nó kə
 Alombah SM cook maize with what
 'Alombah cooked maize and what?'
- c. *ló kó pá'a Alombah a naŋ kó nó (zərə)
 LE what that Alombah SM cook what with it
 'What did Alombah cook with what?'
- d. ló kó pá'a Alombah a naŋ nó ŋgəsájó
 LE what that Alombah SM cook with maize
 'What did Alombah cook with maize?'
- e. *ló kó pá'a Alombah a naŋnə ŋgəsájó nó (zərə)
 LE what that Alombah SM cook maize with (it)
 Int: 'What did Alombah cook maize with?'
- f. ló kó pá'a Alombah a naŋ nó kó
 LE what that Alombah SM cook with what

‘What did Alombah cook with what?’

Unlike in most West African languages (see, e.g., Igbo: Georgi & Amaechi 2020; Medumba: Keupdjio 2020), where resumption rescues such constructions, neither the SM nor any other pronoun circumvent ungrammatical coordinated structures in Awing. The following section will be dealing with embedded *wh*-structures where, among other things, the use of the SM is obligatory when the subject is in sentence-initial position (as in 9b). The fact that the SM neither acts as a rescuing element nor shows up when one of the conjuncts in the subject position is promoted to sentence-initial position is an indication that the obligatory presence of the SM in *ex-situ wh*-subject constructions like that in (9b) is not to rescue a *wh*-movement constraint. Rather, one could argue that the phonological realization of the SM when the (*wh*)-subject is missing can be seen as the need to fulfil the EPP requirement (Chomsky 1982:10). Specifically, not dropping the SM (as in normal SVO sentences) when the (*wh*)-subject is not present seems to be the only solution to have a phonological element occupy the subject position, thus having the EPP requirement met (in the sense of McFadden & Sundaresan 2018).

6.2.4 *Embedding wh-phrases*

Wh-phrases can also be used in embedded constructions. The first point to note is that just as in root clauses, *wh*-phrases in embedded clauses can be realized with or without the LE morpheme, as can be seen in example (16a) with the object *wh*-phrase. Example (17a) has the subject *wh*-phrase *in-situ*, and as we already saw, the LE morpheme cannot be used with *in-situ* subjects. Examples (16b) and (17b) seems to exhibit what is generally referred to as partial *wh*-movement: the idea that *wh*-movement targets a position, say, the initial-position of the (highest) matrix clause but can stop somewhere along the movement. In Awing, partial *wh*-movement is only acceptable when there are just two clauses, that is, having the *wh*-phrase sandwiched between the main and embedded clauses, as in examples (16b) and (17b).²⁶ However, the *wh*-phrases in (16b) and (17b) could probably be base-generated in the C-domain of the embedded clause; see section 6.5. So, we might not actually be dealing with a typical case of partial *wh*-movement. The term is therefore used here descriptively to refer to cases like (16a) (17a) where the *wh*-phrase is placed in the left periphery of the complement clause. Now, note that generally in L(ong) D(istance) Q(uestions) (LDQs) either

²⁶ The Awing data seems to exhibit the general tendency where objects are more prompt to *wh*-movement than subject (e.g., Ur Shlonsky 1992:450-451): The ungrammaticality is judged differently with the subject and non-subject *wh*-phrases. While some speakers consider the object *wh*-word in the embedded-initial position acceptable, the subject is mostly said to be ungrammatical.

the wh-phrase remains in-situ (16a) and (17a), or they occur in matrix-initial position (16c) and (17c). I should also mention, as the English translations suggest, that there seems to be no scopal difference between in-situ (16a) and (17a), and ex-situ (16c) and (17c) constructions: the wh-phrases can have matrix scope in both cases.

- (16) a. Ngwe a kwájŋ ŋgó Tsefor a yí zu(nə) (ló) kó
 Ngwe SM think that Tsefor SM F1 buy LE what
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Tsefor will buy?’
- b. ?Ngwe a kwájŋ ŋgó ló kó pá’a Tsefor a yí zúnó
 Ngwe SM think that LE what that Tsefor SM F1 buy
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Tsefor will buy?’
- c. ló kó pá’a Ngwe a kwájŋ ŋgó Tsefor a yí zúnó
 LE what that Ngwe SM think that Tsefor SM F1 buy
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Tsefor will buy?’
- (17) a. Tsefor a kwaŋ ŋgó wə (*a) yó zó’ə Ayafor
 Tsefor SM think that who SM F2 marry Ayafor
 ‘Who does Tsefor think that she will marry Ayafor?’
- b. ?Tsefor a kwaŋ ŋgó ló wó pá’a *(a) yó zó’ə Ayafor
 Tsefor SM think that LE who that SM F2 marry Ayafor
 ‘Who does Tsefor think that she will marry Ayafor?’
- c. ló wó pá’a Tsefor a kwaŋ ŋgó *(a) yó zó’ə Ayafor
 LE who that Tsefor SM think that SM F2 marry Ayafor
 ‘Who does Tsefor think that she will marry Ayafor?’

As already noted with respect to examples (16b) and (17b), Awing grammar generally does not allow ‘partial wh-movement’. This is more obvious in the following LDQs having more than one embedded clauses.

- (18) a. ló kó pá’a Neh a kwájŋ ŋgó Ngwe a loonô
 LE what that Neh SM think that Ngwe SM want
 ŋgó Tsefor a zúnə
 that Tsefor SM buy
 ‘What does Neh think that Ngwe wants Tsefor to buy?’

- b. *Neh a kwájŋ ŋgó Ngwe a loonê ŋgó ló kó
 Neh SM think that Ngwe SM want that LE what
 pá'a Tsefor a zúnó
 that Tsefor SM buy
 Int: 'What does Neh think that Ngwe wants Tsefor to buy?'
- c. *Neh a kwájŋ ŋgó ló kó pá'a Ngwe a loonê
 Neh SM think that LE what that Ngwe SM want
 ŋgó Tsefor a zúnó
 that Tsefor SM buy
 Int: 'What does Neh think that Ngwe wants Tsefor to buy?'

It should also be mentioned that contrary to the above claim that there is no problem having a wh-phrase in-situ (i.e., when there is just one matrix and one embedded clause), a wh-phrase in the most embedded clause in an example like (19a) below is less preferred compared to that in (19b), where the wh-phrase is in the initial-position of the highest matrix clause.

- (19) a. Neh a kwájŋ ŋgó Ngwe a loonê ŋgó
 Neh SM think that Ngwe SM want that
 Tsefor a zúnó kó
 Tsefor SM buy what
 'What does Neh think that Ngwe wants Tsefor to buy?'
- b. ló kó pá'a Neh a kwájŋ ŋgó Ngwe a loonê ŋgó
 LE what that Neh SM think that Ngwe SM want that
 Tsefor a zúnó
 Tsefor SM buy
 'What does Neh think that Ngwe wants Tsefor to buy?'

The construction in (19a) is not ungrammatical. Fominyam et al. (in prep) show via an acceptability rating study with auditory stimuli (where constructions like example (19a) are used as fillers) that many speakers went for a neutral rating and the grammatical ratio was higher than the ungrammatical one. Actually, when more than two clauses are embedded, speakers 'naturally' prefer to have the wh-phrase in the initial-position of the highest matrix clause; perhaps to facilitate its scopal reading. To conclude the discussion on 'partial-movement', the subject and adjunct wh-constructions in (20) and (21) below show that such

wh-phrases have to be realized in the initial-position of the highest matrix clauses, and not somewhere within the embedding structures: (20b) and (21b).

- (20) a. lɔ́ wɔ́ pá'a ó pə' ŋ-súŋ ŋgɔ́ Tsefor kwáŋ
 LE who that you P1 N-say that Tsefor think
 ŋgɔ́ a yó zó'ə Ayafor
 that SM F2 marry Ayafor
 'Who did you say Tsefor believes that she will marry Ayafor?'
- b. *ó pə' ŋ-súŋ ŋgɔ́ lɔ́ wɔ́ pá'a Tsefor kwáŋ
 you P1 N-say that LE who that Tsefor think
 ŋgɔ́ *(a) yó zó'ə Ayafor
 that SM F2 marry Ayafor
 Int: 'Who did you say Tsefor believes that she will marry Ayafor?'
- (21) a. lɔ́ ghâ-kə pá'a a kwáŋ ŋgɔ́ Tsefor a nə ŋ-súŋ
 LE when that he think that Tsefor SM P2 N-say
 ŋgɔ́ pen yó ghenê mäteenə
 that we F2 go market
 'When does he think that Tsefor asked us to go to the market?'
- b. *a kwáŋ ŋgɔ́ Tsefor a nə ŋ-súŋ ŋgɔ́ lɔ́ ghâ-kə
 he think that Tsefor SM P2 N-say that LE when
 pá'a pen yó ghenê mäteenə
 that we F2 go market
 Int: 'When does he think that Tsefor asked us to go to the market?'

It can be stated at this point that the notion of 'partial wh-movement' is generally not allowed in Awing: Long distance questions with more than one embedded clauses would either have the wh-phrase in-situ, or (preferably) in the left periphery of the highest matrix clause (cf. Epée 1976b for a same observation in Duala, a zone A Bantu language spoken in Cameroon). Also, ex-situ wh-phrases are modified by a relative clause in Awing, to become obvious in a while. Hence, the idea that 'partial wh-movement' is not attested in Awing also seems to fall in place as it has been argued that 'partial wh-movement does not exist with relative clauses' Sabel (2000:442); but see Boef (2012) for counter examples in Dutch and Fanselow (2017) for a broader view on partial wh-movement. We have also seen that the LE morpheme is

optional with non-subject wh-phrase. When it is used with single embedded structures like that in (22) below, there is no preference between in-situ and ex-situ wh-constructions. Actually an experiment (Fominyam et al. in prep) showed 89% acceptability for the in-situ with the LE morpheme in (22a), and 88% acceptability for the ex-situ counterpart in (22b).

- (22) a. Aghetse nə ɲ-suŋ ɲgɔ́ Tsefor lɔg ló kó
 Aghetse P2 N-say that Tsefor take LE what
 ‘What did Aghetse say that Tsefor took?’
- b. ló kó pá’a Aghetse nə ɲ-suŋ ɲgɔ́ Tsefor lɔgə
 LE what that Aghetse P2 N-say that Tsefor take
 ‘What did Aghetse say that Tsefor took?’

Although ex-situ and in-situ wh-phrases with the LE morpheme are said to have the same meaning, I have translated all ex-situ and in-situ wh-phrases with or without the LE morpheme till this point in the same way, which is an oversimplification. It will be shown in section 6.3 that the use of the LE morpheme with in-situ wh-phrases (and by extension ex-situ, where the morpheme is obligatory) comes with an additional semantic interpretation. But before we eventually get to that, let us probe on other uses of wh-phrases, apart from the interrogative contexts discussed thus far.

6.2.5 *Non-interrogative use of wh-phrases?*

Another salient aspect of Awing grammar with respect to wh-phrases is the observation that such phrases cannot be used in non-interrogative contexts. For example, a wh-phrase cannot be used to form free relative clauses (like: *John bought what Mary was selling*). Thus, the construction in (23) must be paraphrased as in (24).

- (23) *Alombah a pe’ n-dʒunə kó Tsefor fínə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy what Tsefor sell
 Int: Alombah bought what Tsefor was selling’
- (24) Alombah a pe’ ndʒunə ʒú *(pá’a) Tsefor fínó
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy thing that Tsefor sell
 Alombah bought the thing that Tsefor was selling’

In the same way, indirect questions cannot be formed in Awing as their English counterparts (e.g., *John asked what Mary saw*). Note, however, that it is possible to have wh-phrases in

indirect questions in-situ. Examples are provided below. Such sentences are considered as reported questions, with the in-situ wh-phrases having (only) embedded scope.

- (25) a. Alombah a pe' m-bítə ɲǵə wə zəənə Tsefor
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask that who see Tsefor
 'Alombah asked who saw Tsefor'
- b. Alombah a pe' m-bítə ɲǵə Neh zəə(nə) (lé) wə/kə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask that Neh see LE who/what
 'Alombah asked who/what Neh saw'
- c. Alombah a pe' m-bítə ɲǵə Tsefor ghen(ə) (lé) ghâ-kə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask that Tsefor go LE when
 'Alombah asked when Tsefor left'

On the other hand, wh-phrases cannot occur in the initial position of the embedded clause; rather, the wh-phrase will have to be replaced with a nominal expression in such positions. Thus, the adjunct wh-phrase in example (26) will be paraphrased as in (27) with a nominal element (meaning 'time'), and example (28) will be rephrased as in (29). Note also that while example (25c) will correspond to (27), (25b) with the animate object 'who' will be interpreted parallel to (29); the choices seem to be stylistic.

- (26) *Alombah a pe' m-bítə (lé) ghâ-kə (pá'a) Tsefor a ghénə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask LE when that Tsefor SM go
 Int: 'Alombah asked when Tsefor left'
- (27) Alombah a pe' m-bítə nde' *(pá'a) Tsefor ghénə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask time that Tsefor go
 'Alombah asked the time that Tsefor left'
- (28) *Alombah a pe' m-bítə (lé) wə (pá'a) Tsefor a pe' n-dzənə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask LE who that Tsefor SM P1 N-see
 Int: 'Alombah asked who Tsefor saw'
- (29) Alombah a pe' m-bítə ɲwun *(pá'a) Tsefor pe' n-dzənə
 Alombah SM P1 N-ask person that Tsefor P1 N-see
 'Alombah asked the person that Tsefor saw'

So, there are two ways of expressing indirect questions: proper wh-interrogative with the wh-phrase in-situ or a concealed question with a relative clause structure. We already saw that whenever a wh-phrase is in sentence-initial position, it must be followed by the *pá'a* morpheme (which has been simplistically translated as ‘that’). This is the same morpheme that obligatorily shows up in examples (27) and (29), introducing the relative clause. We can therefore conclude that, in Awing, ex-situ wh-phrases are always followed by a relative clause which is introduced by the non-variable R(elative) M(arker) (RM) *pa'a*, as in (30).

- (30) (Tsefor a nə n-dzəənə) məngyě [CP *(pá'a) a finô ŋgəsájǎ]
 Tsefor SM P2 N-see woman RM SM sell maize
 ‘(Tsefor saw) the woman who sells maize’

It should come as no surprise that we are dealing with a relative clause in Awing given that this is quite common in African languages (see, e.g., Hartmann & Zimmermann 2012). The *pá'a* morpheme will henceforth be labelled RM, since it always introduces a relative clause; by so doing, the RM is differentiated from the complementizer *ŋgǎ* ‘that’.

A final aspect that will differentiate Awing from languages like English is that a wh-phrase cannot be used as a relative pronoun in Awing:

- (31) a. *Alombah kóolə ŋwun (lǎ) wə (pá'a) a nə n-dʒwítə Neh
 Alombah catch man LE who RM SM P2 N-kill Neh
 Int: ‘Alombah caught the man who killed Neh’
 b. Alombah kóolə ŋwun *(pá'a) a nə n-dʒwítə Neh
 Alombah catch man RM SM P2 N-kill Neh
 ‘Alombah caught the man who killed Neh’

Example (31b) shows that in order for example (23a) to be grammatical, the LE morpheme and the wh-phrase will have to be omitted and, as expected, the RM becomes obligatory. The overall discussion/data in this section suggests that wh-phrases in Awing are inherently interrogative and as such they cannot be used in non-interrogative contexts. We will return to this assertion and consequences in section 6.4. The next sub-section will pursue the preliminary data with multiple wh-questions.

6.2.6 Multiple *wh*-questions

Another common aspect that Awing grammar also exhibits is the possibility to have multiple *wh*-phrases in a single construction. We already had a glimpse of this in section 6.2.3 on the discussion on coordinated structures, where both the left and right conjuncts can be questioned in-situ. Apart from that, it is possible to question the subject, object and the adjunct of a root clause in-situ, as shown in (32b).

- (32) a. Ngwe a pe' n-dzúnə ɲgəsáŋə məsânə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy maize morning
 'Ngwe bought maize in the morning'
- b. wə pe' n-dzúnə kə ghákə
 who P1 N-buy what when
 'Who bought what and when?'

When constituents are questioned in this manner, it is also possible to have one of them in sentence-initial position. However, Awing grammar (analogous to German—Fanselow et al. 2011; Häussler et al. 2015) does not respect the *wh*-superiority condition, that is, the obligatory fronting of the higher (superior) *wh*-phrase while the lower one remains in-situ (cf. Kuno & Robinson 1972). Actually Awing appears to have anti-superiority in certain contexts. Fominyam (2015) notes, and an experiment Fominyam et al. (in prep), confirms that multiple *wh*-constructions are degraded when the *wh*-subject is promoted to sentence-initial position while the object *wh*-phrase remains in-situ. The examples in (33) and (34) illustrate.

- (33) a. ?lɔ́ wə pá'a a pe' n-dzúnə kə
 LE who RM SM P1 N-buy what
 'Who bought what?'
- b. lɔ́ kə pá'à wə pe' n-dzúnə
 LE what RM who P1 N-buy
 'What did who buy?'
- (34) a. ?lɔ́ wə pá'a a pə' n-dzúnə ɲgəsáŋə ghákə
 LE who RM SM P1 N-buy maize when
 Int. 'Who bought maize when?'
- b. lɔ́ ghákə pá'à wə pe' n-dzúnə ɲgəsáŋə
 LE when RM who P1 N-buy maize

‘When did who buy maize?’

The superiority reversal observed in the above examples applies, however, only when the subject wh-phrase is involved. As shown below, there is no difference between the wh-object and the temporal adjunct occurring in the left periphery when the subject is not questioned:

- (35) a. Aghetse a pe’ n-naŋnə kó ghákə
 Aghetse SM P1 N-cook what when
 ‘Aghetse cooked what and when’
- b. ló kó pá’a Aghetse a pe’ n-naŋnə ghákə
 LE what RM Aghetse SM P1 N-cook when
 ‘What did Aghetse cook, and when?’
- b. ló ghákə pá’a Aghetse a pe’ n-naŋnə kó
 LE when RM Aghetse SM P1 N-cook what
 ‘When did Aghetse cook what?’

The absence of superiority effects is common in African languages (see, e.g., Krachi: Torrence & Kandybowicz 2015; Yoruba: Adesola 2006; Akan; Saah 1994). What is peculiar in Awing is the fact that superiority is actually reversed with wh-subject. Now let us see how things will look like when the LE morpheme comes in.

The use of the LE morpheme with multiple wh-phrases is very constrained. When for instance the direct object and the adjunct are questioned, LE can structurally precede the direct object as shown in (36a). However, having LE precede the adjunct will be ungrammatical (36b). Also, observe that LE cannot occur twice in the same clause (36c).

- (36) a. Ngwe a pe’ n-dzú ló kó ghâ-kə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy LE what when
 ‘What did Ngwe buy and when?’
- b. *Ngwe a pe’ n-dzúnə kó ló ghákə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy what LE when
 Int: ‘What did Ngwe buy and when?’
- c. *Ngwe a pe’ n-dzú ló kó ló ghákə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy LE what LE when
 Int: ‘What did Ngwe buy and when?’

Contrary to the apparent affixation of LE with postverbal wh-phrases, it will be shown in section 6.4 (in line with Fominyam & Šimík 2017 and what we argued for in copular clauses in the preceding chapter) that the ungrammaticality (36b) is due to the fact that the LE morpheme has a fixed position in the Awing clause structure. As such, it will be argued that the LE morpheme can only associate with the object wh-phrase since it is higher than the adjunct phrase. A subject object wh-question will exhibit a similar constraint. We know (from example 32 above; and (37b) below) that questioning both the subject and the object is fine in the same root clause. However, the LE morpheme cannot show up preceding the object wh-phrase when the subject is also questioned (37c).

- (37) a. Alombah a pe' n-dzúnə kó
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy what
 'What did Alombah buy?'
- b. wə pe' n-dzúnə kó
 who P1 N-buy what
 'Who bought what?'
- c. *wə pe' n-dzú ló kó
 who P1 N-buy LE what
 Int: 'Who bought what?'

I will later argue (in line with Fominyam 2018) that generally the (wh)-subject is base generated in SpecvP. As such, the ungrammaticality of example (37c) could be viewed, among other things, as due to a conflict between the trace of the subject wh-phrase in SpecvP and the wh-object to associate with the LE morpheme. But before we eventually get to such discussion, let us see how negation works with content questions in Awing.

6.2.7 *Negating content questions*

We will now conclude the description with a note on negation. In order to negate wh-questions the bipartite negation marker is used.²⁷ Recall that the bipartite negation marker has the tendency to alter word order from SVO to SOV in Awing. Taking this into consideration, plus the fact that the LE morpheme cannot immediately precede the (wh)-subject, three

²⁷ It was shown in Chapter 2 that the monopartite negation marker cannot be used in polar questions. It is same with content questions:

(iii) *Ngwe a pe' má m-fê (ló) kó mbo Tsefor
 Ngwe sm P1 Neg N-give LE what to Tsefor
 Int: 'What did Ngwe not give to Tsefor?'

options will be available to negate wh-subject questions: the wh-subject can show up in the preverbal (subject) position in a SOV structure as in (38a); in a postverbal position as in (38b); or realized as a cleft (38c).

- (38) a. wó pe' ŋ-kě ŋgəsájə mbo Tsefor fê pô
 who P1 N-NEG maize to Tsefor give Neg
 'Who did not give maize to Tsefor?'
- b. ló pe' ŋ-kě m-fê wə m-fê ŋgəsájə mbo Tsefor pô
 LE P1 N-NEG N-give who N-give maize to Tsefor NEG
 'Who did not give maize to Tsefor?'
- c. ló wó pá'a a pe' ŋ-kě ŋgəsájə mbo Tsefor fê pô
 LE who RM SM P1 N-NEG maize to Tsefor give Neg
 'Who did not give maize to Tsefor?'

Observe that in the postverbal (wh-)subject construction in (38b), none of the copies of the verb is realized in sentence-final position preceding the second negation particle, as it is often the case with the bipartite negation marker. This could be related to the idea (Fominyam 2018) that the same verb (i.e., the two copies in (38b)) assigns both nominative and accusative Cases in such constellations. As such, both copies have to be in a position preceding the Case receiving elements (i.e. the subject and the object). If such reasoning is correct, one could argue that if the verb were to show up preceding the second NEG particle, such a Case assignment mechanism would be obscured. We leave such arguments for another time, though, and pursue the description with postverbal wh-phrases and negation.

Parallel to affirmative clauses, negation does not necessitate the use of the LE morpheme with postverbal wh-phrases. Hence, either the postverbal wh-phrase shows up in-situ where the LE morpheme is optional, or it is promoted to sentence-initial position. The examples in (39) and (40) illustrate the in-situ and ex-situ options, respectively.

- (39) a. Ngwe a pe' ŋ-kě (ló) ká zu pô
 Ngwe SM P1 N-NEG LE what buy Neg
 'What did Ngwe not buy?'
- b. Ngwe a pe' ŋ-kě ŋgəsájə (ló) mbo wó fê pô
 Ngwe SM P1 N-NEG maize LE to who give Neg
 'Who did Ngwe not give maize to?'

- c. Ngwe a pe' η-kě ηgəsáŋǒ mbo Tsefor (lǎ) ghákə fê pô
 Ngwe SM P1 N-NEG maize to Tsefor LE when give NEG
 'When did Ngwe not give maize to Tsefor?'
- (40) a. lǎ kǎ pá'a Ngwe a pe' η-kě zu pô
 LE what RM Ngwe SM P1 N-Neg buy Neg
 'What did Ngwe not buy?'
- b. lǎ mbo wǎ pá'a Ngwe a pe' η-kě ηgəsáŋǒ fê pô
 LE to who RM Ngwe SM P1 N-NEG maize give NEG
 'Who did Ngwe not give maize to?'
- c. lǎ ghákə pá'a Ngwe pe' η-kě ηgəsáŋǒ mbo Tsefor fê pô
 LE when RM Ngwe P1 N-NEG maize to Tsefor give NEG
 'When did Ngwe not give maize to Tsefor?'

The examples in (39) suggest that the interpretation of in-situ wh-phrases in Awing is not effected in negative clauses, unlike a language like Kîtharaka (Abel & Muriungi 2008), where in-situ wh-phrases are obligatorily promoted to sentence-initial in order to outscope negation.

Turning to multiple wh-questions and negation, we observe a parallel constraint with affirmative questions. As shown in (41a), the LE morpheme cannot be used with the in-situ wh-object when the subject is also questioned (41a). However, depending on what the speaker intends to convey, it would be possible to have the wh-object and wh-subject in the ex-situ positions, as in (41b) and (41c), respectively.

- (41) a. wǎ pe' η-kě (*lǎ) kǎ zú pô
 who P1 N-NEG LE what buy NEG
 'Who did not buy what?'
- b. lǎ kǎ pá'a wǎ pe' η-kě zú pô
 LE what that who P1 N-NEG buy NEG
 'What did who not buy?'
 'For which x, such that who (y,j,k) did not buy x'
- c. lǎ wǎ pá'a a pe' η-kě kǎ zú pô
 LE who that SM P1 N-NEG what buy NEG

‘Who did not buy what?’

‘For which y, such that y did not buy what (x,j.k)’

The examples in (41b) and (41c) differ from the observation in affirmative questions where the wh-subject is less accepted in the ex-situ position. The main difference between (41b) and (41c) is that in (41b) a specific item is being questioned while in (41c) it is a specific individual that is being questioned. This will become evident once the role of the LE morpheme with wh-phrases is established. Recall that an in-situ wh-phrase realized with the LE morpheme is said to have the same semantic interpretation as its ex-situ counterpart. Hence, having the LE morpheme with the in-situ wh-object in (41a) was supposed to yield the same interpretation that the speaker intends to convey (41b). However, for some reasons (which we return to in section 6.4.3) the LE morpheme is not permitted with the in-situ wh-object when the subject is also questioned (both in negative and non-negative clauses). Thus, having the wh-object or wh-subject in sentence-initial position seems to be motivated by the different single pair interpretations that these constructions target (which I have informally presented under the translations). Note that a pair-list reading (which is available in (41a) is not available when the wh-object is clefted, be it in affirmative or negative constructions.

6.2.8 *Summarizing the morpho-syntactic properties of wh-constructions*

The morpho-syntactic properties of wh-constructions can be summarized as follows: Awing wh-phrases are either realized in-situ or in the initial-position of the (highest) matrix clause. As such, partial wh-movement is generally not allowed. Ex-situ wh-phrases are obligatorily introduced by the LE morpheme and linked to the embedded relative clause by the relative marker *pá'a*. The LE morpheme is optional with in-situ non-subject wh-phrases but cannot be used with an in-situ wh-subject. We also saw that some wh-adjuncts are (arguably) degraded when they occur in the ex-situ position.

Non-subject wh-phrases do not play any role in the realization of the SM. When the wh-subject is in-situ, the SM cannot show up. Conversely, an ex-situ wh-subject necessitates the use of the SM in the embedded subject position. Coordinated wh-structures, contrary to non-coordinated ones, cannot have the SM in the subject position when the left conjunct occurs in the ex-situ position; the right conjunct cannot be promoted to the ex-situ position with clefting. On the other hand, only the right conjunct can be questioned in-situ, that is, if only one of the conjuncts needs to be questioned since it is possible to question both conjuncts.

Awing also exhibits multiple wh-questions in-situ in both negative and non-negative contexts. The use of the LE morpheme in-situ is forbidden in both contexts when the subject and the object are questioned. Promoting the wh-object is preferable in multiple wh-questions. This suggests that Awing reverses the superiority role. Negative constructions, however, show no superiority preference, parallel to non-negative questions that only non-subject wh-phrases are questioned.

The structural distribution of the SM and the LE morphemes can be captured in tables 1 and 2 below, respectively.

Table 1: *summary of the SM in wh-constructions for subjects and non-subjects*

	Subjects	Non-subjects
In-situ	wh ... *SM ... verb ...	SM ... verb ... wh
Ex-situ without SM	*LE wh RM ... verb ...	LE wh RM ... verb ...
Ex-situ with SM	LE wh RM ... SM ... verb ...	LE wh RM ... SM ... verb ...

Table 2: *summary of (negative) wh-constructions for subjects and non-subjects*

	Subjects	Non-subjects
(1) In-situ	wh ... verb	... verb ... wh
(2) In-situ with LE (option I)	*LE wh ...verb	... verb ... LE wh
(3) In-situ with LE (option II)	LE ...verb ...wh ...	
(4) Ex-situ	LE wh RM ... verb ...	LE wh RM ... verb ...

Rows (3) in table 2 captures the postverbal (wh-)subject construction which is not available for objects. Row (2) indicates the impossibility to have the LE morpheme with the in-situ wh-subjects. Apart from that, two other important points have been raised concerning the LE morpheme, namely that the LE morpheme comes with an additional semantic input and that this morpheme cannot be used in multiple wh-questions where both wh-phrases occur in-situ. In the next section, I will provide the meaning contribution of the LE morpheme with wh-phrases. This will then facilitate the understanding why, from a semantic/pragmatic view, the LE morpheme is not allowed in multiple wh-questions.

6.3 The semantic component of the LE morpheme with wh-phrases

As already mentioned, the interpretation of content questions with the LE morpheme is different from those in which the wh-phrases are used without LE. Given that in-situ wh-phrases that are realized with LE have the same semantic interpretation as their ex-situ counterparts, I will focus on in-situ root clauses to observe the role of LE with wh-phrases.

Before getting into the actual role with *wh*-phrases, we will first take a look on the formal difference between the LE morpheme and the exhaustive focus particle *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’, given that both elements appear to have the same meaning in affirmative sentences. Moreover, a brief note on the role of the LE morpheme in polar questions will not be out of place, as this could be helpful to better apprehend its role in content question.

6.3.1 *The difference between LE and ‘only’*

The difference between the LE morpheme and the exhaustive focus particle *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’ is not immediately obvious, at least in affirmative clauses like the examples in (42). As can be seen via the parentheses, both elements are interpreted as the only thing for which the predicate holds.

- (42) a. Ngwe a ɜu tsɔ'ə ndzô
 Ngwe SM buy only beans
 ‘Ngwe bought only beans.’ (i.e., she bought BEANS, and nothing else.)
- b. Ngwe a ɜu ló ndzô
 Ngwe SM buy LE beans
 ‘It is beans that Ngwe bought.’ (i.e., she bought BEANS, and nothing else.)

As noted in chapter 5, the LE morpheme functions as an exhaustive focus marker in affirmative clauses like the one in (42b). So, this section will not be concerned with the exhaustivity in affirmative sentences. The primary aim here is to capture the different use conditions, e.g., assertion vs presupposition. However, the exhaustivity in affirmative sentences would be occasionally invoked in the entire section but a proper treatment is provided only in chapter 7 § 4 (also see Fominyam & Šimik 2017).

Although both LE and the *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’ morphemes express exhaustivity, they differ in that while the latter’s exhaustivity is asserted, LE’s exhaustivity is presupposed. Hence, example (42a) will presuppose that Ngwe bought beans and asserts that she didn’t buy anything else. Conversely, (42b) presupposes that she bought something and didn’t buy anything else and asserts that the thing is beans (see, e.g., Velleman et al. 2012 for such modelling in English clefts). In addition to LE’s presupposed exhaustivity, I will argue here that LE also has a presupposition of existence which places the element that LE associates with in a kind of ‘contrast’ with relevant alternatives. These differences make it that LE and *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’ cannot

be used interchangeably. For instance, while (42a) can constitute a felicitous reply to a question that targets an unspecified number of items, e.g., ‘*did Ngwe buy the things?*’, (42b) will not be an appropriate answer to such a question. This is because the exhaustive element *tsɔ’ə* ‘only’ merely asserts that contrary to the expectation, that is, ‘*things*’ that were to be bought, Ngwe bought only ‘beans’. However, example (42b) with LE does not only specify that only one element was bought, contrary to the expectation too, but LE implicitly ‘contrasts’ the given element to an alternative that is not evident from a question with a plural-NP.²⁸ Such a ‘contrast’ seems to contradict the assertion in the question according to which things (plural) and not a thing (singular) was to be bought, which can be modelled through the English exchange in (43).

- (43) Q: Did Ngwe buy the things?
 A: #The thing that she bought was maize.

The infelicity of (43-A) suggests that there is a contrastive meaning component which is presupposed and should thus fit the question content. In other words, the answer in (43-A) is odd because it cannot be understood as contrastive in this context. Among other things, the LE morpheme differs from the *tsɔ’ə* ‘only’ morpheme in that LE encodes existential presupposition which is generally interpreted as ‘contrast’. This places constructions with the LE morpheme in Awing parallel to English clefts, which, according to Destruel and Velleman (2014), need a contrastive component. Another difference between LE and ‘only’ that is worth noting is that ‘only’ involves a salient expectation that ‘more’ things were bought (see, e.g., Beaver & Clark 2008), whereas LE’s interpretation involves a salient expectation that something different was bought. The example in (44) illustrates this intuition. Observe that the appropriate way to answer the question in (44a) would be the response in (44c), where ‘maize’ is denied/substituted by ‘beans’.

²⁸ The LE morpheme would also be infelicitous in questions that might be qualified as ‘indefinite questions’ i.e., questions with no formal restriction on the possible alternatives/answers. Such a question is provided via the context in (iv). We will return to this while discussing so-called ‘mention-some environment’ questions/contexts in chapter 7 § 4.2.

- (iv) Context: Apart from Neh;
 A: mbo’ə Alombah a zɔ’ə #(lɔ) wə
 COND Alombah SM marry LE who
 ‘Who can Alombah marry?’

Note that the context in (iv) already restricts the alternatives. So, using LE with the *wh*-phrase would be inappropriate in this kind of context that is in need of general information because it will exhaust the individuals that can possibly marry Alombah.

- (44) a. Ngwe a zu ɲgəsáj
 Ngwe SM buy maize
 ‘Did Ngwe buy maize?’
- b. *(əməm) a zu tsó’ə ndzô
 no SM buy only beans
 #‘She bought only beans.’
 ✓‘No, she bought only beans.’
- c. (əməm) a zu ló ndzô
 no SM buy LE beans
 ‘(No), it is beans that she bought.’

The question in (44a) is obtained by truncating both the verb and the direct object (cf. chapter 4 § 4.1). Using (44b) with *tsó’ə* ‘only’ as a reply will necessitate the use of the negative element ‘no’ to introduce the sentence. This is because with “only X” the speaker’s prior expectation (in (44b)) would be something additional (to ‘beans’), which sounds odd to the question in (44a) that is demanding, say, confirmation. So, (44b) will necessitate the negative marker to first refute the assertion in (44a) before providing a new alternative. Conversely, LE does not need such negation because with “LE X”, the speaker has a prior expectation that the proposition in question involves ‘something different than X’ (A typical example would be a question like that in (44a) with the LE morpheme: *Ngwe SM buy ló maize?*; we will return to such questions while concluding this sub-subsection). I will qualify this as existential contrast (also see chapter 7 § 4.1.2) and argue that LE expresses both exhaustivity and existential presuppositions in content questions. We will get to this proper in a while, for the time being, consider the presupposition projection context in (45) below which can be further helpful to apprehend the difference between *tsó’ə* ‘only’ and the LE morpheme. The examples in (45) through (47) also illustrate the exhaustiveness of the LE morpheme.

- (45) a. Ngwe a kě ndzǒ zu pô
 Ngwe SM NEG beans buy NEG
 ‘Ngwe did not buy beans’
- b. Ngwe a kě tsó’ə ndzǒ zu pô
 Ngwe SM NEG only beans buy NEG

‘Ngwe did not buy only beans’

- c. Ngwe a kě ló ndzõ zu pô
Ngwe SM NEG LE beans buy NEG
‘It is not beans that Ngwe bought’

Each of the examples in (45) can have two meaning components which can be informally described thus: (45a) will entail that Ngwe did not buy beans and it does not presuppose anything else, including that she did not buy anything else; (45b) presupposes that Ngwe bought beans and asserts that she bought other things; (45c) presupposes that Ngwe bought something and asserts that she did not buy beans. Now, the exhaustive particle *tsó’ə* ‘only’ is assertive and when targeted by negation, it naturally conveys, in this case, that beans was not the only thing that Ngwe bought. So the additive element (i.e., ‘rice’) in (46a) follows naturally. LE presupposes in (45c) that something was bought, too, but the thing is not specified. Rather, LE maintains that it is not ‘beans’ that was bought. Consequently, analogous to (46a), the continuation in (46b) providing the thing that was bought, namely ‘rice’, is a natural follow-up. However, unlike in (46a), (46c) shows that the additive particle ‘also’ cannot be used in a clause which is meant to provide the presupposed element in (45c). This is because the additive particle will contradict an exhaustivity presupposition in (45c) which predicts that only one element holds for the predicate.

- (46) a. a nə ŋ-ké n-dʒu məkwunə
SM P2 N-also N-buy rice
‘She also bought rice’
- b. a nə n-dʒu ló məkwunə
SM P2 N-buy LE rice
‘It is rice that she bought’
- c. #a nə ŋ-ké n-dʒu məkwunə
SM P2 N-also N-buy rice
Int: ‘She also bought rice’

As noted, (46b) as a continuation to (45c) is fine because LE exhaustively identifies ‘rice’ as the presupposed element in (45c). On the other hand, (46b), repeated below as (47b), cannot be a follow-up response to (45b), repeated below as (47a). This is because (46b) and (47b) presupposes that she bought nothing else than ‘rice’, which also contradicts the assertion in

(45b) and (47a) according to which different things were bought (see Fominyam & Šimík 2017, for more on this).

- (47) a. Ngwe a kě tsó'ə ndzǒ zu pô
 Ngwe SM NEG only beans buy NEG
 'Ngwe did not buy only beans'
- b. #a nə n-dzu ló məkwunə
 SM P2 N-buy LE rice
 'It is rice that she bought'

In the attempt to differentiate between LE and *tsó'ə* 'only' morphemes, I claim that LE encodes exhaustivity and existential presuppositions. The preceding paragraphs have introduced the exhaustivity site of LE in declaratives. In the course of this section, the notion of contrast has also been invoked by indicating that elements that associate with LE are generally interpreted as being in a contrasting relation with salient alternatives, analogous to Destruel and Velleman's (2014) observation that contrast is needed for English clefts. Is it then the case that LE encodes, in addition to contrast, exhaustivity and existential presuppositions? It will appear that contrast is an implicature that generally accompanies the LE morpheme. We saw in the preceding chapter that LE is also used with contrastive topics and as an adversative conjunction. Such a (general) contrastive implicature is also available in focus contexts (except in copular clauses; see chapter 5.2.2). As far as focusing is concerned, such an implicature can be linked to presupposition of existence. For example, in questions, a LE+X proposition can imply that there is an existing alternative Y that would satisfy the role of the predicate instead of X. Let us conclude this sub-section with a brief difference between LE and *tsó'ə* 'only' in polar questions, where this notion of existential contrast is further highlighted. The concern is with the SVO interrogative constructions in (48b) and (48c) that make use of the final question particle; (48a) is the declarative baseline sentence.

- (48) a. Alombah a yó zó'(ə) (ló) Neh
 Alombah SM F2 marry LE Neh
 'Alombah will marry Neh'
 OR: 'It is Neh that Alombah will marry'
- b. Alombah a yó zó'ə tsó' Neh óó
 Alombah SM F2 marry only Neh QM

‘Will Alombah marry only Neh?’

- c. Alombah a yó zó'(ə) (lɔ́) Neh ɔ́ɔ
Alombah SM F2 marry LE Neh QM

‘Will Alombah marry Neh?’

OR ‘Is it ACTUALLY Neh that Alombah will marry?’

While *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’ in (48b) questions the idea that Alombah will marry just one woman—*only Neh* (perhaps it is unusual in the Awing culture to marry only one woman, or Alombah is being forced to marry only Neh), LE in (48c) rather questions why it is Neh that Alombah will marry—that is, the speaker believes that there is someone else that Alombah was supposed to marry instead of Neh. In other words, by using the LE morpheme the speaker is contrasting Neh to his belief, or better still the common ground (Zimmermann 2008:9). To be more explicit, consider the context: Tsefor knows that Alombah is dating Ngwe. Tsefor has been out of the village for some time and upon return, he learns that Alombah is going to marry Neh. In such a scenario, while question (48c) with the LE morpheme is a very likely question that Tsefor might ask, (48b) with ‘only’ will not be an appropriate question in such a context. I will argue in what follows that although LE and *tsɔ'ə* ‘only’ both express exhaustivity (to be further clarified for the LE morpheme in chapter 7), LE has an existential presupposition which is often interpreted as contrastive. This makes elements that LE associates with to require explicit alternatives in context.

6.3.2. *LE with wh-phrases*

From a cross linguistic perspective, the use of morphological elements with *wh*-phrases is quite common (see, e.g., Siemund 2001 for a typological overview). In African languages in particular, apart from elements that clearly specify notions like plurality, the exact role of particles like the LE morpheme that often occur with *wh*-phrases are usually not obvious and the tendency has been to simplistically label them as ‘focus markers’. This section has two objectives: to identify the exact role that LE plays in content questions and specify the nature of Awing *wh*-phrases. It would be argued that LE encodes both exhaustiveness effect and an existential presupposition in content questions. As for the nature of *wh*-phrases, I argue that in Awing, a *wh*-phrase opens up a set of alternatives viz. its nature as an indefinite constituent. In line with Rooth (1985), I maintain that a focus ‘marker’ (albeit zero in Awing) triggers the generation of alternatives, and so do *wh*-phrases. As such, LE functions as a focus-sensitive operator with semantic import that operates on the focus alternatives. So, in order to best

apprehend the function of the LE morpheme, the nature of Awing wh-phrases needs to be clarified.

The status of wh-phrases is a contentious notion amongst generativists. For instance some linguists argue that wh-words lack Q-(uestion) features (see e.g., Zavitnevich-Beaulac 2002). The main argument for such a view stems from the fact that languages like English make use of the same morphological base as interrogatives and relative heads. Moreover, in Chinese and Japanese, wh-words can be used as existential and universal quantifiers (see for example Cheng 1991; Aoun & Li 1993). I already showed in section 6.2.5 that Awing wh-phrases can only be used as ‘question pronouns’, i.e., they only show up in interrogative contexts. So, let us narrow the query to languages that have morphemes that affect the semantics of wh-phrases.

Aboh (2007), in line with Lipták’s (2001) observation that wh-phrases are variables that lack inherent quantificational meaning, argues that wh-phrases are of two kinds: focused and non-focused. As such, Aboh maintains that languages with focus markers in wh-questions mark the target constituent in the response as focus, too. This is then related to different focus positions in the syntax since a focused wh-question will require a focused constituent in a focus position while a non-focused wh-phrase will require a non-focused constituent. The conclusion is that “there is no systematic correlation such that in question-answer pairs a wh-question will necessarily require a response including a focused constituent” (Aboh 2007:322). If this is transposed in Awing, with the assumption that the LE morpheme plays the role of a focus marker (in the cartographic realm), it would suppose that both the question in (48a) and the corresponding response in (48b) are not focused constituents. I will argue that such reasoning cannot be extended in Awing.

The main difference between examples (49) and (50) is that the LE morpheme is used in the question in (50a) but omitted in (49a). As such, the answer with the LE morpheme in (49c) is deemed inappropriate, given that the question is posed without the LE morpheme, too.²⁹

²⁹ The use of the LE morpheme is worse in fragment answers (Merchant 2004), where all but the constituent representing the wh-expression is elided. It is important to note also that answers of this nature are the most common means to answer content question, in Awing. Hence, the answer in (ivb) is the most natural response to the question in (iva). However, it is very unlikely (almost impossible), to get a response like (ivc) to the question in (iva). Conversely, if the LE morpheme is used in the question, either (ivb) or (ivc) will be a felicitous response.

(v) a. Alombah a pe' n-dʒúnə ká
Alombah SM P1 N-buy what
'What did Alombah buy?'

- (49) a. Alombah a pe' n-dʒunə kə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy what
 'What did Alombah buy?'
- b. a pe' n-dʒunə məkwúnə
 SM P1 N-buy rice
 'He bought rice'
- c. #a pe' n-dʒu lə məkwúnə
 SM P1 N-buy LE rice
 'It is rice that he bought'
- (50) a. Alombah a pe' n-dʒu lə kə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE what
 'What is it that Alombah bought?'
- b. a pe' n-dʒunə məkwúnə
 SM P1 N-buy rice
 'He bought rice.'
- c. a pe' n-dʒu lə məkwúnə
 SM P1 N-buy LE rice
 'It is rice that he bought.'

Before we proceed, note that the discrepancy in (49) also shows up with English cleft answers to normal non-cleft questions:

- (51) a. What did John buy?
 b. #It is bananas that he bought.

The example in (51b) can be said to be inappropriate because the speaker contrasts the focus with an alternative that is not contextually salient, resulting to a wrong application of existential presupposition. We will not be concerned with the English example here: it suffices to note the parallelism between the use of LE in (49b) and the cleft answer in (51b);

-
- b. məkwúnə
 rice
 'rice'
- c. ?lə məkwúnə
 LE rice
 Lit: 'It is rice'

for general discussions on the semantics of clefts in terms of an existence presupposition see, e.g., Zimmermann and Onéa (2011); DeVeugh Geiss et al. (2018).

Concentrating on the difference between (49) and (50), the fact that the LE morpheme in the wh-question in (50a) legitimizes its use in (50c), seems to suggest that Aboh's (2007) conclusion, namely that (only) focused wh-phrases give rise to focused answers, is what is at stake in Awing. This, however, cannot be the whole story. To begin with, it was shown in section 6.2 that new information focus and wh-phrases exhibit no syntactic (or prosodic) differences. The only difference is the absence of the SM with the subject wh-phrase, which will be argued in the following section as due to feature correlation mismatch between an NP-subject and a wh-subject (also see Fominyam & Georgi (2021)). Thus, in Awing, focalized and wh-phrases share the same syntactic positions (and constraints: section 6.6). Moreover, they make use of the same morphological element: the LE morpheme. Hence, wh-phrases in Awing can be conveniently conceived as focalized elements in the sense that they behave – semantically – as inherently focused by denoting (implicit) alternatives (à la Horvath 1986). This, however, does not mean that their syntax involves a F(ocus)-triggering operator/feature (Haegeman & Guéron 1999; Sabel 2006). The issue will then be to explain the role of LE with such phrases. As to whether wh-phrases have an interrogative feature or not, section 6.2.5 demonstrates that wh-phrase in Awing cannot be used in non-interrogative contexts, which strongly suggests that they are underspecified with a Q(uestion) feature. I will therefore adopt the idea dating back to Katz and Postal (1964) that wh-words are inherently specified as 'questioned', in Awing.

Following Chomsky (2000), I maintain that the Q-feature of the wh-phrase is what distinguishes it from other word categories (like nouns, verbs, adjectives pronouns etc); hence it is interpretable. I further claim that apart from the Q-feature, the Awing wh-phrase is endowed with, say, a 'quantificational force'. Both the Q-feature and the 'quantificational' nature of the wh-phrase can be thought of as part of the wh-phrase's lexical entry. Keeping aside semantic nuances, I consider quantificational as a property that expresses heterogeneity or variability. That is, the capacity to express different alternatives. Such generation of alternatives is what makes wh-phrases to semantically behave as inherently focused, corresponding to Rooth's (1985) focus alternative model.³⁰ The Q-feature on its part identifies

³⁰ It is important to mention that the view in Rooth (1985) is conceptually different from that in Rooth (1992). In Rooth (1992), the focus alternatives triggered by **F** must be bound by a focus operator like 'only', or a question operator, for reasons of interpretability. So, with the unmarked case, the focus alternatives would be bound by a covert 'squiggle'-operator, which introduces the notion of focus as part of its presuppositional

the *wh*-phrase as unambiguously interrogative (in Awing). With that in mind, we can now proceed to see how an in-situ *wh*-phrase is interpreted, and then follow up to show how the use of the LE morpheme influences the *wh*-phrase's interpretation.

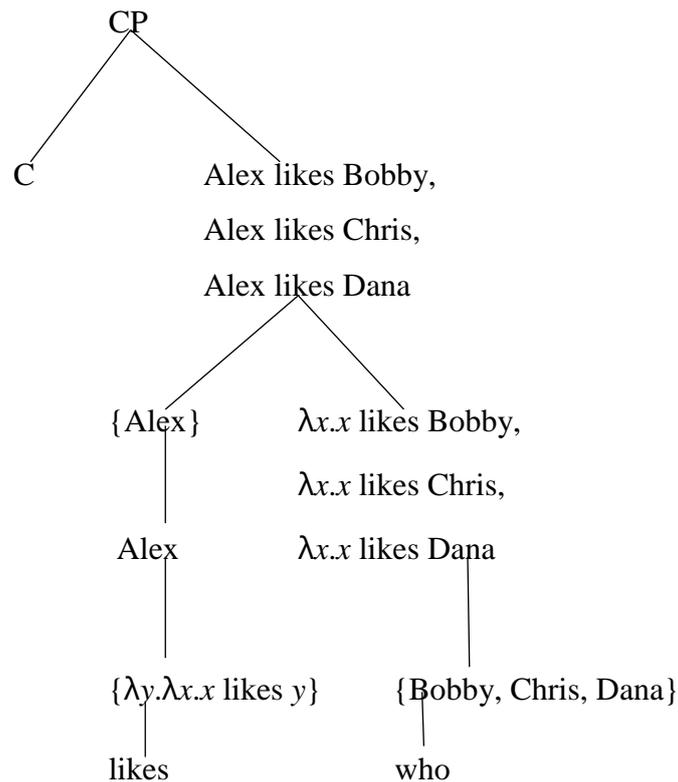
The interpretative or computational mechanism of *wh*-phrases that I adhere to goes back to Hamblin's (1973) idea that the meaning of a question is the set of its possible answers. This is substantiated via Rooth's (1985) underspecified semantic notion of alternative focus which basically maintains that there needs to be correspondence between the focus semantic value of the answer and the semantic value of the question. From this understanding, the scenario in (48) and (49) will imply that the *wh*-phrase 'what', be it with or without the LE morpheme, is computed over a set of possible alternatives. This kind of LF representation of the Roothian alternative-base semantics for questions can be captured in (52), extracted from Kotek & Erlewine (2016).

semantics. On this view, any instance of focus is contrastive, i.e. bound by squiggle, or cleft operator, or exclusive particles etc. So focus is intrinsically tied to the notion of contrast (Kratzer & Selkirk 2007). Fominyam & Šimík (2017) acknowledge this issue in Awing and propose that association with focus applies to the syntactic rules in (v) and (vi) that consider the F-marking on the constituent that LE associates with (deriving the focus semantic value of LE's complement), as being introduced by LE itself.

- (vi) F-marking by Exh:
Place an F-marker on one of the closest maximal projections asymmetrically c-commanded by Exh.
- (vii) Relative distance to Exh:
X is closer to Exh than Y if both are c-commanded by Exh and X asymmetrically c-commands Y.

We will not be concerned here with the exact technicalities involved in these concepts. The essential thing is that a *wh*-phrase induces alternatives that correspond to the possible answers to the *wh*-question under discussion and an implicit relation between a *wh*-phrase and possible alternatives identifies the latter as 'focus' (see, e.g., Beaver and Clark 2008; Velleman and Beaver 2015).

(52)



Kotek & Erlewine (2016:673)

Abstracting from (semantic) technicalities that may not be relevant here, the representation in (52) basically indicates that the interpretation of the wh-phrase ranges over a set of possible alternatives, in this case the individuals: Bobby, Chris, and Dana. These individuals constitute the focus-semantic value of the in-situ wh-phrase which is computed with the help of a Q(uestion)-operator in the C(omplementizer)-domain. Such a computation between the Q-operator in the C-domain and the wh-phrase “yields the appropriate question semantics without establishing a syntactically local relationship between the wh-phrase and C” Kotek & Erlewine (2016:673) (Huang 1982; Pesetsky 2000; Beck 2006; Cable 2007; 2010).

It should be noted, however, that the postulation of the Q-operator (see, e.g., Jacobs & Rosenbaum 1968; Pesetsky 1987) was originally meant to account for the syntax of multiple wh-words. The mechanism, however, has the advantage that it can capture how in-situ wh-phrases result in taking scope over the entire sentence by simply attributing the scope reading to the Q-operator in the C-domain while the wh-phrase remains in-situ. I will comply with such reasoning in section 6.5 and argue that unselective binding, the idea that a null Q-operator unselectively binds in-situ wh-phrases (Baker 1970; Lewis 1975; Heim 1982; Pesetsky 1987), can best account for the A-wing data. We will return to this and related issues in section 6.5. What is important for now is to keep in mind that whether a wh-phrase shows

up with or without the LE morpheme, it will be computed over a set of relevant alternatives. It is the availability of such alternatives that, as already mentioned, qualifies the wh-phrase as a focused category. Let us now relate all these to the Awing data.

A content question without the LE morpheme (be it subject or object) will be informally described as in (53) below. Consider (54) as an in-situ subject question, which should be understood in the same manner as (49a)—with the in-situ object.

(53) Relevant domain of individuals (or the alternatives) without LE:

Q: [Awing question without LE: ‘Who came’] = {Peter came, Mary came, Peter+Mary came...} ≈ “Name an individual who came”

A: [Response without LE: ‘Peter came’] = Peter came (with a defeasible pragmatic inference that other individuals didn't come).

The scenario in (53) indicates that the Awing question in (49a) without the LE morpheme will correspond to languages like English, where the wh-phrase merely opens the possibility to have various alternatives that can be used in the response. The interpretation of the Awing wh-phrase will, however, differ from languages like English when the LE morpheme is used. An informal description is also provided in (54) below.

(54) Relevant domain of individuals (or the alternatives) with LE:

Q: [Awing question with LE: ‘Came LE who’] = {Peter came & Mary didn't come, Mary came & Peter didn't come, Peter & Mary came...} ≈ “Tell me the maximal individual that came”

A: [Response without LE: ‘Peter came’] = Peter came (with a defeasible pragmatic inference that other individuals didn't come).

A: [Response with LE: ‘Came LE Peter’] = only Peter and nobody else came.

The scenario in (54) indicates that by using the LE morpheme with the wh-phrase (as in (50a), for example), the speaker is doing two things: requiring the exact (or maximal) alternative(s) and at the same time assuming that some did not come.³¹ We return shortly to this negative

³¹Requiring the exact alternative is considered in some contexts as the ‘truth’. For example, consider the context in (viii) where the father doubts the veracity of a previous allegation.

(viii) Tsefor tells his father that while in the market he bought rice with his pocket money. The father, however, knows that Tsefor does not like eating real food and that he often buys sweet things for

assumption. Expatiating on what is meant by the exact alternative(s), this can be understood as either asking the only true alternative or necessitating a complete list of the alternatives if the context is such that the predicate is satisfied by more than one of the alternatives. As such, providing the answer in (50b), that is, without the LE morpheme, the speaker is either agnostic or does not want to make any claim about the other alternatives. The questioner takes it as, say, an ‘ignorant’ but satisfying one. On the other hand, using the LE morpheme in the answer (50c) will satisfy the questioner’s expectation as it presupposes that only the mentioned alternative will satisfy the predicate. In other words, a wh-question with LE presupposes an exhaustive answer by requiring the addressee to provide only or all of the alternatives that holds and by using the LE morpheme in the answer, the speaker confirms that only the provided alternative holds. Now, let us briefly see how the exhaustiveness listing effect can be modelled contextually and introduce in the question viz. the LE morpheme. Such a context is provided in (55).

(55) Alombah is invited by the friend to Neh’s restaurant. However, Alombah eats only traditional dishes (like: pounded yam, fufu corn, pounded beans, etc.) and he has never eaten at Neh’s place before. So he wishes to know the different dishes that Neh offers and asks the friend the following question:

Q: Neh a fínó ló kó mājî-mə-alá’ə
 Neh SM sell LE what food-LINK-village
 ‘Which traditional dishes does Neh sell?’

A: a. #a fínó azó’ə
 she sell yam
 ‘She sells pounded yam’

food. The father can then use the LE morpheme in (c) to demand a third party (who was with Tsefor) the exact thing that was bought.

Q: a. ó pe’ n-dʒunə kó á mæteenə
 You P1 N-buy what in market
 ‘What did you buy in the market’

A: b. Tsefor: mí pe’ n-dʒunə mekwunə
 I P1 N-buy rice
 ‘I bought rice’

Q: c. a pe’ n-dʒu ló kó
 he P1 N-buy LE what
 ‘What did he (actually) buy?’

- b. ##a fínó ló azó'ə
 she sell LE potatoes
 'It is pounded yam that she sells'
- c. a fínó (ló) azó'ə, apənə nə ndzô
 she sell LE yam fufu and beans
 'She sells yam, fufu corn and beans'

By using the LE morpheme in the question in (55-Q), the speaker wants a maximal list of the traditional dishes that Neh offers. As such, providing just one of them, as in (54-A.a), would be contextually inappropriate. (55-A.b) is worse because the speaker uses the LE morpheme to mean that Neh sells only yam. On the other hand, (55-A.c) provides a list of the various dishes. Note that the listing in (55-A.c) is not the only dishes that the restaurant offers: they are the various traditional dishes that are important to the questioner. The LE morpheme is used in (55-A.c) to indicate that the listing is exhaustive. If LE is omitted in the question, as in (56a) below, analogous to the scenario in (49), a single alternative (56b), and a complete listing (56c), would be fine; and still having the LE morpheme with a single alternative would be contextually infelicitous (56d).

- (56) a. Neh a fínó kó məjî-mə-alá'ə
 Neh SM sell what food-LINK-village
 'Which traditional dishes does Neh sell?'
- b. a fínó azó'ə
 she sell yam
 'She sells pounded yam'
- c. a fínó (ló) azó'ə, apənə nə ndzô
 she sell LE yam fufu and beans
 'She sells yam, fufu corn and beans'
- d. #a fínó ló azó'ə
 she sell LE yam
 'It is pounded yam that she sells'

Now, assume that the only traditional dish is 'yam'. Example (55d) would be a felicitous reply in such a scenario. Notice, then, that the fact that the LE morpheme would be accepted in (56d) in such a scenario whereas it is not used in the question in (55a), would constitute an apparent contradiction to the data in (49a) and (49c), where LE is said to be inappropriate in

the answer because it is not used in the question. Such a contradiction is illusive since the wh-phrases in (55) and (56) are D(iscourse)-linked wh-phrases and it is known that D-linked wh-phrases inherently imply the existence of a contextual set of familiar entities of the type denoted by the wh-phrase (Pesetsky 1987). This actually brings us back to the other facet of the LE morpheme, namely its existential presupposition. This is manifested in (56d), in the event where Neh sells only ‘yam’, by enabling the LE morpheme to contrast the only traditional dish (i.e., ‘yam’) with relevant alternatives. Such alternatives would have to be made explicit in one way or the other. D-linked wh-phrases by nature render the alternatives explicit but non-discourse linked wh-phrases like that in (49a) do not render the alternative explicit. Hence, the answer with the LE morpheme in (49c) is deemed inappropriate to the question posed in (49a) without the LE morpheme because by using the LE morpheme in the answer, the speaker is contrasting the given alternative with inconspicuous alternatives. By so doing, there is a mismatch between the presuppositions of LE and that of the question, resulting in a pragmatic inappropriateness. That D-linked wh-phrases are different from bare wh-phrases will further be confirmed in section 6.4, where it would be shown that only the former trigger subject agreement in Awing. It will be argued (in line with Fominyam & Georgi (2021)) that bare wh-phrases are non-referential and that the subject pronoun generally does not show up with non-referential categories. However, when a wh-phrase is combined with a nominal element (as in 55 and 56), the resulting phrase has a referential exponent that the subject pronoun can refer to. The same argument may be extended to the D-linked phrase in (55-Q) and (56a) by stating that the inherent existential component that such phrases imply feeds the existential presupposition of LE, thereby legitimizing its use.

Another way of capturing why a response with LE sounds inappropriate to a question without LE is to think of the LE morpheme in questions as semantically exhaustive but pragmatically analogous to the English inclusive morphemes ‘too’ and ‘also’. Thus, (49c) can be said to be inappropriate for the same reason why the examples in (57b) and (57c) below will be considered odd for the question in (57a).

- (57) a. What did Alombah buy?
 b. #He bought maize too.
 c. #He also bought maize

Examples (57b) and (57c) can be said to be inappropriate because by using or associating the additive particles ‘too’ and ‘also’ to maize, the speaker renders the latter (contextually) anaphoric, whereas there is no contextual antecedent that can be linked to it. Analogously, one

can think of LE as anaphoric or having an existential presupposition in the sense that it has to be able to relate to some contextual or pragmatic salient antecedent. Among other things, these will include: corrective, contrastive, exclusive, and exhaustive contexts or contexts that render the alternative explicit, as in alternative questions and D-linked wh-phrases. So, if LE presupposes an exhaustive answer plus an existential contrast in the question, the use of LE in the answer is legitimized since there would be appropriate antecedent(s) that the existential and exhaustive component in the answer can relate to. On the other hand, if the question merely opens the possibility for the answer to select among the alternatives without any commitment to the alternative, an answer with LE is seen as a wrong pragmatic move. In effect, because there is no salient contextual antecedent in a question like that in (49a), the questioner can possibly respond to the answer with the LE morpheme in (49c) with questions like: what were you expecting him to buy; or, did I ask you what he did not buy? Such existential presupposition in content questions can be further apprehended in the examples in (58).

- (58) a. o zu lǎ kǎ
- you buy LE what
- ‘What is it that you bought?’
- b. #maŋ kě aju-yítsə zu pô
- I NEG thing-IND buy NEG
- ‘I did not buy anything’
- c. #kě
- none
- ‘Nothing’

There are different scenarios that could result in using the LE morpheme in the question in (58a): it could be that Alombah was asked to buy something when coming back from the market. However, someone later informed the questioner that the thing was not available and that Alombah bought something else. In any case, the use of the LE morpheme would imply, among other things that something was supposed to be bought. As such, the negative responses in (58b) and (58c) would contradict the expectation in the question. Conversely, if the question is formulated without the LE morpheme (59a), as expected, the negative responses in (59a) and (59b) would constitute felicitous replies.

- (59) a. o ʒunə kə
 you buy what
 ‘What have you bought?’
- b. maŋ kě aju-yítsə ʒu pô
 I NEG thing-IND buy NEG
 ‘I did not buy anything’
- c. kě
 none
 ‘Nothing’

I have argued that the LE morpheme has an existential presupposition which feeds on salient background alternatives. While wh-phrases inherently generate alternatives that a corresponding response can select one (resulting in plain/free focus), LE has an existential component that often requires such alternative to be contextually explicit. As such, its usage with an answer to a bare wh-phrase can result to a mismanaged presupposition. In content questions, LE is said to presuppose an exhaustive answer by demanding the only alternative(s) that would satisfy the property denoted by the predicate, which is considered as the ‘truth’ in some instances (cf. fn 30). Such an exhaustivity effect in questions may be ignored in the answer but if the context requires a list of items, as in (55) with the D-linked wh-phrase, the answer would have to exhaust the list. Such maximal listing is not restricted to D-linked wh-phrases, though. Consider a context where Tsefor sends Alombah to buy items for a new baby and after the shopping Tsefor decides to ask the question in (60a).

- (60) a. Alombah a ʒu ló kə
 Alombah SM buy LE what
 ‘What has Alombah bought?’
- b. a ʒu(nə) (ló) məghólə, ashaabə nə asogə
 SM buy LE oil comb with soap
 ‘He bought oil, comb and soap’

In such a context, it is obvious that the questioner (Tsefor) knows that different items are to be bought. By using the LE morpheme in the question in (60a), the intention is to be detailed on the specific things that were bought. Observe that the list of items can be introduced with the

LE morpheme too.³² Parallel to the above discussion concerning D-linked wh-phrases, the LE morpheme in the response in (60b) is used to indicate that the list is exhaustive. It is important to note that even in the context where an exhaustive list with the use of LE is required, the questioner had a pre-knowledge, or presupposed that not all of the baby's items were bought. Perhaps because he did not give enough money or he is not confident that Alombah will buy all of the stuff. Thus, by using the LE morpheme, the questioner assumes that some of the baby's items were excluded.

Summarizing: Adopting Hamblin's (1973) idea that the meaning of a question is the set of its possible answers, I pursued a theory which basically builds on Rooth's (1985) underspecified semantic notion of alternative focus. Without applying the squiggle operator and its stronger semantics in Rooth (1992), I argue that wh-phrases implicitly specify alternatives and that they can be computed with the help of a Q-operator in the C-domain. As such, the LE morpheme cannot be considered a focus marker in Awing (questions) given that its role is not to make available the alternatives that the focus interpretation depends on. Rather, LE presupposes in content questions that there is an alternative, or some alternatives, depending on the context, that necessarily hold true to the predicate. Such a presupposition can be followed up in the answer to imply that the focused element is the only one that would satisfy the background predicate.

In the attempt to specify the exact role that the LE morpheme assumes with wh-phrases, I left out details regarding the manner in which the Q-operator within the C-domain computes the wh-phrase to yield the appropriate question semantics. We will return to this in section 6.5, where the Q-operator is considered as a semantic value that 'indirectly associates' with an in-situ wh-phrase. Having established the role of LE with wh-phrases, I will now proceed in the following section to explain why the SM does not show up with wh-subject in Awing. Then section 6.5 will return to the exhaustive nature of the LE morpheme and show how the interpretation of multiple wh-questions is interrupted with the use of this morpheme.

³² The example in (60b) should not be mistaken with the 'follow-up contexts' provided in (ix) below where the LE morpheme introduces a proposition and presupposes that it is exhaustive, thus rendering an additive proposition infelicitous:

- (ix) #Alombah a pe' n-dʒu ló ashaabə ɲkó n-dʒunə asogə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE comb also N-buy soap
 Int: 'Alombah bought comb, and he also bought soap'

6.4 Why the SM is phonetically null with in-situ wh-subject in Awing

Unlike (most) Southern and Eastern Bantu languages, *wh*-phrases seem to be syntactically unconstrained in Grassfields Bantu languages given that *wh*-subjects and postverbal *wh*-phrases can occur in their canonical positions with no additional phonological, morphological and/or syntactic cues.³³ Concerning Awing in particular, it has been shown that both subject and non-subject *wh*-phrases can be realized in-situ: clefting of a *wh*-phrase is optional. However, the SM and the LE morpheme cannot show up with an in-situ *wh*-subject. We will return to the reason why the LE morpheme cannot be used in the subject position in the next section. Concentrating on the SM here, re-consider example (9a) repeated as (61a) against (61b) below.

³³ As far as Southern and Eastern Bantu languages are concerned, Zentz (2016:85), for example, notes that “*wh*-phrases in Shona and similar languages must be interpreted as focused if they are to be answered. This is inherently incompatible with the preverbal subject position, which cannot host focused material”. It is from such a position that Fiedler et al. (2010:249) conclude that “the focused subject will have to be realized in a non-canonical structure, for instance, by means of special morphological markers and/or syntactic reorganization”. The observation that *wh*-phrases are generally excluded from the preverbal subject position (also see, Wasike 2007:276–279; Zerbian 2006a: 69–71) cannot be extended to Grassfields Bantu languages, at least those that I have observed thus far. For example, parallel to Awing, data from Nda’nda’ (courtesy, Christelle Toukam) and Fe’fe’ (courtesy, Lappi Justine) show the *wh*-subject in the preverbal subject position. Note that contrary to Awing, Nda’nda’ and Fe’fe’ do not have subject marking morphology. However, as can be seen in the Nda’nda’ example provided in (viib), the ex-situ *wh*-subject is quite distinct from the in-situ counterpart in (viiia), as the former is explicitly realized in a cleft-like structure, parallel to Awing.

Examples of in-situ *wh*-phrases in Nda’nda’:

	In-situ	ex-situ
(x)	a. wò là’ yú ɲwanyè who P2 buy book ‘who bought the book?’	b. ǎ wò yè là’ yú ɲwànyè ? who that P2 buy book ‘Who is it that bought the book?’
(xi)	a. Toukam là’ yú kò -ò Toukam P2 buy what Int. ‘What did Toukam buy?’	b. ǎ kò yè Toukam là’ yú ? what that toukam P2 buy ‘What is it that Toukam bought?’

Examples of in-situ *wh*-phrases in Fe’fe’:

(xii)	a. Wá (mα) lá- zā kwēle’ wāhā Who ? P3 eat plantain yesterday ‘Who (is it that) ate plantain yesterday?’	b. Lappi zá (mα) ká Lappi eat ? what ‘What (is it that) Lappi bought?’
-------	--	--

Refraining from any arguments here regarding the status or position of the *mα* morpheme in Fe’fe’, the translation given to such constructions when the *mα* morpheme is not used strongly suggests that both the *wh*-subject and *wh*-object have not be moved from the canonical subject and object positions in (ixa) and (ixb), respectively.

- (61) a. wə (*a) pe' n-dʒúnə ɲgəsájə
 who SM P1 N-buy maize
 'Who bought maize?'
- b. Alombah (a) pe' n-dʒúnə ɲgəsájə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy maize
 'Alombah bought maize'

Given that the SM functions as a (free) pronoun in Awing, its absence in (61a) with the wh-subject calls for an explanation. There are two prominent lines of reasoning accounting for the absence of the SM in data like that in (61a), or use of a default form, in Bantu literature. According to some researchers, (see, e.g., Baker 2003; Bresnan & Mchombo 1987, Cheng & Downing 2009; Downing & Hyman 2015, Morimoto 2000, 2006; van der Wal 2009; Zerbian 2006a, among others) the non-availability of a proper subject marking form, or its absence, is because the subject position is a default topic position. According to others (see in particular Baier 2018), it is the result of an A-bar feature on the subject NP/marker. Fominyam & Georgi (2021) show that neither of these approaches can explain the Awing data. The following discussion summarizes the argument.

According to Morimoto (2006), the SM is actually a topic marker in certain (reversal S-O) constructions in Bantu. Zeller (2008) takes the argument further and suggests that the subject position is 'anti-focus'. As such, the SM (within the vP) marks the subject as [-focus] (also see Carstens & Mletshe 2015 for a similar position in Zulu and Zentz 2016 for a broad Bantu perspective). Given that wh-phrases are generally viewed as [+focus], the absence of the SM with the in-situ wh-subject in (61a) seems to fall in place. The immediate problem with this in Awing is that, unlike what is observed in Eastern and Southern Bantu, the SM is allowed with new/plain subject focus, as that in (61b): (61b) is a felicitous response to the question in (61a). Moreover, Zeller (2008:239) argues that "[+Focus]-features are not licensed in preverbal subject" positions. This is shown with the focus exclusive particle 'only'. Consider the examples in (62) and (63) for Kinyarwanda and Zulu, respectively.

- (62) a. *Abáana bonyíne b-a-gii-ye.
 child2 only SM2-PST-go-ASP
 'Only the children left.'
- b. H-a-gii-ye abáana bonyíne.
 EXPL-PST-go-ASP child2 only

‘Only the children left.’

(Kimenyi 1980: 51)

(63) Ngi-mem-e wonke umuntu, kodwa
1SG-invite-PST every1 person1 but
‘I invited everybody, but...’

a. *uJohn kuphela u-fik-il-e. (S-V)
John1a only SM1a-arrive-DIS-PST

b. ku-fik-e uJohn kuphela. (V-S)
EXPL17-arrive-PST John1a only
‘...only John came.’ Zeller (2008:240)

Zeller argues that the focus sensitive particle ‘only’ cannot take scope over the preverbal subjects in (62a) and (63a) in these languages because these subjects are explicitly marked as [-Focus] (i.e., by the SM). But in (62b) and (63b), the subjects take the focus particle since they are inside vP and there is no SM. Note that the SM is used to account for the S-V vs V-S alternation in Zeller’s theory parallel to what I argue for such alternation in Awing (copular) clauses in chapter 5. The difference, though, is that according to Zeller, the SM plays an additional role by marking the subject as [-Focus]. Now consider the same kind of S-V vs V-S alternation in Awing below where, crucially, the focus particle is allowed in both constructions. Note that the two constructions are felicitous in different kinds of context, which are provided before the examples.

(64) Context A: *We asked the men to buy anything that they will like to be cooked for the meeting and...*

a. tsó’ə Alombah (a) nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋǒ
only Alombah SM P2 N-buy maize
‘Only Alombah bought maize’

Context B: *All the men bought maize in the market. No...*

b. ló nə n-dʒu tsó’ə Alombah n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋǒ
LE P2 N-buy only Alombah N-buy maize
‘It is only Alombah who bought maize?’ (Not all of the men)

Thus, it cannot be claimed that the subject position in Awing is essentially topical or [-Focus], in Zeller’s (2008) terms.

Another school of thought considers subject agreement drop as a result of an A-bar feature on the subject marker. This second approach can be traced back to Ouhalla (1993). The main argument is that the finite verb is partially or completely impoverished of argument encoding morphology when the subject undergoes A-bar movement, that is, wh-movement, focus movement or relativization (see for example, Schneider-Zioga 2007; Diercks 2010). However, Baier (2018) refines this approach and proposes that instead of a proper movement-dependent analysis, subject agreement morphology is absent when the subject bears an A-bar feature. The idea is that prior to vocabulary insertion the phi-features (including agreement between the subject and the T-head) are deleted in the presence of a wh-feature which is copied from the wh-subject. A comparison of simple and complex wh-phrases in Awing suggests that this second proposal cannot work for Awing, either. Consider the examples provided in (65), where such complex wh-subject phrases trigger subject agreement; possessive DPs also show same agreement patterns (66).

- (65) a. zǎənə aŋwárə (ə) pɔŋnɛ̃ mbo mɔɔ nə
 which book SM good for child this
 ‘Which book is good for this child?’
- b. pǎnə əŋwárə (pə) pɔŋnɛ̃ mbo mɔɔ nə
 Which books SM good for child this
 ‘Which books are good for this child?’
- (66) a. naa wə (ə) nə ŋ-kunə aká’ə maŋ
 caw who SM P2 N-enter yard my
 ‘Whose caw entered my yard?’
- a. mǎ-naa mǎ-wə (mǎ) nə ŋ-kunə aká’ə maŋ
 PL-caw PL-who SM P2 N-enter yard my
 ‘Whose cattle entered my yard?’

The data in (65) and (66) suggest that the non-availability of the SM with the bare wh-subject in Awing is due to a feature mismatch between the wh-phrase and a subject NP. This mismatch has to do with the referential status of such elements. That is, NPs are referential and wh-phrases are non-referential. Thus, when a wh-phrase is combined with a nominal element, the resulting phrase will have a referential exponent which can be interpreted by SM. As the data in (67) below further show, non-referential quantifiers like ‘someone’, (which in a negative context becomes) ‘nobody’ and ‘something’ do not show-up with the SM, either.

This is predicted in Awing as the SM in such clauses cannot pick on a specific referent from such elements.

- (67) a. ɲwun-tsě (*a) naɲnə məjĩə
 person-IND SM cook food
 ‘Someone has cooked food’
- b. ɲwun-tsě (*a) kě məjĩ naɲ pô
 person-IND SM NEG food cook NEG
 ‘Nobody has cooked food’
- c. ʒú-yitsǎ (*ə) pe’ ɲ-gwúə ndu ndé
 thing-IND SM P1 N-fall on house
 ‘Something fell on the roof’

Actually Fominyam & Georgi (2021) have provided a wide range of non-referential contexts that the SM cannot be used in Awing. The conclusion is that subject marking in Awing is conditioned by the referentiality of the nominal subject. NPs that are fully referential can (optionally) be doubled by the SM, while less or even non-referential ones do not co-occur with the SM. That the referential interpretation of an NP determines the use or not of the SM can be controlled with other interpretations of the examples in (67). For instance, (67a) and (67b) are said to refer to non-specific entities/persons. That is, the speaker cannot determine their identities. However, if the speaker has in mind a specific individual, the SM can be used with both examples to mean ‘a specific/certain person (did not) cook(ed) beans’. This would be in a context where the speaker knows who cooked/or did not cook beans.

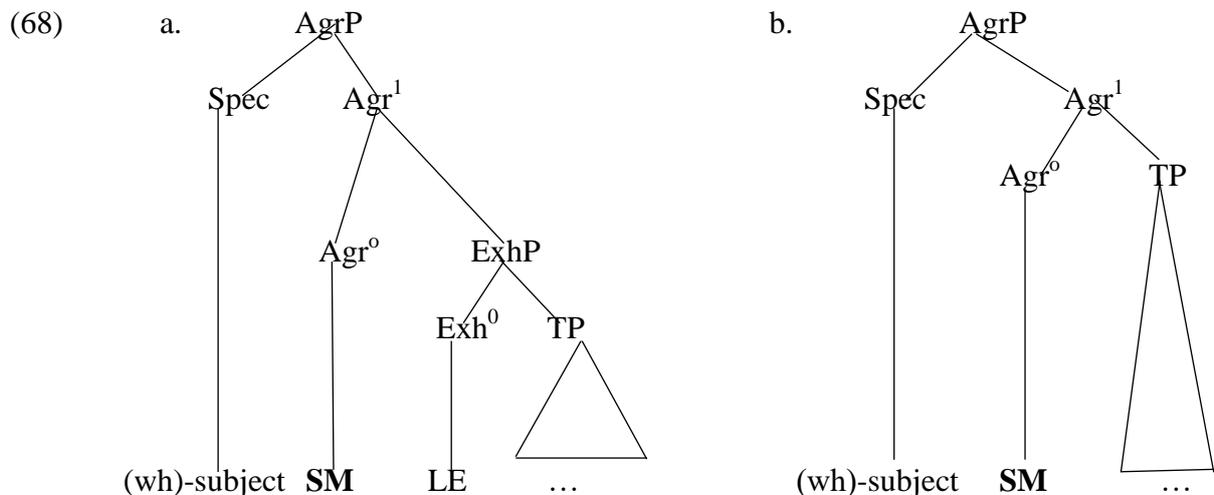
Now, note that the term referentiality can apply to different concepts depending whether it is seen from a semantic or pragmatic view (see, e.g., Chen 2009 for an overview). Sticking to wh-phrases, I narrow the concept to ‘specificity’ which from a syntactic perspective, will have to do with number (in particular) and (perhaps) person features. From this understanding, I will argue in the following section that although the SM is mute with non-referential (or non-specific) categories like wh-phrases, I maintain that the non-realization of the SM cannot be reduced to non-existent in such constructions. Rather, it is argued that the syntax of wh-subjects and ‘referential’ subject NPs apply the same mechanism, notably with respect to how the subject position is filled. The next section will follow up with this argument, but before that we will see why the LE morpheme cannot immediately precede the (wh-)subject.

6.5 Engaging the syntax of wh-constructions in Awing

This section introduces the syntax of wh-constructions. We will begin by indicating the syntactic position of the LE morpheme and then revisit the position(s) of the wh-subject in Awing clause structure. By so doing, the role of the SM with regard to subject positions will be clarified. Then the section will end by examining the consequences of the fixed syntactic position of the LE morpheme in multiple wh-constructions.

6.5.1 A note on the position of the LE morpheme

In line with previous works on Awing (Fominyam & Šimík 2017 Fominyam 2018) and following the argument in the previous chapter on the syntax of copular clauses, I will maintain here that the LE morpheme has a fixed position where it follows AgrP and precedes the tense slot. This can be captured in (68a); (68b) will represent cases where the LE morpheme is omitted. In line with Fominyam & Šimík (2017) and the discussion in section 6.3, the LE morpheme is represented as an Exh(austive) P(hrase) (ExhP) to capture its function in non-copular clauses.



The main argument that the LE morpheme occupies a fixed position as shown in (68a) comes from data like that in (69) and (70). In (67a), the focus operator ‘only’ is (arguably) adjoined to the subject. This does not seem to be the case with the LE morpheme in (69b). The example in (70) where the LE morpheme shows up preceding the object can either be interpreted as object or VP focus. This also suggests that LE is not adjoined to the object in such clauses but has a fixed position where it can ‘associate’ with either the object or the entire VP (which will become evident as we proceed).

- (69) a. tsó'ə Alombah a nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋé
 only Alombah SM P2 N-buy maize
 'Only Alombah bought maize'
- b. *lɔ́ Alombah a nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋé
 LE Alombah SM P2 N-buy maize
 Intended: 'It is Alombah who bought maize?'

- (70) Alombah a nə n-tó n-naŋnə lɔ́ ɲgəsáŋé
 Alombah SM P2 N-PROG N-buy LE maize
 ✓'Alombah was cooking maize' (and not pounding yam)
 ✓'It is maize that Alombah was cooking' (not yam)

Cleft-like constructions like those in (71b) and (71c), where other categories, namely the tense marker, negation marker and the copular verb intervene between the focused phrase and the LE morpheme show that even in sentence-initial position the LE morpheme is not adjoined to the focused phrase.

- (71) a. ɲgáj cató nə ɲ-kwá-mbi nó ənúə-əsê alá'a nê
 people Catholic P2 N-take-front with thing-God village this
 'The Catholic church was the first to preach in this village'
- b. lɔ́ nə má m-bə ɲgáj cató pá'a pó nə m-bígnə ɲ-suŋ
 LE P2 NEG N-be people Catholic RM SM P2 N-start N-talk
 ənúə-əsê alá'a nê...
 thing-God village this
 'It was not the Catholics who began preaching in this village'
- c. ...lɔ́ nə m-bə ɲgáj bǎbtísə pá'a pó nə m-bígnə ɲ-suŋə ənúə-əsê
 LE P2 N-be people Baptist RM SM P2 N-start N-talk thing-God
 'It was the Baptists people that first preached'

Thus, the fact that LE cannot immediately precede the (wh-)subject, as in 69b, is basically reduced to a fixed syntactic position that LE occupies, namely following AgrP, in a position where it precedes the TP slot, as shown in (68a). This will become evident as we proceed.

6.5.2 Revisiting the SM and the subject position in Awing

In the preceding chapter, I argued in line with Fominyam & Šimík (2017) and Fominyam (2018) that the subject in Awing is triggered by the SM from SpecvP to SpecAgr. However, we have seen that a bare wh-phrase cannot be followed by the SM. So we will have to explain how a wh-subject manages to show up in a position preceding the verb (i.e. SVO). Recall that the (wh)-subject can show up in three different positions in Awing, which are presented again in (72) for convenience.

- (72) a. wə (*a) pe' n-dʒúnə ŋgəsáŋé
 who SM P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’
- b. lǎ pe' (*a) n-dʒú wǎ (*a) n-dʒúnə ŋgəsáŋé
 LE P1 SM N-buy who SM N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’
- c. lǎ wə pá'a *(a) pe' n-dʒunə ŋgəsáŋé
 LE who that SM P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’

We will return to example (72c) in section 6.6. The preoccupation for now is to explain whether the wh-subject in (72a) is base generated in such a position or gets there via movement, and if it gets there via movement, how does the movement apply? To answer these questions, I will briefly indicate the position of the subject in example (72b), and then the position of the subject in example (72a) will be considered against two previous approaches (Fominyam & Šimík (2017) vs Fominyam & Georgi (2021)). I will argue that the initial approach (Fominyam & Šimík 2017) covers a wider range of phenomenon.

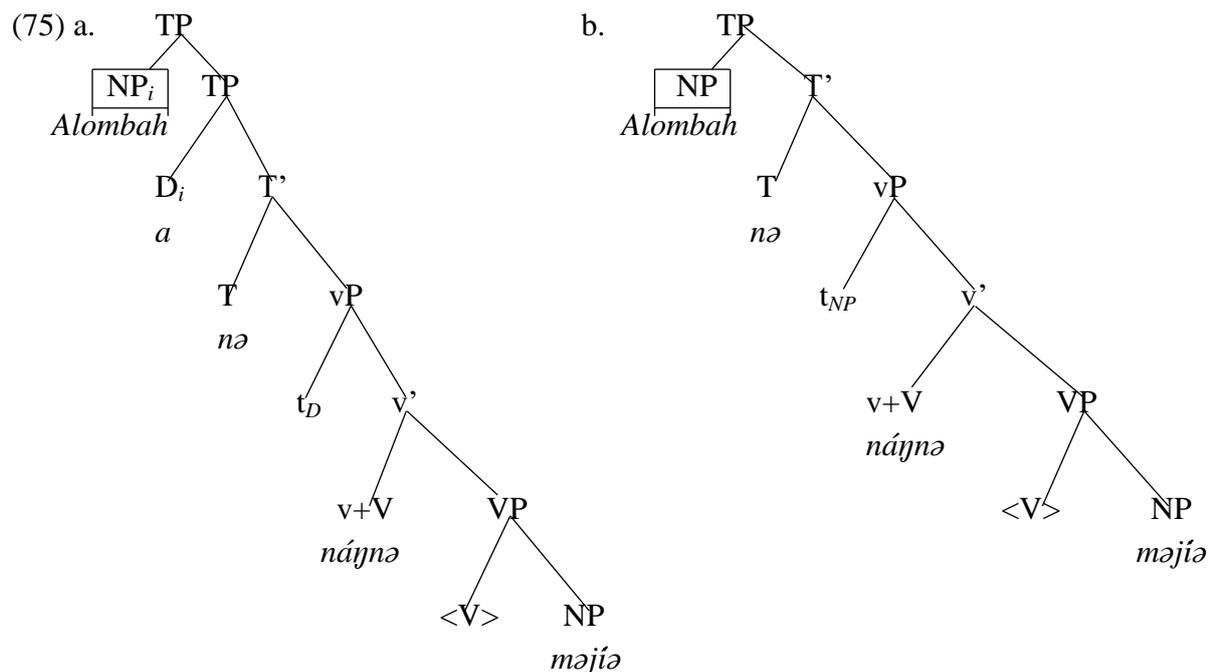
Let us begin with the position in which the (wh)-subject in (72b) is. Fominyam (2018) demonstrates, among other arguments, with the data in (73) and (74) that postverbal subjects in Awing are trapped in SpecvP. The argument is based on van der Wal's (2012) observation which consists of using a quantifier like ‘all’ with the subject while the verb is negated. The prediction is that if ‘all’ falls under the scope of negation, then the subject is within the vP domain.

- (73) a. ló pe' ma ɲáj ɲwúɲ tsəm náɲ ndzǒ
 LE P1 NEG cook person all cook beans
 ✓ 'It is not everybody that cooked beans' (i.e., some cooked something else).
 * 'It is everybody that did not cook beans' (i.e., no one cooked beans).
- b. ló pe' ɲ-kě ɲáj ɲwúɲ tsəm náɲ ndzǒ pô
 LE P1 N-NEG cook person all cook beans NEG
 ✓ 'It is not everybody that cooked beans' (i.e., some cooked something else).
 * '(It is) everybody (that) did not cook beans' (i.e., no one cooked beans).
- (74) a. ló pe' ma n-dzú pə-ɲgyě pə-tsəm n-dzúnə məghələ
 LE P1 NEG N-buy PL-woman PL-all N-buy oil
 ✓ 'It is not all of the women that bought oil' (some bought something else).
 * 'It is all of the women that did not buy oil'.
- b. ló pe' ɲ-kě n-dzú pə-ɲgyě pə-tsəm n-dzúnə məghə' pô
 LE P1 NEG N-buy PL-woman PL-all N-buy oil NEG
 ✓ 'It is not all of the women that bought oil' (some bought something else).
 * 'It is all of the women that did not buy oil'.

As can be seen in examples (73) and (74), the indefinite NP (73) and the quantified noun phrase in (74) necessarily take low scope with both the monopartite and bipartite negation markers. Such data strongly suggest that postverbal subjects in Awing remain in SpecvP; the syntax of copular clauses in chapter 5 section 5.4 presented additional arguments for such a position. Let us now turn to the position of the subject in (72a).

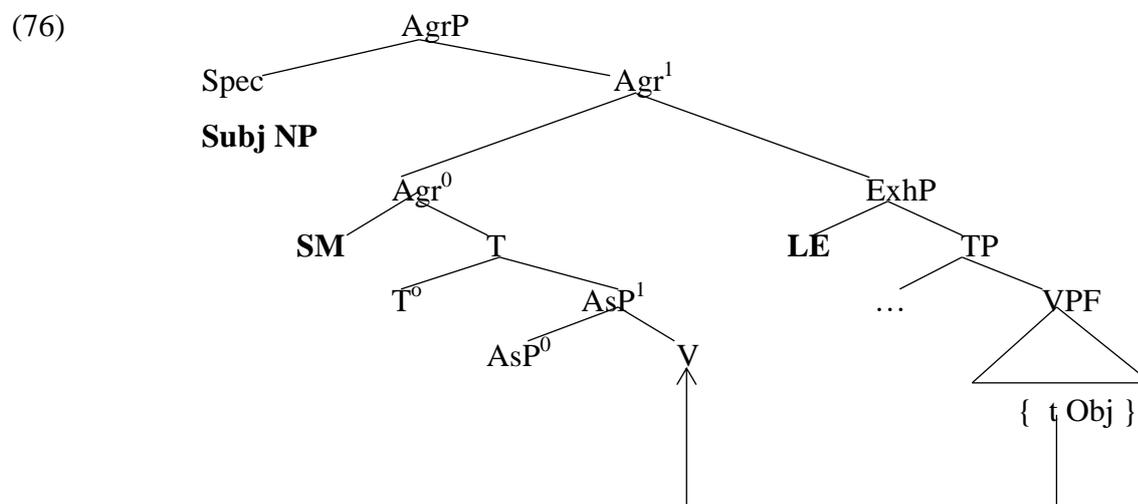
Before we proceed, it is important to note that recently Fominyam & Georgi (2021) adopted an approach which differs from that in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), Fominyam (2018) and that presented for the copular clause in chapter 5 section 5.4. The principal argument in Fominyam & Georgi (2021) is that the SM is not a bona fide agreement marker. Consequently, the SM is not responsible for subject movement from SpecvP. Rather, the SM, which is shown to be a pronominal element, competes for the subject position with the subject NP. This means that when the pronoun co-occurs with the subject-NP, it is the pronoun that is merged in SpecvP and subsequently moves to SpecTP and the thematic subject-NP is adjoined to TP. On the other hand, when the pronoun is omitted, the subject NP originates in SpecvP and moves to

SpecTP. Both scenarios as described in Fominyam & Georgi (2021) are shown in (75a) and (75b). (75a) shows the adjunction of the subject NP to TP and, as already noted, the pronoun is the actual ‘subject’. In (75b), the pronoun is omitted and the NP is the actual subject. One crucial point with this analysis is that the omission of the subject pronoun supposes that it was never merged in such a structure. As such, the T-node is endowed with an EPP feature which is responsible for triggering both the pronoun and the subject NP in (75a) and (75b), respectively.



The syntactic analysis proposed in Fominyam & Georgi (2021) does not include the use of the LE morpheme in SVO structures. However, it is possible to have the LE morpheme, the subject NP and the SM in the same construction, e.g., the VP/object focus construction in (70). Given that the LE morpheme has a fixed syntactic position, namely preceding TP, its integration in such a system will have direct consequences with regard to the ordering of the subject, the subject pronoun and the LE morpheme itself. That is, since LE is above TP and the subject pronoun is hosted in SpecTP while the subject-NP is adjoined (somewhere) above TP, the resulting order should either be *Subject-NP>SM>LE>V or *Subject-NP>LE>SM>V. Unfortunately, none of these orders are attested in Awing. The main problem with the syntactic proposal in Fominyam & Georgi (2021) is that it ignored a constraint formulated in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the LE morpheme and the subject (be it the subject pronoun and/or the subject-NP) cannot occur on the same side of the main verb. The only possible order is: Subject-NP>SM>V>LE, as shown in the syntactic

representation in (76), which is used in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) to explain the object/VP focus ambiguity in (70).



As shown in (76), the verb moves (via *v* all the way up to Agr) and subsequently shows up in a position preceding LE. Notice that in order to obtain this order, the SM projects its own phrase instead of being a host in TP. A little digression from the word ordering discussion (although not out of place): Fominyam & Šimík (2017) argue that LE associates via an asymmetric c-command relation with the closest maximal projection. Observe that the object in (76) is in its canonical position somewhere within vP and it is the maximal projection within the asymmetric c-command domain of the LE morpheme (since TP is vacant). The ambiguity therefore results because LE can associate with the entire VP. Hence, either LE interprets the only element overtly spelled out within this domain, namely the object, or the object and the verb's copy. When LE 'sees' both the object and the verb's copy the resulting interpretation is the VP focus. The idea that LE 'sees' the copy of the verb might sound strange but I will later argue that this is not independent to the verb.

Returning to the ordering problem for now, we saw in chapter 5 that the LE morpheme can immediately follow the subject-NP in copular clause (i.e., NP,>LE>(*SM)COP(*SM)>NP). But then the SM is banned and the NP immediately preceding LE is said to have an 'aboutness topic' status and it is separated from the rest of the clause by a pause (or truncation). However, the subject-NP in (75a) which is considered as an adjoining element to the clause does not have such pragmatic and phonological status. These and other reasons which will come up as we proceed impel me to stick to the original analysis proposed in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) and Fominyam (2018) regarding the position and role of the SM.

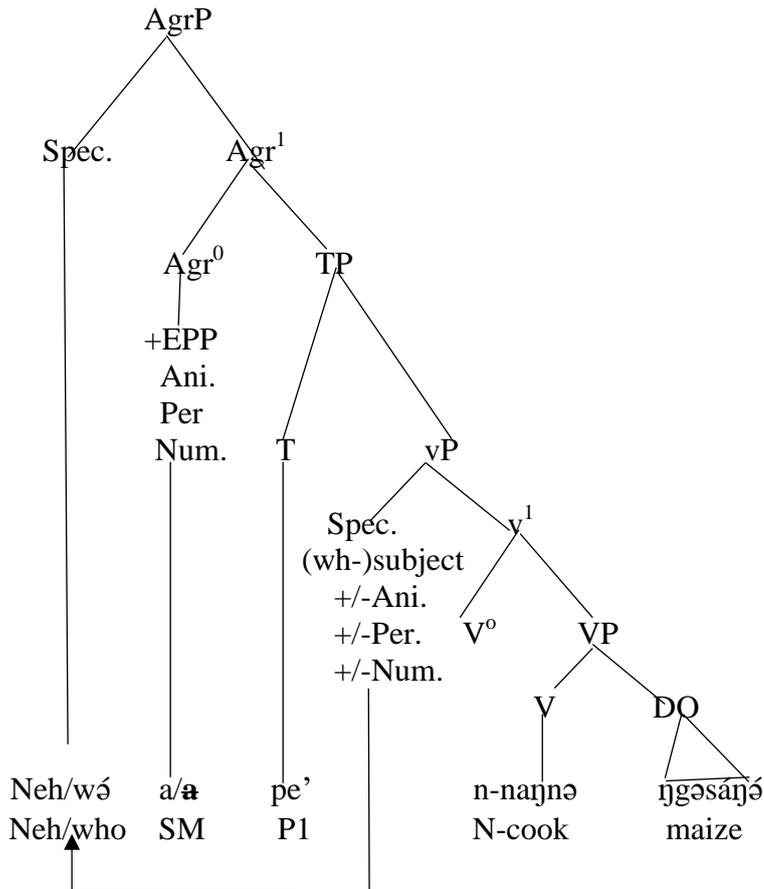
However, I comply with the arguments regarding the pronominal status of the SM in Fominyam & Georgi (2021). The issue seems to be that the SM in Awing (as it is the case in most Grassfields Bantu languages; which in fact are considered as the ancestors of Bantu languages; see, e.g., Hyman et al. (2003) was actually an agreement marker which in time lost genuine agreement morphology (which is still available in Southern Bantu languages). As I noted in chapter 2, although Awing subject agreement morphology has lost class reference, there is a residue of such class reference which can be seen via the non-human plural *pə* and *mə* alternation in (77) below.

(77) Awing SM paradigm:

	Human	Non-human
sg	a	ǎ
pl	p ^o	pə, mə

Thus, being fully aware that the SM in Awing is being drifted, or is already a pronominal element, I maintain, in line with the proposals in Carstens (2005) and Baker (2003, 2008), that the EPP is mainly a property of the SM in Awing. As such, I will argue that whenever the subject NP (be it a referential or non-referential NP) shows up in the position preceding the verb (i.e., SVO clauses), it is triggered by the SM, and it does not matter whether this latter is overt or covert. With this in mind, the syntactic structure of canonical SVO sentences will look like (78) below.

(78)



The main points to retain from (78) are the merge position of the subject and the featural make-up of the subject and the SM. It has already been shown that subjects are base generated in SpecvP in Awing and that they remain in such a position when the SM is syntactically absent; explaining why the EPP is attributed to the SM. Most important is that the SM's features interpretability and realization will be determined by the subject NP. The strike on the SM in (78) instantiates non/less-referential contexts; for example a wh-subject that does not distinguish/specify number and person. This means that when the SM (which is pronominal) lacks the necessary features to refer to the subject NP, it remains mute. The conclusion then is that the SM does not show up with non-complex wh-phrases because such elements are non-specific and as such do not permit the SM to have a full semantic interpretation.³⁴

³⁴ Notice that the features on the SM are neither interpretable nor uninterpretable. This is done (deliberately) to avoid confusion with the core minimalist idea (Chomsky 2001) which stipulates that uninterpretable features must be valued before spell out else the derivation crashes.

6.5.3 Consequences of LE's fixed position in multiple wh-question

The discussion in the preceding section centered on the syntactic positions of the wh-subject and the LE morpheme and argued for a unifying mechanism for subject movement from SpecvP to SpecAgrP. This section will focus on the position of the LE morpheme and discuss the consequences of such a position in multiple wh-questions. Before we get into the subject proper, a brief reminder of the theoretical stands will not be out of place.

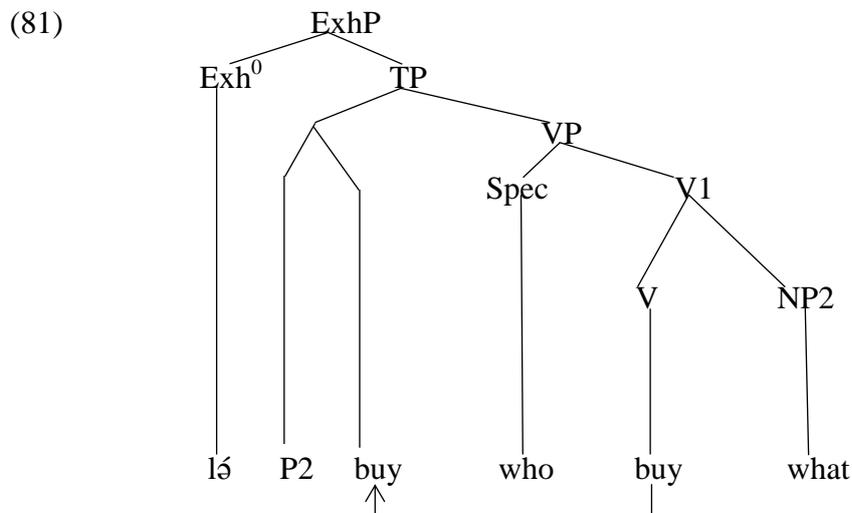
As noted in section 6.3.2, we assume that a wh-phrase denotes a set of alternative propositions. Following Kotek (2019:10), it can be assumed that such propositions are computed by “operators such as focus operators and question complementizers”. I have argued that the LE morpheme has an existential presupposition which often need explicit alternatives. However, alternatives denoted by wh-phrases are implicit and as such, LE's existential presupposition can clash with a wh-phrase without LE since the latter merely opens the possibility for different options without rendering any salient in context. Conversely, when LE is used with the wh-phrase, among other things, there is an assumption that other relevant alternatives are false. The addressee interpretes such an assumption as an explicit requirement to provide the only ‘true’ alternative(s). This suggests that a wh-phrase that is realized with the LE morpheme would have its alternative propositions computed by the latter and there would be no need for a c(omplementizer)-transfer. On the other hand, when the wh-construction is realized without the LE morpheme, the alternative propositions will be computed at the C-domain. This will mean that the former computation with the LE morpheme will still require a mechanism through which the in-situ wh-phrase gets the scopal reading. Such a two-fold computation can be circumvented by assuming that in both cases unselective binding viz. a Q-operator in the C-domain computes the alternatives, thereby yielding at the same time the appropriate scopal relation for both scenarios (as described in section 6.2.4). So, the issue here is to see how the LE morpheme's position influences the interpretation of multiple wh-questions—in particular, why the use of the LE morpheme renders sentences like that in (79b) ungrammatical.

- (79) a. wó pe' n-dʒunə kó
who P1 N-buy what
'Who bought what?'

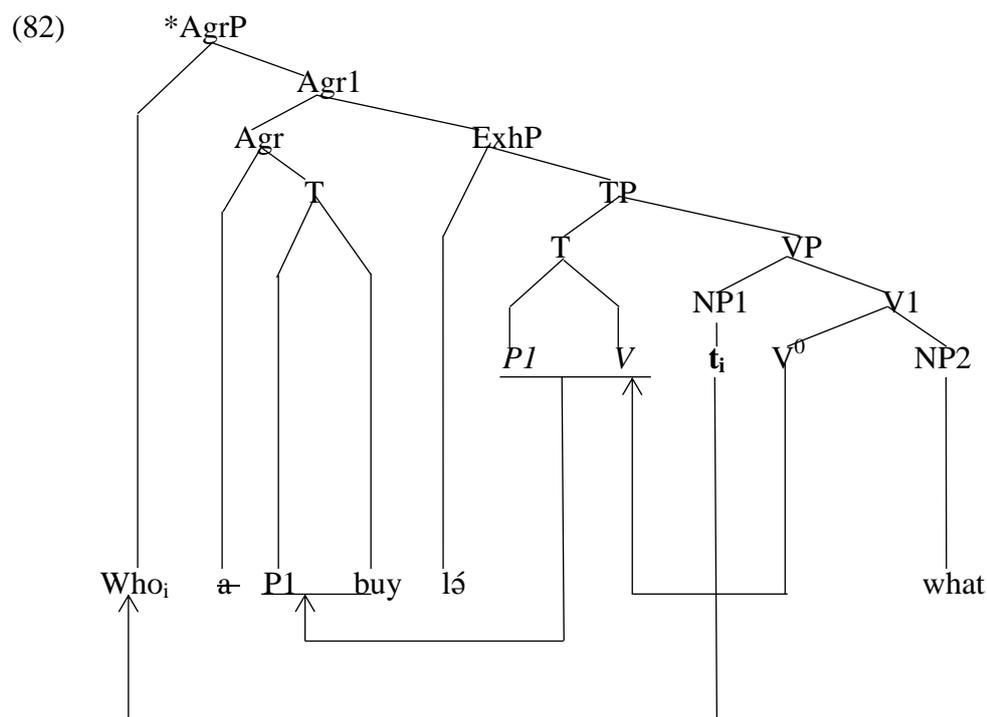
- b. *wə́ pə́' n-dʒu lə́ kə́
 who P1 N-buy LE what
 Int: 'Who bought what?'

Just as in English, the immediate parsing of multiple wh-questions in Awing like the one in (79a) is a pair-list reading (one might need to create an appropriate context to be able to obtain a single-pair reading). Hence, the question in (79a) will normally imply that: Tsefor bought yam; Neh bought beans; Ayafor bought maize, etc. However, it is curious to observe that when the LE morpheme is used with the wh-object the sentence is ungrammatical (79b). This seems to fall in line with Beck's (2006) Rooth-Hamblin alternative computation theory which predicts intervention effects when a focus sensitive operator occurs between the in-situ wh-phrase and the Q-operator. Although this is argued to be a crucial factor in diagnosing covert wh-movement from wh-interpretation via the Rooth-Hamblin alternative mechanism—where intervention effects indicates the latter (see, e.g., Kotek and Erlewine 2016), it appears that the reason behind the ungrammaticality of (79b) is not actually an intervention effect blocking the interpretation of the in-situ wh-phrase by the Q-operator: If the LE morpheme is an intervener, then the sentence in (80) below—represented in the tree diagram in (81), should be illicit since the LE morpheme occurs in a position preceding both wh-phrases. Contrary to such an expectation, the construction in (80) has no interpretative or syntactic problems.

- (80) a. lə́ pə́' n-dʒu wə́ n-dʒunə́ kə́
 LE P1 N-buy who N-buy what
 'Who bought what?'



The C-domain is not represented in (81). Nonetheless, the argument developed so far will predict that both wh-phrases communicate with the Q-operator in the C-domain and the LE morpheme does not seem to block such an operation. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (79b) cannot be resumed to an intervention effect that blocks the interpretation of the in-situ wh-phrase's alternative proposition by the Q-operator. Rather, I argue that the ungrammaticality results due to LE's fixed position and its ability to 'see' the trace of a moved element. To see what this means, consider the diagram in (82) below representing the ungrammatical sentence in (79b).



The difference between the grammatical structure in (81) and the ungrammatical one in (82) is that AgrP has been merged above ExhP and the wh-subject has moved to SpecAgrP while the verb and tense marker are adjoined to the agree head. It should be reiterated that these movements are not the cause of the ungrammaticality since they are generally applicable in SVO constructions. The problem therefore appears to be that the LE morpheme is capable of retrieving the trace of the wh-subject, perhaps due to the fact that, unlike subject NPs, the wh-phrase is inherently focused. Also, note that if the LE morpheme could be attached directly to the wh-phrase, in this case the wh-object, the trace of the wh-subject will not be visible to it because it will be lower in the structure. The idea that the LE morpheme can interpret the trace of a 'focus-sensitive element' might seem ad hoc but this is not peculiar to the wh-subject, though. Consider the data in (83) below.

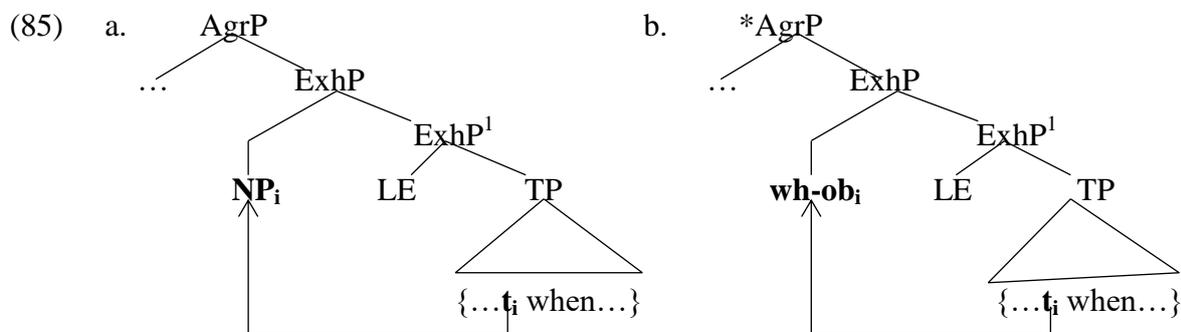
- (83) a. tsó'ə Alombah a pe' n-dzunə kó
 only Alombah SM P1 N-buy what
 'What did only Alombah buy?'
- b. *tsó'ə Alombah a pe' n-dzu ló kó
 only Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE what
 Int: 'which (specific) x, such that only Alombah bought x'
- c. ló kó pá'a tsó'ə Alombah a pe' n-dzúnó
 LE what RM only Alombah SM P1 N-buy
 'which (specific) x, such that only Alombah bought x'
- d. ló pə' n-dzu tsó'ə Alombah n-dzunə kó
 LE P1 N-buy only Alombah N-buy what
 'It is only Alombah who bought what'

To better apprehend the differences in the above examples, consider a context where Alombah was among a set of customers who shopped in Ayafor's shop. Later on someone decides to ask Ayafor the question in (83a) which will roughly mean: *what are the things that among all the customers only Alombah bought*. If the questioner uses the construction in (83c), the intent would be something like: *what is the 'specific' thing which, among all customers, only Alombah bought*. This latter reading would have been expected with the use of the LE morpheme preceding the in-situ wh-object in (83b). However, the LE morpheme is not accepted with the object wh-phrase when the subject NP occurs with the exclusive focus operator 'only': compare (83b) against (83a). This is reminiscent to the ungrammaticality resulting from having LE precede the wh-object when the subject is also questioned. So what seems to be happening is that the focus operator 'only' merges with the subject in SpecvP—as in (83d), before moving to SpecAgrP—i.e. (83b). As such, analogous to what happens in the representation in (82), there is a focus sensitive trace in SpecvP that prevents the LE morpheme from associating 'freely' with the wh-object. Again, notice from the translations in (83c) and (83d) that the LE morpheme does not associate with the wh-object. If that were the case, the reading available in (83c) would also be available for (83d). The ungrammaticality of both (79b) and (83b) therefore seems to be due to an intervention effect caused by the trace of a 'focus-sensitive phrase'.

Finally, the idea that the LE morpheme has a fixed syntactic position and that it is capable of seeing traces of focus-sensitive elements will easily explain why (36b) repeated below as (84b) is ungrammatical.

- (84) a. Ngwe a pe' n-dʒunə ŋgasáŋ ló ghâkə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy maize LE when
 'When did Ngwe buy maize?'
- b. *Ngwe a pe' n-dʒúnə kó ló ghâkə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy what LE when
 Int: 'What did Ngwe buy and when?'
- c. Ngwe a pe' n-dʒú ló kó ghâkə
 Ngwe SM P1 N-buy LE what when
 'What did Ngwe buy and when?'

Fominyam & Šimik (2017) show that when the indirect object is targeted by the LE morpheme, the direct object moves to left-adjoin to the ExhP in order to clear way for LE to associate with the indirect object. Such a movement is said to be motivated at the interface. Now, consider the implication of this proposal with the sentences in (84a) and (84b), represented in (85a) and (85b), respectively.



Movements of the subject and inflectional categories are ignored in the above representations. What is important is that in both (85a) and (85b), the object is scrambled to a position above ExhP, but below AgrP. The ungrammaticality of (85b) is therefore due to the fact that it is a wh-phrase that gets to the higher position. Thus, unlike in (85a), where the LE morpheme can associate directly with the adjunct 'when', its association with this latter is impaired by the trace of the wh-object in (85b).

Summarising: I argue that the LE morpheme is capable of 'seeing' traces of focus-sensitive elements and that such elements act as barriers between the LE morpheme and its target. Such

an argument seems to counteract Kotek and Erlewine’s (2016: 674) claim that: “intervention only affects wh-phrases that project focus alternatives but not traces of wh-movement”. This is not the only challenge that the Awing data poses to the Rooth-Hamblin alternative computation theory that I have adopted. As earlier mentioned, this theory predicts intervention effects when a focus sensitive element occurs between the Q-operator and an in-situ wh-phrase. This, however, does not seem to be the case in Awing since my analyses imply that in a multiple wh-question like that in (80), the LE morpheme can associate with the wh-subject and still the Q-operator in the C-domain computes the alternatives of both the wh-subject and the wh-object. Moreover, the example in (83a), where the subject occurs with the focus operator ‘only’ and the object is questioned further speaks in disfavour of intervention effects. So there seems to be no kind of interveners between an in-situ wh-phrase and the Q-operator in Awing; recall that negation does not prevent the occurrence and interpretation of in-situ wh-phrases in Awing although negation is said to be a common intervener cross-linguistically (see e.g., Beck 1996; Pesetsky 2000; Fanselow and Ćavar 2000).³⁵ Note, however, that even though the LE morpheme can associate with an in-situ wh-phrase, LE’s mian function is not to type the wh-phrase as interrogative: wh-phrases, whether they associate with LE or not, have to establish a relationship with the C-domain to permit their scopal interpretation. From this view, and following Chomsky’s (1995) claim that both the wh-feature in the C-domain and that found in the wh-word are interpretable, I conclude that the C-domain in Awing has a Q-force that unselectively binds the (in-situ) wh-phrase

³⁵ That negation is no intervener seems to be contradicted by the data in footnote (4), repeated below as (Xiiia) where the monopartite negation marker cannot be used when the object is questioned—also see (Xb). Only the bipartite negation marker is used in such clauses, exemplified once more in (Xiiic). One might therefore argue that the monopartite negation marker is the actual intervener in Awing. Such an argument might be backed by indicating that since the second particle of the bipartite negation always shows up in sentence-final position, it is the actual negation typing element which apparently does not occur in a position between the C-operator and the wh-phrase. Such an argument might seem logical, however, we saw in chapter 3 section 3.9.1 that the monopartite negation marker cannot be used to form any kind of question in Awing; hence the ungrammaticality of (Xiiia) and (Xiiib) could be interpreted as a general constraint where the *má* morpheme is disallowed in question formation in Awing.

- (xiii) a. *Ngwe a pe’ má m- fê (lá) ká mbo Tsefor
 Ngwe sm P1 Neg N-give LE what to Tsefor
 Int: ‘What did Ngwe not give to Tsefor?’
- b. *wə pe’ m-má m- fê ŋgasáŋǎ mbo Tsefor
 who P1 N-Neg N-give maize to Tsefor
 Int: ‘Who did not give maize to Tsefor?’
- c. wə pe’ ŋ-kě m- fê ŋgasáŋǎ mbo Tsefor pô
 who P1 N-Neg N-give maize to Tsefor NEG
 ‘Who did not give maize to Tsefor?’

(Pesetsky 1998)—thus enabling the wh-phrase to take scope over the entire construction. Such a binding process seems to be immune to any kind of intervention effects in Awing. The following section which has as main objective to investigate whether ex-situ wh-phrases are base-generated in such a position will conclude this chapter.

6.6 The syntax of ex-situ wh-phrases

In the course of this chapter, the terms in-situ and canonical position have been used (interchangeably) to describe wh-phrases that do not undergo movement to a position out of the clause in which they originate. Other than the wh-subject which, parallel to NP subjects, is said to have moved from SpecvP to SpecAgr in SVO clauses, other in-situ wh-phrases are considered to be, and remain in their base-generated positions. On the other hand, nothing substantial has been said regarding the position of ex-situ wh-phrases, in particular whether such phrases get to such positions via movement or not. This is precisely what we intend to do in the following pages. To attain this goal, various syntactic and semantic dependency tests that are available in the literature on the subject matter and language specific morpho-phonological phenomena will be exploited.

6.6.1 Syntactic constraints targeting movement dependencies

This section discusses two types of structures that are commonly used to determine whether elements that show up in non-argument positions (A'-movement) actually get there via movement or are base-generated in such positions. This has to do with island constraints as coined in Ross (1967). In a general sense, an island is a syntactic domain that does not allow elements out of it to be interpreted as though they were within the domain. In other words, islands act as barriers that can, for example, prevent movement from, or across them. It must be mentioned, however, that the origin of island constraints is a matter of debate, see for example, Sprouse et al (2012); Goodluck et al. (2017). The main issue is whether the ungrammaticality results due to grammatical/syntactic constraints, as assumed here, or whether islands are just a processing burden. I have no intention to get into such a debate at this point: the aim here is to test whether Awing exhibits island constraints with regard to wh-movement, irrespective of the source of the constraint.

The first point to note is that Awing grammar does not seem to block wh-phrases from referring back within islands like the adjunct and complex NP islands.³⁶ While the adjunct

³⁶ Another island constraint that has been often used together with those discussed here is the wh-island constraint which basically stipulates that a wh-phrase cannot move out of a +Wh-CP. The wh-island constraint

island prohibits movement out of an adjunct clause, the complex NP island prohibits movement out of a clause that modifies a noun. Adjunct islands can be introduced in Awing with: *zá’ə* ‘before’ (86); by combining the relative marker *pá’a* with an NP (87); and also by combining the complementizer *ɲgə* ‘that’ with an adverbial element which literally means ‘because’ (88).

- (86) a. Aghetse a nə ɲ-kwûə zá’ə Tsefor/wə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-die before Tsefor/who
 poŋnə lɔ́gə Ngwe/wə
 first take Ngwe/who
 ?‘Aghetse died before Tsefor/who took Ngwe/who overseas’
- b. ló wə pá’a Aghetse a nə ɲ-kwûə zá’ə
 LE who RM Aghetse SM P2 N-die before
 *(a) poŋnə lɔ́gə Ngwe nteenə

appears to apply in Awing not solely because a wh-phrase cannot move cross another one but also due to the fact that the grammar generally disallow embedded wh-CPs—as discussed in section 6.2.4; compare for example (xiva) against (xivb). Hence, it is not obvious whether the ungrammaticality of (xvb) is entirely due to the object crossing the subject in CP or the reason behind the problem in (xiva) is also a contributing factor.

- (xiv) a. ?Ngwe a kwáɲ ɲgə ló kə pá’a Tsefor a yí zúnó
 Ngwe SM think that LE what that Tsefor SM F1 buy
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Tsefor will buy?’
- b. ló kə pá’a Ngwe a kwáɲ ɲgə Tsefor a yí zúnó
 LE what that Ngwe SM think that Tsefor SM F1 buy
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Tsefor will buy?’
- (xv) a. ló kə pá’a wə yí zúnó
 LE what RM who F1 buy
 ?‘What will who buy?’
- b. *ló kə pá’a Ngwe a kwáɲ ɲgə ló wə pá’a a yí zúnó
 LE what RM Ngwe SM think that LE who RM SM F1 buy
 *‘What does Ngwe think that who will buy?’

Moreover, one cannot test the wh-island constraint with complementizers like ‘whether’ and ‘if’. This is because these complementizers do not have equivalents in Awing that introduce embedded clauses. To express such meanings, the ‘normal’ complementizer *ngə* ‘that’ is used and interpreted as either ‘whether’ or ‘if’, as shown in (xvia) and (xvib), respectively. As such, these kinds of constructions have no problem in Awing since they are just like normal complement clauses.

- (xvi) a. ló kə pá’a Alomabah a kwáɲ ɲgə who/Tsefor pe’ ndoonə má-zu-nó
 LE what RM Alomabah SM think that who/Tsefor P1 want INF-buy-INF
 *‘What does Alomabah wonder whether who/Tsefor wanted to buy?’
- b. ló wənə aɲwəwə pá’a Alomabah a pe’ m-bitə ɲgə Tsefor perə n-fuɲə
 LE which book RM Alomabah SM P1 N-ask that want still N-read
 *‘Which book did Alomabah ask if Tsefor was still reading?’

SM first take Ngwe overseas

*‘Who did Aghetse die before s/he took Ngwe overseas?’

- c. ló wə pá’a Aghetse a nə ŋ-kwûə zá’ə
LE who RM Aghetse SM P2 N-die before
Tsefor (a) poŋnə lɔgə (*yə) nteenə
Tsefor SM first take him overseas
*‘Who did Aghetse die before Tsefor took overseas?’

- (87) a. Neh a ne n-kwə əghâ-pá’a Tsefor/who
Neh SM P2 N-return time-that Tseforwho
(a) nə mbərə n-dʒunə tǎmto/kó
SM P2 still N-buy tomatoes/what
?‘Neh returned when Tsefor/who was still buying tomatoes/what’

- b. ló wə pá’a Neh a ne n-kwə əghâ-pá’a
LE who RM Neh SM P2 N-return time-that
*(a) nə m-bərə n-dʒunə tǎmto
SM P2 N-still N-buy tomatoes
*‘Who did Neh returned when he was still buying tomatoes?’

- c. ló kó pá’a Neh a ne n-kwə əghâ-pá’a
LE what RM Neh SM P2 N-return time-that
Tsefor a nə m-bərə n-dʒunə (*zərə)
Tsefor SM P2 N-still N-buy it
*‘What did Neh return when Tsefor was still buying?’

- (88) a. Neh a nə n-fuŋ ŋgaŋ-sojə ńtô-ŋgə
Neh SM P2 N-call people-police why-that
Tsefor/wə (a) zəələ mbíŋə/kó
Tsefor/who SM steal goat/what
?‘Neh called the police because Tsefor/who stole a goat/what’

- b. ló wə pá’a Neh a nə n-fuŋ ŋgaŋ-sojə ńtô-ŋgə
LE who RM Neh SM P2 N-call people-police why-that
*(a) zəələ mbíŋə
SM steal goat

*‘Who did Neh call the police because he stole a goat?’

- c. ló kó pá’a Neh a nə n-fuŋ ŋgaŋ-sojə níŋ-ŋgá
 LE what RM Neh SM P2 N-call people-police why-that
 Tsefor a zəələ (*zərə)
 Tsefor SM steal it
 *‘What did Neh call the police because Tsefor stole?’

Notice from examples (86a) (87a) and (88a) that it is possible to question either or both the subject and object within the island. Apart from that, we saw in section 6.2.2 that when the subject is questioned in an ex-situ position, the subject marker cannot be omitted, as can further be seen in (86b) (87b) and (88b). Conversely, it is indicated with the asterisks inside the parentheses on the pronouns in examples (86c) (87c) and (88c) (78c) that resumption is forbidden in the object position. We will get to more on this as this section unfolds. It can be noted for now that Awing grammar does not seem to respect the adjunct island. Turning to the complex NP island, the examples in (89b), (90b) and (91b & c) also suggest that Awing is immune to the complex NP constraint.

- (89) a. Tsefor a pe’ n-dzənə nwuŋ pá’a Aghetse/wə kəŋnə
 Tsefor SM P1 N-see person RM Aghetse/who love
 ?‘Tsefor saw the man that Aghetse/who loves(?)’
 b. ló wə pá’a Tsefor a pe’ n-dzənə nwuŋ pá’a *(a) kəŋnə
 LE who RM Tsefor SM P1 N-see man RM SM love
 *‘Who did Tsefor see the man that she loves’
- (90) a. Tsefor a pe’ n-dzənə nwuŋ pá’a *(a) fínə ŋgəsáŋǎ/kó
 Tsefor SM P1 N-see man RM SM sell maize/what
 ?‘Tsefor saw the man who sells maize/what(?)’
 b. ló kó pá’a Tsefor pe’ n-dzənə nwuŋ pá’a *(a) fínə (*zərə)
 LE what RM Tsefor P1 N-see man RM SM sell it
 *‘What did Tsefor see the man who sells?’
- (91) a. Tsefor jîə ali’á pá’a Neh pe’ n-dzúnə ngəsáŋǎ
 Tsefor know place RM Neh P1 N-buy maize
 ‘Tsefor knows (the place) where Neh bought maize’

- b. ló kó pá'a Tsefor jîə ali'ə pá'a Neh pe' n-dʒunə (*zərə)
 LE what RM Tsefor knows place RM Neh P1 N-buy it
 *'What does Neh know the place where Tsefor bought?'
- c. ló wə pá'a Tsefor jîə ali'ə pá'a *(a) pe' n-dʒunə ngəsájə
 LE who RM Tsefor knows place RM SM P1 N-buy maize
 *'What does Neh know the place where Tsefor bought?'

The construction in (90b) further shows the subject object resumption asymmetry with the complex NP constraint. The data on islands in Awing discussed thus far is reminiscent of Koopman's (1982) observation in Vata, where the extraction of nominals from the subject position must be resumed but resumptives are prohibited in all other positions. Note that resumption is not disallowed only in islands like the ones discussed above in Awing. As shown in (92) below, inserting a pronoun in the position where an ex-situ wh-object is supposed to be interpreted is not accepted.

- (92) a. ló kó pá'a Neh pe' n-dʒunə (*zərə) (məsânə)
 LE what RM Neh P1 N-buy it
 'What did Neh buy (in the morning)?'
- b. ló wə pá'a Neh pe' n-dəbê (*yə) (məsânə)
 LE who RM Neh P1 N-slap him morning
 'Who did Neh slap (in the morning)?'

However, unlike what Koopman (1982) describes for Vata, resumption is not prohibited in all non-subject positions in Awing. Actually resumption is obligatory with oblique NPs, that is, when the object of a preposition strands the preposition in the embedded clause, as shown in (93a). Example (93b) shows that the preposition can occur with the wh-phrase in sentence-initial position.

- (93) a. ló wə pá'a Tsefor a pe' mfê aɲwarə mbo *(yə) (məsânə)
 LE who RM Tsefor SM P1 N-give book to him morning
 'Who did Tsefor give a book to (in the morning)?'
- b. ló mbo wə pá'a Tsefor a pe' mfê aɲwarə (məsânə)
 LE to who RM Tsefor SM P1 N-give book morning
 'To whom did Tsefor give a book (in the morning)?'

So, oblique nouns and the subject position must be resumed when the NPs that are ‘normally’ interpreted in such positions occur in a higher position. Conversely, the object position cannot be resumed irrespective whether such a position is found inside an island or not. The overall data and discussion in this section seem to suggest that Awing grammar is insensitive to both the complex NP and the adjunct islands. It is, however, unlikely that Awing grammar is totally immune to these islands. We have seen that it is possible to question either or both the subject and the object inside the adjunct and complex NP islands. However, having the LE morpheme inside the island considerably degrades the sentence. An adjunct island experiment (Fominyam et al. in prep), where sentences like that in (94a) below were included showed a low acceptability (with a median rating of 3 within a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is perfect, 5 is very bad and 3 is neither considered grammatical nor ungrammatical), compared to the same adjunct clause with an in-situ wh-object without the LE morpheme.

- (94) a. ?Alombah a nə ŋ-kwô zá’ə Neh a fi ló kó
 Alombah SM P2 N-return before Neh SM sell LE what
 *‘Alombah return before Neh sold what?’
- b. Alombah a kwáŋ ŋgó Neh a fi ló kó
 Alombah SM think that Neh SM sell LE what
 ‘What does Alombah think that Neh sold?’

If we compare the sentence in (94b), which is a perfect construction in Awing, against that in (94a), one cannot conclude that Awing grammar is totally insensitive to islands. The reason behind the low acceptability of (94a) is not yet clear to me. It could be that a focus sensitive particle like the LE morpheme is difficult to parse inside an island, or something else which I will have to leave for future research. The parsing issue raised here is not the only case indicating that Awing is sensitive to islands: prepositional phrases cannot be interpreted inside islands in Awing. We have seen (in (93)) that it is possible to either have a preposition in the base-generated position with an obligatory pronoun or the ex-situ wh-phrase ‘pied-pipes’ the preposition. Now compare the complement clauses in (95) against the adjunct clauses in (96b) and (96c).

- (95) a. lə ndu kó pa’a Tsefor a suŋ ŋgó Neh a nə n-noŋnô
 LE on what RM Tsefor SM say that Neh SM P2 N-lie
 ‘On what did Tsefor say that Neh lied?’

b. lə kə pa'a Tsefor a suŋ ŋgə Neh a nə n-noŋnə ndu *(wə)
 LE what RM Tsefor SM say that Neh SM P2 N-lie on it
 'What did Tsefor say that Neh lied on?'

(96) a. Tsefor a nə tə ŋ-ŋáŋnə məjio ghâ-pá'a
 Tsefor SM P2 PROG N-cook food time-that
 Neh a nə noŋnə ndu akə'ə/kə (əzoonə)
 Neh SM P2 lei on chair/what yesterday
 'Tsefor was cooking when Neh was lying on the chair/what (yesterday) (?)'

b. *lə ndu kə pa'a Tsefor a nə tə ŋ-ŋáŋnə mejio
 LE on what RM Tsefor SM P2 PROG N-cook food
 ghâ-pá'a Neh a nə noŋnə (əzoonə)
 time-that Neh SM P2 lay yesterday
 *'What was Tsefor cooking when Neh was lying on (yesterday)'

c. *lə kə pa'a Tsefor a nə tə ŋ-ŋáŋnə mejio
 LE what RM Tsefor SM P2 PROG N-cook food
 ghâ-pá'a Neh a nə noŋnə ndu wə (əzoonə)
 time-that Neh SM P2 lay on it yesterday
 *'What was Tsefor cooking when Neh was lying on (yesterday)'

Examples (96b) and (96c) show that it does not matter whether the preposition occurs with the ex-situ wh-phrase (96b), or it occurs with a pronoun, where the PP is normally interpreted (96c), the result is same: an ungrammatical sentence. The reader might be wondering at this point whether the data in (96b) and (96c) do not camouflage a general property of the language, namely argument adjunct island asymmetry—especially since nothing has been mentioned concerning adjuncts with respect to island effects. It is not an easy task to establish whether such an asymmetry holds in Awing since we know from section 6.2.1.1 that some adjuncts are naturally degraded in sentence-initial position. Nonetheless, the time adjunct 'when' is not one of such adjuncts. Hence, the examples in (97) through (99) are an attempt to see whether the adjunct 'when' can possibly be interpreted inside islands when they are realized in a higher position.

(97) lə ghâ-kə pá'a Tsefor nə m-fuŋə mɔ-məmgyé pá'a
 LE when RM Tsefor P2 N-call small-woman RM

*(a) nə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋǎ

she P2 N-buy maize

*‘When did Tsefor call the girl who bought maize?’

The example in (97) indicates that there is no problem interpreting the wh-adjunct inside the complex NP island, that is, when the relative head is a noun. However, this changes when the relative head is adverbial; consider (98) below. It is tempting to attribute the ungrammaticality of (98) to the fact that the verb introducing the relative clause is a factive verb (Adams 1985); however, object questions (for example (91b)) clearly indicate that this cannot be the (sole) reason.

(98) *lǎ ghâ-kə pá’a Tsefor a jîə ali’ǎ pá’a

LE when RM Tsefor SM knows place RM

Neh a pe’ n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋǎ

Neh SM P1 N-buy maize

*‘When does Neh know the place where Tsefor bought maize?’

The adjunct islands presented in (99) below further suggest that restrictions on adjunct reconstruction within islands may be determined by the categorical status of the elements that introduce the islands.

(99) a. lǎ ghâ-kə pá’a Neh a nə n-fuŋ ɲgaŋ-sojə níŋ-ɲǎ

LE when RM Neh SM P2 N-call people-police why-that

Tsefor a zəələ ɲgəsáŋǎ

Tsefor SM steal maize

*‘When did Neh call the police because Tsefor stole maize?’

b. ?lǎ ghâ-kə pá’a Ayafor nə naŋ məjîə zá’ə

LE when that Ayafor P2 cook food before

Tsefor ʒunə məló’ə

Tsefor buy wine

*‘When did Ayafor cook before Tsefor bought wine?’

c. *lǎ ghâ-kə pá’a Neh a ne n-kwə əghâ-pá’a

LE when RM Neh SM P2 N-return time-that

Tsefor a nə m-bərə n-dʒunə ɲgəsáŋǎ

Tsefor SM P2 N-still N-buy maize

*‘When did Neh return when Tsefor was still buying maize?’

Before we proceed, it is important to mention that unlike arguments (i.e., the subject and the object) that a study has been carried out and it can be stated with a certain degree of certainty that their interpretation inside islands are grammatical, the discussion on adjunct is primarily based on the author’s native intuition (with a couple of informal judgement from other speakers). That being said, observe that while example (99a) does not have any issue, the judgement in (99b) is problematic. However, there is no doubt that example (99c) is an ungrammatical sentence. As already suggested, this is because the lexical composition of the time adjunct ‘when’ and the element introducing the adjunct clause are very similar (or same) in that they both refer to time. I will informally label such a restriction as ‘*wh-adjunct adverbial island incompatibility*’. So, keeping aside example (99b), it may be stated that an adjunct can only be parsed inside islands when the island introducing element is non-adverbial. This state of affairs, coupled with the fact that some adjuncts are naturally disallowed in cleft positions, does not give us a clear picture as to whether there is argument adjunct asymmetry in Awing.

Returning to the main preoccupation of this section, namely whether islands favour movement in Awing or not, three factors suggest that there is island sensitivity. These include the so-called *wh-adjunct adverbial island incompatibility* issue, the problem having the focus operator LE inside an island and the impossibility to interpret a PP inside an island. It is therefore not obvious whether we are dealing with base-generation or movement since such contexts may favour a movement approach but island insensitivity with arguments appears to favour a base-generation approach. Moreover, although the SM is always obligatory when the subject NP is omitted or questioned in a higher position (supposing that a subject gap is not licensed in Awing), it is not clear whether the occurrence of the SM inside an island (accidentally?) functions as an ‘*intrusive pronoun*’ Sells (1984:17) or what Ur Shlonsky (1992) calls a ‘*last resort*’ strategy to repair the island (when the subject is questioned in Awing). In this light, it can be argued that Awing grammar actually has null pronominal forms in the object position that also repair the island effects. Actually Korsah & Morphy (2019) take such a position on Asante Twi³⁷ (where island sensitivity is neither found with resumptives nor with gaps but a PP is sensitive to islands) and argue that unlike DPs, the ungrammaticality of PP ‘extraction’ is due to the fact that prepositional phrases lack

³⁷ Asante Twi is a dialect of Akan, a Niger Congo language spoken in Ghana.

pronominal forms. Assembling these pieces, it will appear that the insensitivity of Awing grammar to the adjunct and complex NP islands may be a delusion which is caused by some kind of pronominal forms. The veracity of such an assertion will have to be proven by other dependency phenomena, which we now turn to.

6.6.2 *Semantic effects targeting movement dependencies*

The idea that displaced material (e.g., viz. wh-movement) is returned in order to enable reinterpretation in the extracted site is actually one of the pillars of the generative framework (see in particular Chomsky 1977b) and it cuts across the syntactic and semantic domains. The focus here is on semantic reconstruction effects that are commonly used to diagnose movement. Since reconstruction implies a chain relation, it will apply only to elements generated by movement (Sportiche 2005). Unlike the constraints discussed in the preceding section, semantic effects, in particular the principle A and C of the binding theory point to base generation of ex-situ constituents in Awing. We begin with the familiar context in (100). In such a context, it is expected that if the constitute ‘which picture of himself’ in (100b) originated from the object position similar to that in (100a), the pronoun *jiə* ‘his’ should have a proper antecedent which is the subject Alombah. Contrary to this expectation, the asterisk on the index (*i*) in the wh-question in (100b) and the focalized phrase in (100c) shows that the pronoun cannot be bound by the subject in the embedded clause in both examples.

- (100) a. Alombah_i a nə n-dzəənə fúto/məlólǵlǵ jiə_{i/x}
 Alombah SM P2 N-see picture/shadow his
 ‘Alombah saw his photo/shadow’
- b. lǵ wǵnǵ fúto jiə_{*i/x} pá’a Alombah_i a nə n-dzəənə
 LE which picture his RM Alombah SM P2 N-see
 Int: ‘Which picture of himself did Alombah see?’
- c. lǵ mǵlólǵlǵ jiə_{*i/x} pá’a Alombah_i a nə n-dzəənə
 LE shadow his RM Alombah SM P2 N-see
 ‘It is his shadow_{*i/x} that Alombah_i saw’

The examples in (100b) and (100c) violate the principle A of the binding theory which requires a reflexive pronoun to be locally bound. When the questions in (100b) and (100c) are posed, the questionee may immediately follow with a question like: *ji wǵ?*—‘whose?’ A non-reconstruction effect with principle C in Awing also favours a non-movement account.

Following the logic in Lasnik & Stowell (1991); Torrence (2013), if the ex-situ R-expression is base generated within the embedded clause, it would be capable to reconstruct and as such (101b) and (101c) will result to the same violation observed in (101a). (101a) is ungrammatical on grounds that the in-situ object - the referent ‘Alombah’- cannot be bound by the subject pronoun—because this will violate the principle C of the binding theory which stipulates that a referential expression must be locally free. Conversely, as shown in (101b) and (101c), when the referent ‘Alombah’ is in sentence-initial position it can be bound by the SM in the (most) embedded clause.

- (101) a. a_i tó n-fónó ηgwe Alombah $_{*i/k}$
 he PROG N-call wife Alombah
 *‘He $_i$ is calling the wife of Alombah $_i$ ’
- b. ló ηgwe Alombah $_{i/k}$ pá’a a_i tó n-fónó
 LE wife Alombah RM he PROG N-call
 ‘It is the wife of Alombah $_{i/k}$ that he $_i$ is calling’
- c. ló ηgwee Alombah $_{i/k}$ pá’a m̀ kwan ηgə a_i tó n-fónó
 LE wife Alombah RM I think that he PROG N-call
 ‘It is the wife of Alombah $_{i/k}$ that I think that he $_i$ is calling’

The fact that the ex-situ R-expression in both (101b) and (101c) can be bound by the subject pronoun is an indication that it did not originate as the argument of the verb ‘call’. A logical question to ask here is: what is the object of the verb ‘call’ in constructions like those in (101b) and (101c) if the material in the left periphery did not originate as the object of this verb? Such a question is founded on grounds that a sentence like **Alombah is calling* is incomplete and illicit. Hence, it is logical to assume that there is a null object pronoun in (101b) and (101c). Such an assumption might reinforce the conclusion in the preceding section that islands might be licit in Awing due to ‘pronominal intrusion’, but it does not say much about the possible binding phenomenon at hand since the binding has to do with the subject position. Nevertheless, there seems to be an explanation for the binding that may not necessarily be attributed to the idea that the ex-situ phrase does not originate from within the embedded clause. Such an explanation stems from a general observation where the subject pronoun can freely be interpreted as referring to any R-expression that syntactically or pragmatically comes before it; Example (102c) shows such a possibility.

- (102) a. ndu Neh_i a nə m-fê ηgəsáηó yíwə mbo ηgwe Tsefor_x
 husband Neh SM P2 N-give maize DEF to wife Tsefor
 ló a_{i?/x} kě ηgəsáηó kɔ' pô
 but SM NEG maize eat NEG
 'Neh's husband gave the maize to Tsefor's wife but she doesn't eat maize'
- b. ndu Neh_i a nə m-fê ηgəsáηó yíwə mbo ηgwe Tsefor_x
 husband Neh SM P2 N-give maize DEF to wife Tsefor
 ní-tá-ηgó a_{i/x?} kě ηgəsáηó kɔ' pô
 because SM NEG maize eat NEG
 'Neh's husband gave the maize to Tsefor's wife because he doesn't eat maize'
- c. ndu Neh_i a nə m-fê ηgəsáηó yíwə mbo ηgwe Tsefor_x,
 husband Neh SM P2 N-give maize DEF to wife Tsefor
 a_{i/x} kě ηgəsáηó kɔ' pô
 SM NEG maize eat NEG
 'Neh's husband gave the maize to Tsefor's wife, s/he doesn't eat maize'

Observe that in (102a) the use of the 'adversative' conjunction '*but*' makes it very unlikely to interpret the SM as referring to the subject of the matrix clause (i.e., Neh's husband); this unlikely interpretation is indicated with the question mark on the index which is co-indexed with the subject. Conversely, the use of the 'reason' conjunction '*because*' renders binding of the SM with the object (i.e., Tsefor) almost impossible in (102b). Yet, when there is no conjunction, as in (102c), binding of both the matrix subject and object with the SM is possible. Thus, if we take the SM to be an actual pronoun then the binding phenomenon in (101b) and (101c) becomes a trivial issue since pronominal reference can be syntactically accidental (Lasnik 1972) or free (Grodzinsky & Reinhart 1993). So this particular test appears to me to be problematic in movement diagnostic in Awing.

Another aspect which is commonly used as a means to diagnose movement is the absence or presence of a pair-list reading with ex-situ wh-phrases. I already noted in section 6.4.3 that when a wh-phrase is in sentence-initial position in Awing a pair-list reading is completely absent. Thus, the embedded quantifier phrase in (103a) cannot out-scope the ex-situ wh-phrase to enable a situation where different individuals bought different items. This is taken as evidence that the ex-situ wh-phrase never occurred in the embedded clauses, as in (103b).

- (103) a. ló kó pá'a ɲwuɲ-tsemə nə n-dzúnó
 LE what RM person-all P2 N-buy
 'What did everybody buy?'
 *Answer A: Tsefor bough yams; Neh bought maize; Alota bought rice, etc.
 ✓Answer B: Everybody bought yams.
- b. ɲwuɲ-tsemə nə n-dzunə kó
 person-all P2 N-buy what
 'What did everybody buy?'
 ✓Answer A: Tsefor bough yams; Neh bought maize; Alota bought rice, etc.
 ✓Answer B: Everybody bought yams.

The interpretation of idiomatic chunks is also considered a viable means to test movement. Following Chomsky's (1993:39) idea that an 'idiom interpretation takes place at LF', it has become a standard practice that if part of an idiom moves it will logically reconstruct to its original position to preserve the idiomatic meaning (but see e.g., Bruening 2015 for a counter view). For example, the spilt (via raising) VP idioms in (104) below adopted from Postal (2004) will have to reconstruct to the complement position in order to enable the idiomatic interpretation.

(104) They believe *the shit* to have *hit the fan* yesterday. (Postal 2004:93)

The Awing grammar has VPs that are interpreted as idioms. However, just as in Scottish Gaelic (Adger & Ramchand 2005), when an idiomatic expression is split in Awing via clefting, not only is the idiomatic meaning out but in most cases the construction is nonsensical. Consider the following examples.

- (105) a. Aghetse pe' n-faɲkô apô jíə
 Aghetse P1 N-mistake hand his
 'Aghetse cheated on the husband'
- b. ?ló kó pá'a Aghetse pe' n-fáɲkô
 LE what RM Aghetse F1 N-mistake
 'What did Aghetse mistake'
- c. ?ló apô jíə pá'a Aghetse pe' n-fáɲkô
 LE hand his RM Aghetse P1 N-mistake
 Lit: 'It is his hand that Aghetse mistaken' (Nonsense!)

Int: ‘Aghetse cheated on the husband’

(*Not possible*)

(106) a atsəəbə Tsefor nə ɲ-gwam ɲkĩə
talk Tsefor P2 N-catch water
‘Tsefor’s speech was coherent’

b. *lɔ́ kɔ́ pá’a atsəəbə Tsefor nə ɲ-gwámnɔ́
LE what RM talk Tsefor P2 N-hold
*‘What did Tsefor’s talk catch’

c. *lɔ́ ɲkĩə pá’a atsəəbə Tsefor nə ɲ-gwámnɔ́
LE what RM talk Tsefor P2 N-catch

Lit: ‘It is water that Tsefor’s talk caught’

(*Nonsense!*)

Int: ‘Tsefor’s speech was coherent’

(*Not Possible*)

The reason why the Awing split idiom constructions sound very odd is because most of the VP expressions are combination of phenomena which are ‘culturally unrealistic’, in Awing, and perhaps generally. That is, one cannot conceive the possibility of catching water or mistaking his (own) hand. Idioms therefore speak in disfavour of semantic reconstruction in Awing. So, unlike syntactic constraints where a clear decision could not be reached as to whether ex-situ wh-phrases are base-generated or not, the semantic effects discussed in this section favour a base generation approach. The next section will tackle the query from a phonological angle.

6.6.3 *Phonological and prosodic effects targeting movement dependencies*

Another aspect of Awing grammar that could be used as an argument for movement, but which does not necessarily argues in favour of base-generation, is what was labelled in chapter 4 as truncation. As shown in chapter 4 section 4.4.1, the form of the verb (i.e., long or truncated) can be determined by its internal argument—the direct object. For example, the verbs *kwarə* ‘collect’ in (107a) and *finə* ‘sell’ in (108a) must occur in the truncated forms. This is because the direct objects are ‘uncountable nouns’. Following the discussion on split VP idioms that clefted objects can form a single constituent with the verb in the embedded clause, one would expect a situation where these verbal forms will maintain the truncated forms when the direct objects are questioned or focalized via clefting. As shown in (107b & c) and (108b & c), such an expectation is not met.

- (107) a. móonə a yí kwá*(rə) məghələ mbo tă yə
 child SM F1 collect oil from father his
 ‘The child will collect oil from his father’
- b. ló kə pá’a móonə a yí kwá*(rə) mbo tă yə
 LE what RM child SM F1 collect from father his
 ‘What will the child collect from his father?’
- c. ló məghələ pá’a móonə a yí kwá*(rə) mbo tă yə
 LE oil RM child SM F1 collect from father his
 ‘It is oil that the child will collect from his father’
- (108) a. Aghetse a nə m-ǰi*(nə) ŋgwájə (alí’ə-nəwûə)
 Aghetse SM P2 N-sell salt place-death
 ‘Aghetse sold salt (at the death ceremony)’
- b. ló kə pá’a Aghetse a nə m-ǰi*(nə) (alí’ə-nəwûə)
 LE what RM Aghetse SM P2 N-sell place-death
 ‘It is salt that Aghetse sold (at the death ceremony)’
- c. ló ŋgwájə pá’a Aghetse a nə m-ǰi*(nə) (alí’ə-nəwûə)
 LE salt RM Aghetse SM P2 N-sell place-death
 ‘It is salt that Aghetse sold (at the death ceremony)’

The verb and the object in (107a) and (108a) are said to form a ‘phonological idiomatic phrase’, where the nature—i.e., ‘plurality’ of the object conditions the verb to take a truncated form. If the verb in the wh-questions and focalized constructions in (107) and (108) could possibly maintain the truncated forms, this would have been a strong argument favouring movement. But as I already hinted, that truncation is not maintained cannot be used as a solid argument against movement either. This is because when constituents are questioned or focalized as in (107) and (108), the verb’s tones change indicating a sort of high-high patterns. Hence, it can still be argued that truncation cannot apply in the above contexts because these verbs need to exhibit what I am simplistically calling a high-high tonal pattern. What this actually means is that the verb has to preserve the final schwa to allow a high (or raising) tone to dock on.

We will now conclude the discussion with the issue briefly raised in the preceded paragraph, namely the prosodic realization of the verb in the embedded/relative clause when the wh/focused element is clefted. This might fall under the phenomenon commonly referred to

as wh-agreement or wh-copying, where A'-movement is reflected via agreement morphology (see, e.g., Fanselow and Mahajan 2000, Carstens 2005). However, what we are interested in here has to do with tones, which is somehow different from morphological agreement. There has been of late an argument relating tonal modification on (embedded) verbs as a reflex of movement (see in particular Korsah and Murphy 2019; Amaechi 2020). As I indicated from the onset of this chapter (in section 6.2), a tonal change is attested in Awing when a wh/focused phrase occurs in sentence-initial position. The data in (109) and (110) further illustrate.

- (109) a. Tsefor/wə (a) ʒunə ŋgəsáŋé/ké
 Tsefor/who SM buy maize/what
 ‘Tsefor/who has bought maize/what (?)’ (*Decl./wh-in-situ with low-low tones*)
- b. ló wə pá’a a ʒúnó ŋgəsáŋé
 LE who RM SM buy maize
 ‘Who bought maize?’ (*Ex-situ wh-subject with high-high tones*)
- c. ló ké pá’a Tsefor a ʒúnó
 LE who RM Tsefor SM buy
 ‘What has Tsefor bought?’ (*Ex-situ wh-object with high-high tones*)
- (110) a. Tsefor/wə (a) lógə mɔ-ŋwíŋə/ké
 Tsefor/who SM take small-cutlass/what
 ‘Tsefor/who has taken the knife/what (?)’ (*Decl./wh-in-situ with low-low tones*)
- b. ló wə pá’a a lógnó mɔ-ŋwíŋə
 LE what RM SM take small-cutlass
 ‘Who has taken the knife?’ (*Ex-situ wh-subject with high-high tones*)
- c. ló ké pá’a Tsefor lógnó
 LE what RM Tsefor take
 ‘What has Tsefor taken?’ (*Ex-situ wh-subject with high-high tones*)

The verb ʒúnə ‘buy’ has a default high-low tonal pattern. This high-low pattern can be changed to low-low to express the present past tense (or perfective aspect). The examples in (109a) and (110a) show that there is no tonal change with in-situ questions. On the other hand, when a wh/focused phrase is in sentence-initial position, the verbs occur with high-high tones. In fact, observe that not only does the verb in (110) indicate this prosodic change but its

form is altered too. It is crucial to note, however, that the high-high tonal pattern is a simplistic representation of what is actually happening in such contexts. For example, it has been said that the final schwa in (107b & c) and (108b & c) must be present because a high tone needs to be realized in such a position. But I will claim below that this tonal change can be perceived on the first syllable of a verb too. Hence it is not clear whether the tonal change affects the entire verb or just some part. As I mentioned in chapters 2 and 3, the exact prosodic changes that may apply in cases like this is beyond the scope of this work. What is curious in Awing, though, is that the tonal change is not systematic in the sense that the change does not affect embedded verbs as described in Korsah and Murphy (2019) for Asanti Twi.³⁸ Actually there is no tonal effect when the ex-situ wh/focused phrase is not in a root clause. In other words, when a wh/focused phrase shows up in a matrix-initial position, neither the matrix nor the embedded verb(s) exhibit prosodic (or morphological) change. The examples in (111b & c) and (112b & c) illustrate. Once more examples (111a) and (112a) are the base sentences indicating the normal patterns.

- (111) a. Neh loonê ηgô Tsefor/wô zúnə ηgəsáηô/kô
 Neh want that Tsefor/who buy maize/what
 ‘Neh wants Tsefor/who to buy maize/what (?)’
- b. lô wə pá’a Neh loonê ηgə a zúnə ηgəsáηô
 LE who RM Neh want that SM buy maize
 ‘Who does Neh want to buy the maize?’
- c. lô kô pá’a Neh loonê ηgə Tsefor a zúnə
 LE what RM Neh want that Tsefor SM buy
 ‘What does Neh want Tsefor to buy?’
- d. lô kô pá’a Ngwe kwan ηgô Neh loonê ηgə Tsefor zúnə
 LE what RM Ngwe think that Neh wants that Tsefor buy
 ‘What does Ngwe think that Neh wants Tsefor to buy?’

³⁸ To the best of my knowledge, apart from koundjeu (2020), tonal changes as a reflex of movement have not been described in Grassfields Bantu. Koundjeu (2020:130) indicates that in medumba the tones on the verb and a preverbal ‘auxiliary’ are modified in object and subject wh-focus extractions in root clauses, but that only the ‘auxiliary’ (i.e., excluding the matrix verb(s)) indicates the tonal change in non-root clauses. The overall patterns in medumba as described by koundjeu show object subject asymmetry (see koundjeu 2020 for details). This is different in Awing, where only the verb’s tones are modified in root clauses. Moreover, unlike medumba, the tonal change in root clauses in Awing does not distinguish arguments from adjuncts.

- (112) a. Aghetse nə η-suŋ ηgə Tsefor/wə (a) ləgə mɔ-ŋwɪŋə/kə
 Aghetse P2 N-say that Tsefor/who SM take small-cutlass
 ‘Aghetse said that Tsefor/who took the knife/what?’
- b. lə wə pɑ’a Aghetse nə η-suŋ ηgə a ləgə mɔ-ŋwɪŋə
 LE who that Aghetse P2 N-say that SM take small-cutlass
 ‘Who did Aghetse say that s/he took the knife?’
- c. lə kə pɑ’a Aghetse nə η-suŋ ηgə Tsefor ləgə
 LE what that Aghetse P2 N-say that Tsefor take
 ‘What did Aghetse say that Tsefor took?’

The same scenario described above is noticeable with adjuncts. For instance the verb *finə* ‘sell’ has a low tone on the first syllable but when the adjunct is questioned as in (113b), one can clearly perceive a high tone on the syllable. This is not the case when the adjunct occurs in the initial-position of the matrix clause in (113c).

- (113) a. Neh a nə n-finə ηgəsəŋə ghə-kə
 Neh SM P2 N-sell maize when
 ‘When did Neh sell the maize?’
- b. lə ghə-kə pɑ’a Neh a nə n-finə ηgəsəŋə
 LE when RM Neh SM P2 N-sell maize
 ‘When did Neh sell the maize?’
- c. lə ghə-kə pɑ’a Tsefor nə η-suŋ ηgə Neh a nə n-finə ηgəsəŋə
 LE when RM Tsefor P2 N-say that Neh SM P2 N-sell maize
 ‘When did Tsefor say that Neh sold the maize?’

For completeness, it should be noted that relative clauses exhibit the same tonal modification and they apply in the same context, that is, only when the head noun immediately precedes the modifying clause:

- (114) a. Alombah a zənə ηgəsəŋə
 Alombah SM buy maize
 ‘Alombah has bought maize’
- b. ηgəsəŋə pɑ’a Alombah a zənə
 maize RM Alombah SM buy

‘Maize that Alombah has bought’

- c. lě ɲgəsáj pá’a Neh kwaŋ ɲgǒ Alombah ʒunə
 this maize RM Neh think that Alombah buy
 ‘This is the maize that Neh thinks that Alombah bought’

The languages that tonal changes have been identified in the contexts described here have been used as evidence, or better still a reflex of movement. What distinguishes Awing, as already mentioned, is that such a reflex applies only when the wh/focused phrase immediately precedes the clause that it is supposed to have originated from. So one may question whether in Awing movement is attested only in such root clauses. Before we answer such a question, it is important to recall from section 6.4.1 that an ex-situ focused phrase actually resides in a copular clause which can show up with a tense, negation and the copular verb (see example (71)). As shown (115) below, an ex-situ wh-phrase can also show up with the copular verb and an aspectual marker.

- (115) a. ló pí m-bə wó [CPpá’a *(á) tsábnó lé]
 LE ITE N-be who RM SM talk so
 Lit: ‘Who is it again (that is talking this way)?’
- b. ló pí m-bə kó [CPpá’a Tsefor a ʒúnǒ]
 LE ITE N-be what RM Tsefor SM buy
 Lit: ‘What is it again (that Tsefor is buying)?’
- c. ló lan m-bə fú [CP pá’a ó pe’ n-dó’kǒ ɲkáp yíwə]
 LE actually N-be where RM you P1 N-keep money DEF
 Lit: ‘Where is it actually (that you kept the money)?’

What these examples suggest is that ex-situ wh/focused elements are hosted in a full-fledged copular clause. This copular clause is obscured because the copular verb can only show up when a tense or aspectual marker is used; which is a typical characteristic of copular clauses in Awing, as shown in chapter 5. So what seems to be happening is that when the copular clause immediately precedes the embedded, or better still relative clause, the ‘predicate’ of the copular verb, that is, the wh/focused phrase is interpreted as the relative head. Hence it is logical to conclude, in line with Hartmann & Zimmermann (2012), that there is a semantic operator that links the predicate of the copular/matrix verb to the interpretative site in the relative clause, and this operator movement is captured by tonal modification in Awing. On

the other hand, when a clause intervenes between the *wh*/focused phrase, or even the relative head, the operator movement is completely obscured.

We are now in a position to say that while in-situ *wh*-phrases stay in the clauses in which they originate, their ex-situ counterparts, although often parsed as arguments or adjuncts of the embedded structures, do not originate from such clauses. There is therefore no need to think of ex-situ *wh*/focused phrases as a movement operation being triggered by a *wh*/focused feature (or precisely the focus operator LE which obligatorily shows up with ex-situ *wh*-focused phrases), as suggested in Fominyam (2012). The data and argument here point to the conclusion that *wh*/focused phrases are derived via a non-movement relation, which seems to be a very common phenomenon across Bantu (see, e.g., Carstens 2005: Kilega; Diercks 2010: Lubukusu; Hartmann & Zimmermann 2012: Bura; Muriungi 2003: Kĩitharaka; Sabel 2000: Kikuyu and Duala; Sabel & Zeller 2006: Zulu; Schneider-Zioga 2007: Kinande, etc.).

6.7 Summary

This chapter begins by showing that *wh*-phrases can be realized either in-situ (i.e., in the position in which the noun phrase (NP) that corresponds to the *wh*-phrase will normally occur in declarative sentences) or in sentence-initial position (termed, ex-situ). We have seen that postverbal *wh*-phrases can be realized in three different ways: as bare *wh*-phrases in-situ, with the LE morpheme still in-situ, and in cleft-like constructions where the LE morpheme is obligatory. We also saw that parallel to other Niger-Congo languages (e.g., Schachter & Fromkin 1968; Korsah & Murphy 2019; Amaechi 2020), Awing indicates a prosodic (H-H tone) on the embedded verb when the *wh*-phrase is in the ex-situ position. I however demonstrate in section 6.6 that in Awing, such a prosodic mechanism is lost in constellations involving more than one embedded clause. I then argue that this cannot be used as a valid movement diagnostic in Awing (unlike in, e.g., Igbo: Amaechi 2020 and Asante Twi: Korsah & Murphy 2019).

Concentrating on the description in 6.2, we saw in section 6.2.4 that either the *wh*-phrase is realized in-situ, or in the left periphery of the highest matrix clause (e.g., as in Duala: Epée 1976b) in LDQs. The Awing data (and an experiment Fominyam et al. (in progress)) however show that speaker prefer to have the *wh*-phrase in the initial-position of the highest matrix clause; perhaps to facilitate its scopal reading. Section 6.2.5 then showed that *wh*-phrases cannot be used in non-interrogative contexts. While discussing multiple *wh*-questions, we saw that parallel to German—e.g, Fanselow et al. (2011), Awing grammar disrespects the *wh*-

superiority effect which requires fronting of the higher (superior) *wh*-phrase while the lower one remains in-situ (cf. Kuno & Robinson 1972). The Awing data further exhibit an apparent anti-superiority effect, where *wh*-constructions are degraded when the *wh*-subject shows up in sentence-initial position while the object *wh*-phrase remains in-situ (Fominyam 2015). Such (apparent) anti-superiority effect (coupled with island insensitivity; section 6.6) has been observed in other languages (e.g., Moken, an Austronesian language spoken in Thailand: Baclawski Jr. & Jenks 2016) and will constitute an exciting research domain in Awing (Fominyam et al. (in prep)).

Section 6.3 argues that in Awing, *wh*-phrases inherently (or lexically) denote alternatives. As such, they semantically behave as inherently focused, corresponding to Rooth's (1985)-style alternatives. LE's role in *wh*-questions is therefore not to encode focus, but exhaustive semantics, as in corresponding English clefts (e.g., *Who was it that sold the cow?* vs. *Who sold the cow?*). From this understanding, I argue that LE incarnates existential and exhaustivity presuppositions in questions that do not only make its use contrastive with salient alternative(s), analogous to Destruel and Velleman's (2014) observation that contrast is needed for English clefts, but further presupposes an exhaustive answer.

Section 6.4 argues that the Awing subject position cannot be considered as 'topical' (contra, e.g., Baker 2003; Bresnan & Mchombo 1987, among others) or [-Focus] in Zeller's (2008) terms. Section 6.5 then questions why the LE morpheme—a focus sensitive operator and the subject marker, are incompatible with a *wh*-subject. I show that LE cannot occur with the *wh*-subject (or any subject NP) because it has a fixed syntactic position, namely below the subject following AgrP. Regarding the unavailability of the SM with *wh*-subjects, it is argued that this is due to the fact that *wh*-phrases (in Awing) are non-referential and the SM being a pronominal element cannot refer to them. I conclude, in line with the proposals in Carstens (2005) and Baker (2003, 2008), that the EPP is mainly a property of the SM in Awing. As such, whenever the subject NP (be it a referential or non-referential NP) shows up in the position preceding the verb (i.e., SVO clauses), it is triggered by the SM, and it does not matter whether the SM is overt or covert (contra Fominyam & Georgi (2021)). We then got to ex-situ *wh*-phrases and following an ongoing experiment (Fominyam et al. (in prep)), I claim that ex-situ *wh*-phrases cannot be conceived as a typical movement operation in Awing.

Chapter 7

Focalization

7.1 Introduction

Much has been done as far as focalization is concerned in Awing (Fominyam 2015; 2018, Fominyam & Šimík 2017). This chapter will summarize the findings in these works, indicate some of the open questions and then elaborate on the main challenge that the syntactic analysis proposed in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) encounters, specifically with verb focus and negation.

The chapter has three main parts. In the first part (Sections 7.2-7.3), two main types of focus in Awing are distinguished: morphologically unmarked focus (information focus) and morphologically marked focus. The latter includes corrective focus and selective focus in connection with alternative questions. In the second part (Section 7.4), the notion of exhaustivity is discussed. The section begins with morphological elements like indefinite and universal quantifiers that are incompatible with the LE morpheme. It is shown that exhaustivity is something that cases of morphologically marked focus have in common, and it is argued based on a number of diagnostics that exhaustivity is part of the semantics of the LE morpheme and not derived via contextual implicature. The third part (Section 7.5) is concerned with the syntax of verb focus and negation. A recap of the syntactic analysis proposed in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) is presented and the challenge it faces, specifically in negative clause, is highlighted. I then concentrate on negative clauses and provide a (potential) solution on how to derive verb focus and negation.

My analysis of focus in Awing differs in a crucial way from previous analyses on focus in most (Western) Bantu (e.g., Aboh 2004; Bassong 2014; Biloa 2020, among many others) that rely on the cartographic approach which is based on a focus head and ‘criterial’ checking of a focus feature (Rizzi 1997; 2013, Cinque & Rizzi 2008, and related works). As far as Awing is concerned, it is argued that there is no F(ocus) head in Awing clausal projection, which leads to two basic conclusions: (1) answerhood focus is not marked by means of any prosodic, morphological or morph-syntactic mechanism and, (2) exhaustive focus (which can be

thought of as the English-type cleft interpretation) instantiates a syntactic head (i.e., the LE morpheme) which associates with the focused category. Hence, focus in Awing is always realized in-situ no matter whether the focused category shows up in a monoclausal or biclausal structure (cf. chapter 6 § 6.6).

Concerning focus interpretation, it has already been indicated (Chapter 6 § 6.3) that focus is considered from the Roothian (1985) Alternative Semantics perspective which, according to Krifka (2007:6), “indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of a linguistic expression.” So in a sense, focus has a core unifying function which is the interpretation of relevant alternatives within a context (van der Wal 2016:3). The various focus types (e.g., correction, selection, exhaustive) arise due to additional pragmatic/semantic factors (Zimmermann and Onea 2011). From this understanding, languages resort to different strategies: prosodic, morphological and syntactic, or a combination of these sub-systems to achieve different focus interpretations/types. These various strategies are considered (here) as focus marking. So, while focus types will refer to the semantic or pragmatic interpretation attributed to a focalized element, focus marking can be thought of as a strategy that a language employs to express a focus type. This means that certain types of focus can be unmarked, as shown in the next section with new information focus in Awing.

7.2 New information focus; the unmarked focus

There are numbers of way to obtain focus among which is question-answer congruence. The modelling of focus through wh-question answer pairs is a good way to achieving focus since this permits to neatly tailor the focus size (see, e.g., Krifka 2007; Lambrecht 1994). Hence the bracketed categories in (1b) through (4b) represent different focus sizes (or categories) corresponding to the wh-phrases in the questions in (1a) through (4a).

(1) Subject focus:

- a. wə pe’ ŋaŋnə mətó’ə
 who P1 cook potatoes
 ‘Who cooked potatoes?’
- b. [Alombah]_F a pe’ ŋaŋnə mətó’ə/zərə
 Alombah SM P1 cook potatoes/it
 ‘Alombah cooked potatoes/it’

(2) Object focus:

- a. Alombah a pe' η-ηαηηηə kó
Alombah SM P1 N-cook what
'What did Alombah cook?'
- b. a pe' η-ηαηηηə [mətó'ə]_F
he P1 N-cook potatoes
'He cooked potatoes'

(3) Verb (V) focus:

- a. Alombah a ghé' léé nó ηgasáη yíwə
Alombah SM do how with maize DEF
'What has Alombah done with the maize?'
- b. a pe' [η-ηαηηηə]_F zərə
he P1 N-cook it
'He cooked it'

(4) Verb phrase (VP) focus:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Neh a fá'ə kó | b. a tó [η-ηαηηηə məjîə] _F |
| Neh SM work what | She PROG N-cook food |
| 'What is Neh doing?' | 'She is cooking food' |

The focalized element, for example the subject (Alombah) in (1b) is considered as such because it 'introduces an alternative into the common ground which has not been explicitly mentioned in the preceding discourse' (Zimmermann and Onea 2011:1663). This alternative is chosen from a set of individuals that could possibly fulfil the role prescribed by the predicate (i.e., cooked potatoes). The other alternatives are implicit in such contexts (see chapter 6 § 6.3.2). The type of focus instantiated in (1b) through (4b) is considered new/information focus (Halliday 1967; Jackendoff 1972) and it basically updates the discourse with the new information without any presupposition with respect to the focused element. Note that there is no prosodic or morpho-syntactic difference between the questions and answers in (1) to (4); hence the position that new information focus is not formally marked in any way in Awing. On the other hand, 'contrastive' focus is morpho-syntactically marked. The following section illustrates how this is achieved in Awing.

7.3 Morphological focus ‘marking’; the data

The association of a focus particle with a focused category can be thought of as morphological focus marking (but should not be mistaken with ‘focus markers’ (FMs), e.g., in languages like Gungbe: Aboh 2004, 2010; Tuki: Biloa 1997, 2013, which are said to be special particles marking the focus of the sentence). Rather, morphological focus marking in Awing refers to the association of focus particles like *tsó’ə* ‘only’ or the LE morpheme with a focused category, exemplified with the object focus in (5b) and (5c), respectively. Concerning the interpretation of focus with the LE morpheme, keep in mind that the LE morpheme is felicitous with focus only in contexts where alternatives are explicit. For instance, using the LE morpheme as an answer to a wh-question requires its presence in the question (see chapter 6 § 6.3.2 on the formal difference between a wh-phrase which is used with or without the LE morpheme and how the LE morpheme renders the alternative explicit in wh-question-answer pairs).

- (5) a. Alambah a pe’ η-ηαη ló kó
 Alambah SM P1 N-cook LE what
 ‘What did Alambah cook?’
- b. Alambah a pe’ η-ηαη tó’ə [mətó’ə]_F
 Alambah SM P1 N-cook only potatoes
 ‘Alambah cooked only potatoes’
- c. Alambah a pe’ η-ηαη ló [mətó’ə]_F
 Alambah SM P1 N-cook LE potatoes
 ‘It is potatoes that Alambah cooked’

The association of the focus particle ‘only’ and the LE morpheme with the verb differs from other categories in that the verb is obligatorily doubled and the particles show up in a position preceding the second copy of the verb, as can be seen in (6b) and (6c).

- (6) Verb (V) focus:
- a. Alambah a ghe’ ló léé nó ηgasáη yíwə
 Alambah SM do LE how with maize DEF
 ‘What has Alambah done with the maize?’
- b. a pe’ η-ηájηə ηgasáη yíwə/ zə’ tó’ə [ηájη-nó]_F
 he P1 N-cook maize DEF/it only cook-INF

overview of obligatory resumption in subject relatives clauses), or it remains in its base generated position, i.e., in SpecVP (Fominyam 2018), as in (8b).

- (8) a. ló Alombah pá'a *(a) fĩṅə məjĩə
 LE Alombah RM SM sell food
 ‘It is Alombah who sells food’
- b. ló fĩ Alombah m-fĩṅə məjĩə
 LE sell Alombah N-sell food
 ‘It is Alombah who sells food’

Section 7.5 and the subsequent ones will concentrate on the syntax of verb focus and negation. In doing so, a synopsis of the syntax of other focused categories is highlighted. But before we get to that, the following section will clarify the interpretative component of the LE morpheme with focused categories.

7.4 Focus interpretation with the LE morpheme

Fominyam & Šimík (2017) argue that the LE morpheme is a morphological exponent of a functional head Exh, which corresponds to Horvath's (2010) EI (Exhaustive Identification) head postulated for Hungarian and which introduces an exhaustivity presupposition. The primary objective here is to show additional data on Awing that supports this claim.

Before we get into that proper, it might be helpful to mention that notions like correction, exclusivity and exhaustivity can overlap in interpretation. For example, van der Wal (2016:4) notes that “exclusive focus means that there is at least some other referent to which the predicate does not apply, which leaves open the option that in fact all alternatives are excluded.” As argued in chapter 6 § 6.3.2, the use of the LE morpheme with wh-phrases presupposes an exhaustive answer. But the exhaustivity in wh-questions is also said to imply that a salient (or contextual) alternative does not hold, which suggests exclusion. So, the boundary between exclusion and exhaustivity with focalized elements can be much narrowed since exclusivity (and perhaps correction) merely leaves open the option that all alternatives are excluded (meaning that they could as well be all excluded). The situation might be more complex in Awing given that the same morphological particle which is argued to have a semantic exhaustive exponent is also used in contexts that (primarily) target notions like exclusion, correction or selection. Hence, it is important to question whether the LE morpheme’s exhaustive interpretation is underspecified (as claimed in Fominyam & Šimík 2017) and whether the other interpretational effects are merely pragmatic, or if it is the other

way round; that is, whether the LE morpheme’s exhaustivity with focused elements is an implicature (similar to what has been argued for in, e.g., Hausa: Hartmann and Zimmermann 2007; Kîtharaka: Abel and Muriungis 2008).

To tackle this issue, I will begin by indicating the various contexts that the LE morpheme can be used in to express, say, ‘contrasting’ focus, and then move on to show various morphological elements that are incompatible with the LE morpheme (in the spirit of É. Kiss 1998) and finally conclude with some exhaustive tests available in the literature (complementing those presented in Fominyam & Šimík 2017). The conclusion is that exhaustivity is an underspecified feature of the LE morpheme.

7.4.1 ‘Contrast’

Contrast is used here as an umbrella term for non-information focus. The main difference between information focus and contrastive focus is that the alternatives in the former are often implied whereas the alternatives have to be explicit with contrastive focus. Keep in mind that the target is on contrastive focus induced by LE morpheme. Nonetheless, it is important to note that contrastive focus can refer to different notions (see, e.g., Repp 2010; Destruel and Velleman 2014). For example, contrastive focus can be triggered at the syntactic level. This sort of contrast (provided in (9)) is what Rooth (1992) considers as symmetric contrast.

(9) Context: Do you know when the chief will address the people?

Tsefor pə’ ŋ-suŋ ŋgɔ́ a yí tséebə mbo [pə-mbyáŋnə]_F [məsânə]_F

Tsefor P1 N-say that he F1 talk to PL-man morning

tsi’ tséebə mbo [pə-ŋgyě]_F [nkwanɔ́]_F

then talk to PL-woman evening

‘Tsefor said he will address the men in the morning and the women in the evening’

The context in (9) seeks to know when the chief will address his people and the answer distinguishes different groups (i.e., men versus women) and different times (i.e., morning versus evening). Contrast here is deduced by ‘opposing’ the different groups of individuals and various moments that they will be addressed. Further note that this is different from ‘pragmatic contrast’ which is a core (interpretative) aspect of focus alternatives (Molnár 2002). That is, by choosing an alternative from a set of possible choices in a wh-question-answer congruence, the speaker is by default contrasting the chosen alternative with the other relevant propositions. Hence, in a sense, ‘contrast’ is intrinsically linked to focus

interpretation, thus making its definition complex. In what follows, we stick to terms like corrective focus, alternative (or selective) focus and exhaustive focus when discussing the role of the LE morpheme with focused element.

7.4.1.1 *Corrective focus*

Corrective focus replaces existing information which is assumed by the speaker to be false with a new alternative. The new alternative therefore contrasts with the existing one. So, corrective focus will be most felicitous in contexts where the alternatives are explicit for all discourse participants. In Awing, the most adequately way to contrast a preceding alternative, as that in (10b), is with the use of the LE morpheme (10d), explaining why (10c) is considered incongruous.

- (10) Q: a. Alombah a pe' ŋ-ŋaŋnə kɔ́
 Alombah SM P1 N-cook what
 'What did Alombah cook?'
- A: b. a pe' ŋ-ŋaŋ [mətó'ə]F
 he P1 N-cook potatoes
 'He cooked potatoes'
- c. #əməm, a pe' ŋ-ŋaŋ [ndzô]F
 no he P1 N-cook beans
 '(No), he cooked beans'
- d. a pe' ŋ-ŋaŋ lɔ́ [ndzô]F
 he P1 N-cook LE beans
 'It is beans that he cooked'

Although (10c) might be used to contradict the alternative provided in (10b), it is not the (most) appropriate strategy. This is because by using the LE morpheme in the answer in (10d), the speaker explicitly 'assert' the selected alternative and at the same time 'negates' (or excludes) the preceding one. This also explains why the use of the negative marker *əməm* 'no' is not necessarily with corrective focus, in Awing. In other words, the negative marker *əməm* 'no' merely rejects the presented alternative but, crucially, does not indicate any affirmative commitment w.r.t the focus. As such, the focused element (in (10c)) could be interpreted as an additional element, among different scenarios. Conversely, the use of the LE morpheme, as earlier mentioned, asserts the accuracy of the chosen alternative which may not be challenged.

An unchallengeable alternative (from the speaker’s perspective) means that the alternative is exhaustive.

However, if it is the case that the speaker in (10d)’s exhaustive assertion cannot be incorporated into the common ground because it is not mutually accepted by the participants, specifically speaker (10b), this latter might resort to what Downing & Pompino-Marschall (2013:666) consider as ‘emphatic paralinguistic’ contexts. Hence speaker (10b), in an effort to counteract on (10d)’s assertion, can realize the focused element in sentence-initial position, as in (11) below.

- (11) lə [mətó’ə]F pá’a a pe’ ŋ-ŋaŋ
 LE potatoes RM he P1 N-cook
 ‘It is potatoes that he cooked’

Notice that the interpretation (indicated with the English cleft-like sentences) is same for (10d) and (11). Essentially, the LE morpheme is obligatory in both strategies. This is why Fominyam (2012), for lack of a better term, labelled sentence-initial focus as [+Semantic Strength] which (does not have to do with semantics, per se, but) captures, among other things, the mindset of the speaker. The conclusion is that the LE morpheme is used in both (10d) and (11) to indicate exhaustivity (to be further developed in § 7.4.2). However, notions like: irritation, provocation, surprise or level of politeness can cause the speakers to resort to the biclausal strategy in order to place the focalized element in sentence-initial position. But such paralinguistic factors do not constitute core notions of information structure (Chafe 1976; Krifka 2008).

7.4.1.2 *Alternative questions; selective focus*

Al(ternative) Q-(uestions) (ALT-Q) typically have a restrictive set of alternatives and require the questionee to select one of the alternatives. In Awing, the use of the LE morpheme with ALT-Qs is optional in both the question and the answer:

- (12) a. Alombah a zu(nə) (lə) mətó’ə ké ndzô
 Alombah SM buy LE potatoes or beans
 ‘Did Alombah buy potatoes or beans?’
 b. a zu(nə) (lə) mətó’ə
 SM buy LE potatoes
 ‘He bought potatoes’

The above definition of ALT-Qs suggests that, from the questioner’s perspective, only one of the alternatives holds. However, the answer can be against such an expectation, and this would be accepted by the questioner in Awing when the question is posed without the LE morpheme. That is, the omission of the LE morpheme in the question in (12a) could result in different scenarios: it could be in a world in which Alombah bought both potatoes and beans, or just one of the alternatives, or still there is a possibility that he did not buy anything. What is interesting in Awing is that by using the LE morpheme in the question, the questioner seems not only to be ‘certain’ that something was bought but further assumes that only one of the alternatives holds. As such, the LE morpheme constrains the answer by requiring the precise alternative. To this effect, consider the data in (13), where the focal of the disjunctives are the numerals (i.e., one or two containers). Example (13b) shows that a substitution in the answer with a non-given alternative (i.e., one and a half container) is an infelicitous move.

- (13) a. Alombah a zu ló tá’ ŋkag məghó kə ŋkag pê
 Alombah SM buy LE one container oil or container two
 ‘Did Alombah buy one container of oil or two containers?’
- b. #a zu ndó tá’ nə akəmə
 SM buy like one with half
 ‘He bought about one and a half container’

Note that if the LE morpheme is omitted in (13a) the response in (13b) will be an appropriate answer, since the omission of LE in the question does not restrict the questionee’s response.

Now, the claim that the LE morpheme in both questions and answers in ALT-Q indicates that only one of the alternatives holds is tantamount to saying that the LE morpheme functions as an exhaustive operator not only with the chosen alternative but also in the question. This should be expected given that the LE morpheme intrinsically presupposes the exclusion of other relevant alternatives (cf. chapter 6.3) and only two disjuncts are computed in ALT-Qs (like those in (11) and (12)). Hence, the exclusive component (which amounts to exhaustivity in ALT-Qs) is not directly challengeable and thus constitutes a non-at-issue implication of a conventional presupposition (Aloni and Egře 2008), deduced by the meaning component (or semantics) of the LE morpheme, Lee (2017:12 with slight modifications on my part).

I have argued here that corrective focus is interpreted as exhaustive in Awing because it is necessarily realized with the LE morpheme. When ALT-Q or selective focus is realized with the LE morpheme, exhaustivity follows naturally since just two alternative are involved and

the exclusion of one by the LE morpheme implies that the other holds. We will now turn to some exhaustive diagnostics.

7.4.2 Exhaustivity

As defined in the preceding section, the type of exhaustivity discussed here goes back to É. Kiss's (1998) identification focus which 'identifies' the focused alternative as the referent for which the proposition is true and presuppose that the other relevant alternatives are false. To show that this applies with focus that is associated with the LE morpheme, this section will unfold with two principal objectives: (1) identify morphological elements in Awing that are incompatible with the LE morpheme and, (2) apply exhaustivity tests available in the literature with specific settings pertaining to the Awing context/culture.

7.4.2.1 Exhaustivity is incompatible with indefinite and universal NPs/quantifiers

The discussion here centers on contexts that are incompatible with the LE morpheme but before we target specific morphemes, recall (from chapter 6 § 6.3.2) that the use of the LE morpheme, from a general understanding, has specific effects. For example, it is argued (cf. footnote 28) that the LE morpheme is infelicitous in a question like that in (13) below which requires an answer from a 'non-restrictive' set of alternatives.

- (13) Context: Apart from Neh;
mbó' Alombah a zó' #(lǎ) wə
COND Alombah SM marry LE who
'Who can Alombah marry?'

As noted in chapter 6, the LE morpheme is inappropriate in such a context because it exhausts the individuals that can possibly marry Alombah, which is against the context's expectation that seeks to know different people and not a specific person. The example in (13) shows that the LE morpheme imposes specificity on the focus it associates with. In effect, the incompatibility of the LE morpheme with what I call questions with no formal restriction on the possible alternatives/answers masks a morpho-semantic facet of this morpheme, namely an incompatibility with non-specific indefinites and universal NPs/quantifiers. The data in (14b) and (15b) show this incompatibility with indefinite NPs like 'something' and 'somewhere'.

- (14) a. Tsefor a yó zú ajú-yitsǎ
 Tsefor SM F2 buy thing-IND
 ‘Tsefor will buy something’
- b. *Tsefor a yó zú lǎ ajú-yitsǎ
 Tsefor SM F2 buy LE thing-IND
 Int: ‘It is something that Tsefor will buy’
- (15) a. Tsefor a yó ghén alí’ə-yitsǎ
 Tsefor SM F2 go place-IND
 ‘Tsefor will go somewhere’
- b. *Tsefor a yó ghén lǎ alí’ə-yitsǎ
 Tsefor SM F2 go LE place-IND
 Int: ‘It is somewhere that Tsefor will go to’

There is an apparent exception to the data in (14) and (15). This has to do with the word for ‘someone’ *ɣwun-tsǎ*, which is derived from *ɣwunə* ‘person’ plus the indefinite suffix *-tsǎ*. This word can be interpreted as the indefinite NP ‘someone’ or ‘a specific person’, depending on the context. In any case, the *ɣwun-tsǎ* ‘someone’ morpheme can be used with the LE morpheme; however, it will be interpreted as a shift from non-human species to humans, as in (16) below.

- (16) Tsefor a zəə lǎ ɣwun-tsǎ
 Tsefor SM see LE person-IND
 ‘It is a human that Tsefor saw’ (not an animal)

Using the word for ‘someone’ in a generic way as ‘humans’ in order to permit the exclusion of alternatives (specifically non-humans) is not specific to Awing (see, van der Wal 2016 for a similar effect for the word for ‘person’ in Makhuwa). The ungrammaticality of (14b) and (15b) therefore suggest that indefinite NPs like ‘something’ and ‘somewhere’ offer no possibility for exclusion as they are too uninformative/unselective. Also observe that the morpheme corresponding to the IND(infinite marker) is truncated in ‘someone’(suggesting a sort of synthesis disfavouring the indefinite reading); besides this word can also be interpreted as ‘a specific person’. So its semantics seems to afford a specific reading, differentiating it from typical indefinite NPS like ‘something’ or ‘somewhere’, in Awing.

Now, given that focalization naturally updates the discourse with contentful elements, it can be questioned whether indefinite expressions are compatible with (information) focus in the first place. The declarative example in (17b) indicates that an indefinite NP is not a felicitous response to a wh-question, although the negative clause in (17c) can be a natural follow up to the question in (17a).

- (17) a. Tsefor a yó zúnə kó
 Tsefor SM F2 buy what
 ‘What will Tsefor buy?’
- b. #a yó zúnə ajú-yitsǎ
 SM F2 buy something
 ‘He will buy something’
- c. a yó kě ajú-yitsǎ zú pô
 SM F2 NEG something buy NEG
 ‘He will not buy anything’

The answer in (17b) is not ungrammatical: it is pragmatically inappropriate and this is because the speaker deliberately refuses to update the discourse by not providing a contentful referent. Conversely, (17c) is pragmatically appropriate since it update the discourse (albeit in a negative manner) by asserting that contrary to what the questioner thinks, nothing is to be bought. The fact that (17c) is a felicitous move and (18) below is ungrammatical shows that such indefinite expressions are excluded with the LE morpheme.

- (18) *a yó kě ló ajú-yitsǎ zú pô
 SM F2 NEG LE thing-IND buy NEG
 ‘It is not something that he will buy’

The reason why the LE morpheme is incompatible with such indefinite expressions is because ‘non-specifics do not generate alternatives’ (van der Wal 2016). Recall that the LE morpheme’s core function has to do with ‘identifying’ the alternative for which the proposition holds. So where there are no alternatives, LE’s usage is illicit.

Moreover, the LE morpheme is not only incompatibly with indefinite NPs but its usage with NPs that are modified by indefinite quantifier corresponding to ‘some’ and ‘about’ is also illicit. This is shown in (19c) and (20c).

- (19) a. Acho a nə n-dʒəə mə-ŋgəb (ndó) mən-teəlǎ
 Acho SM P2 N-steal PL-chicken about PL-three
 ‘Acho stole (about) three chickens’ (it could be less or more)
- b. Acho a nə n-zdəə lǎ mə-ŋgəb mən-teəlǎ
 Acho SM P2 N-steal LE PL-chicken PL-three
 ‘It is three chickens that Acho stole’ (not two or five...)
- c. *Acho a nə n-dʒəə lǎ mə-ŋgəb ndó mən-təelǎ
 Acho SM P2 N-steal LE PL-chicken about PL-three
 Int: ‘It is about three chickens that Acho stole’
- (20) a. Acho a yó ʒú ə-tsə’ pə-tsǎ
 Acho SM F2 buy PL-dress PL-IND
 ‘Acho will buy some dresses’
- b. Acho a yó ʒú lǎ ə-tsə’ə
 Acho SM F2 buy LE PL-dress
 ‘It is dresses that Acho will buy’
- c. *Acho a yó ʒú lǎ ə-tsə’ pə-tsǎ
 Acho SM F2 buy LE PL-dress PL-IND
 Int: ‘It is some dresses that Acho will buy’

Notice from (20) that Awing does not have a specific indefinite quantifier like ‘some’. This is expressed via the combination of the indefinite suffix *-tsə’* and a prefix corresponding to the nominal class of the head noun. Also, the quantifier ‘few’ would be *nta’lǎ* (literally: ‘one, one’) and it cannot also be combined with the LE morpheme. However, it has been shown that languages that have specific indefinite quantifiers like ‘some’ and ‘few’, the exclusion of alternative quantities “that are contextually relevant, e.g., the expected, the usual, or the necessary amount” is possible, Skopeteas & Fanselow (2010:40). As such, these quantifiers can be used in exclusive/exhaustive contexts. It is not entirely clear to me why Awing disallow such expressions with LE but that could be related to the fact that Awing does not have, as already noted, specific indefinite quantifiers. The difference could also be due to the fact that in languages like Georgian and German, either the noun or the quantifier can be accentuated with a higher pitch accent, but such stressing rules are not applicable in a tonal language like Awing.

Universal quantifiers also appear to be incompatible with the LE morpheme but the judgement is not consistent: while some speakers (immediately) reject the use of the LE morpheme in the constructions following the contexts provided in (21) and (22), others (including my own intuition) consider the use of LE in such constructions a rejection to the contextual assertion that considers only a partial set to hold for the proposition, i.e., ‘only men’ and ‘only ingredients’ in (21) and (22), respectively.

(21) Context: Tsefor was supposed to go to the palace and discuss with the men and the woman, but Ayafor said that while in the palace he saw only the men.

(əməm), Tsefor a nə n-dʒəənə (?lɔ) ŋwun-tsəmə
 no Tsefor SM P2 N-see LE person-all
 ‘(No), Tsefor saw everybody’

(22) Context: Tsefor was supposed to buy everything (that will be used to cook the food), but Ayafor said that he ended up buying only the ingredients for the soup.

(əməm), Tsefor a nə n-dʒunə (?lɔ) əjúmə-tsəmə
 no Tsefor SM P2 N-buy LE thing-all
 ‘(No) Tsefor bought everything’

Both sentences in (21) and (22) without the LE morpheme can felicitously be used as corrections to the contexts in (21) and (22), respectively. This might explain, to an extent, why the LE morpheme is rejected by some speakers. The (partial) unacceptability could also be related to the observation that universal quantifiers include all relevant alternatives, thus rendering exclusion impossible within such sets (É. Kiss 1998); or to the idea in É. Kiss (2016) that focus has a predicative role and universal quantifiers cannot function as nominal predicates (Giannakidou 2000).

The fact that non-specific indefinites and, arguably, universal NP/quantifiers render the use of the LE morpheme illicit is an indication that the exhaustivity is part of LE’s semantics. We now turn to some diagnostics that will further clarify the exhaustivity effect.

7.4.2.2 *Additional exhaustivity diagnostics*

This section presents additional exhaustivity tests. In applying any test with the LE morpheme, I use the latter in monoclausal structures, where the focused element is in a postverbal position since using the LE morpheme with the subject results in a biclausal cleft-like

structure and cleft are commonly considered as inherently exhaustive (É. Kiss 1998); although De Vaugh-Geiss (2020) argues against such a generalization.

The first test has to do with the incompatibility of exhaustive operators in what Hartmann and Zimmermann (2007) consider as non-exhaustive contexts. An example of such a context is provided in (23a), and (23b) follows-up by isolating one of the items.

- (23) a. m̀ ndzĩə pú pə-nəənə pá'à Neh fínô á m̀teenó.
 I know thing PL-many RM Neh sell in market.
 'I know a lot of things that Neh sells in the market'
- b. #Neh a fĩ ló ndzô á m̀teenó
 Neh SM sell LE beans in market
 'It is maize that Neh sells in the market'

Example (23a) maintains that Neh sells a lot of things. Hartmann and Zimmermann indicate that in such a situation, an exhaustive operator cannot pick up a unique item within a 'domain that is explicitly introduced as containing more than the focused entity'. This is precisely the problem with the follow-up in (23b), where the use of the LE morpheme counteracts the assertion in (23a) by indicating that Neh sells only beans.

Another non-exhaustive context is the so-called 'mention-some environment'. For example in a context where the speaker asks a question that can have different answer possibilities. Such a context disallows a specific listing of an only true alternative, as shown in the answer in (24b).

(24) *Context:* Alombah visits Neh and while they are in the market Alombah wants to smoke but does not know where to buy cigarette and decides to asks the following question:

- Q: a. támbo' maŋ zúnə ndəpa'ə fú
 COND I buy cigarette where
 'Where can I buy cigarette?'
- A: b. #támbo' o zúnə ndəpa'ə ló məm ntaŋə nə
 POT you buy cigarette LE in shop this
 'It is from this store that you can buy cigarette'
- OR:
- c. zú #(ló) məm ntaŋə nə
 buy LE in shop this

‘Buy from this store’

#‘Buy only from this store’

It is very unlikely (and both Alombah and Neh are aware) that just a single shop sells cigarettes. However, by using the LE morpheme in the answer in (24b), or the elided form in (24c), the speaker is actually implying that only the shop that is indicated sells cigarettes. Notice that these tests are more or less same with the context I earlier provided in (13) and termed as questions with no formal restriction on the possible alternatives. As noted then, these types of contexts are incompatible with the LE morpheme since they imply non-exhaustivity, while LE implies the opposite. Precisely, the LE morpheme *specifies* the only true alternative. Nonetheless, Hartmann and Zimmermann (2007:14) rightly observed that the use of exhaustive operators can be amended in such contexts by means of accommodations. That is, “the property under discussion is specified in such a way that it will apply to a unique individual, in congruence with the exhaustivity requirement.” Among other ways, this can be achieved in Awing by also using the LE morpheme in the question. For example, if the questioner in (24a) wants to know the exact place where he can buy cigarette, he can do so by associating the LE morpheme with the wh-phrase (cf. chapter 6.3.2).

Another exhaustive diagnostic (from É. Kiss 1998) has to do with so-called ‘follow-up contexts’. The test is based on the idea that if an element is interpreted exhaustively, then a follow-up clause adding another item to the already exhaustive element should be impossible. This can be applied in various ways. For example, the construction in (25a) indicates that Neh bought maize and nothing else, so the continuation introduced by the additive particle that she also bought maize is disallowed. Notice that even if another clause is included to override the additive item introduced by the second clause, the sentence will still not be pragmatically coherent.

(25) a. #Neh zu ló ŋgəsájə ŋkə n-dʒunə məndzô
Neh buy LE maize also N-buy peanuts
Int: ‘It is maize that Neh bought, and also peanuts’

b. #Neh zu ló ŋgəsájə ŋkə n-dunə məndzô
Neh buy LE maize also N-buy peanuts
a kě ló ndzô zu pô
SM NEG LE beans buy NEG

Int: ‘Neh bought maize and also peanuts; it is beans that she didn’t buy’

Another way in which this test can be applied is to reverse the follow-up scenario and have new information focus precede the focused element which associates with the LE morpheme. In such a scenario, the follow-up alternative that associates with LE makes no sense.

- (26). a. Alombah a pe' η-ghenê mæteenó
 Alombah SM P1 N-go market
 'Alombah went to the market'
- b. a pe' η-kó η-ghenê afoonə
 SM P1 N-also N-go farm
 'He also went to the farm'
- c. ?a pe' η-kó η-ghen ló afoonə
 SM P1 N-also N-go LE farm
 Int: 'he also went to the farm'

Example (26b) is a felicitous reply to (26a), where the speaker indicates that in addition to the market, Alombah also went to the farm. The additive operator in (26c) has the same role as in (26b): it implies that Alombah went to the market and the farm. However, the LE morpheme contradicts such an implicature by asserting that he went only to the farm. This means that the additive particle 'also' and the LE morpheme cannot occur in the same clause and associate with the same focus.

Another context where the use of the LE morpheme is not permitted is when an additive proposition is introduced with *tá-ηkó*, which has a scalar meaning that can roughly be translated as 'and even'. A context is provided in (27) with follow-up answers.

(27) Context: Alombah is not supposed to drink alcohol. But he went to a wedding and upon return the wife realized that he is behaving strangely and ask the son who was with him the following question:

Q. Did Alombah drink alcohol?

- A. a. a pə' nō fu-məlo' tá-ηkó nō məlo'-mə-məkáló
 he P1 drink white-wine until-again drink wine-LINK-white man
 'He drank palm wine and even drank beer'
- b. *a pə' nō ló fu-məlo' tá-ηkó nō məlo'-mə-məkáló
 he P1 drink LE white-wine until-again drink wine-LINK-white man

Int: ‘He drank palm wine and even drank beer’

The son uses the scalar morpheme in (27a) to indicate that Alombah did not only drink palm wine but he went forth to drink beer, where beer is conceived as having a higher degree of alcohol. Hence, (27b) is illicit because, say, a ‘stronger’ alternative, that is, an alternative which is more likely to have caused the drunkenness is considered as true to the proposition whereas the use of the LE morpheme does not only presupposes that only the ‘weaker’ one holds but, recall from the discussion on corrective focus, negates other relevant alternatives. Note that LE’s interpretation does not rely on the interpretative (or scalar) status of the alternatives: if it were the case that LE associates with a ‘strong’ alternative adding a ‘weaker’ one would still result in inappropriateness. However, the difference between, e.g., (25) and (27) is that while the speaker in (25) merely attempts to add another alternative (propositions) to that specified by the LE morpheme (resulting in a pragmatic infelicity), the attempt to add an alternative (proposition) which is said to be ‘stronger’ than the one that occurs with the LE morpheme may be considered as kind of ‘challenging’ the meaning of LE (which excludes all relevant alternative). This kind of challenge is interpreted as a semantic conflict, resulting in unacceptability.

Another interesting test is that proposed by Szabolcsi (1981) which builds on the premise that a proposition represented by a conjoined NP entails the corresponding proposition where one of the conjuncts is dropped (É. Kiss 2016:677). So, in Awing, if (28b) with one of the conjuncts (i.e., cigarette) is realized without the LE morpheme, it would entail the conjoined proposition in (28a). However, using the LE morpheme would contradict the entailment since it would mean that only the given conjunct holds for the proposition. In the same way, if the conjoined NP is realized with the LE morpheme, as in (29a), the entailment obtained in (28a), that is, without LE, should still be available but using LE in (29b) would be perceived as a direct contradiction.

- (28) a. Alombah a pə' n-dʒu məlo'ə nɔ́ ndəpa'ə
Alombah SM P1 N-buy wine and cigarette
‘Alombah bought wine and cigarette’
- b. Alombah a pə' n-dʒunə (#lɔ́) ndəpa'ə
Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE cigarette
‘Alombah bought cigarette’

- (29) a. Alombah a pə' n-dʒu lə məlo'ə nə ndəpa'ə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE wine and cigarette
 'It is wine and cigarette that Alombah bought'
- b. Alombah a pə' n-dʒunə (*lə) ndəpa'ə
 Alombah SM P1 N-buy LE cigarette
 'Alombah bought cigarette'

The final diagnostic that I will like to discuss here is adopted from Hartmann and Zimmerman's (2007) notion of 'inferences based on strong exhaustivity'. A context is given for (30) and the possible answers with their implications are provided.

Context: There will be a death ceremony in Alombah's house and the wife asks him: will the kwi'foh dance group come? But men are not required (by the tradition) to talk about the Kwi'foh (a secret group) with women. So Alombah responds in one of the following ways:

- (30) a. apɛnə əkogə yó yǎ
 dance widows F2 come
 'The widow's dance group will come'
- b. lə yó yǎ apɛnə əkogə
 LE F2 come dance widows
 'It is the widow's dance group that will come'
- c. tsɔ'ə apɛnə əkogə yó yǎ
 only dance widows F2 come
 'Only the widow's dance group will come.'

The example in (30a) without the LE morpheme does not tell the wife anything about the Kwi'foh dance; it can be considered as a deliberate diversion from the question. Conversely, as noted in chapter 6 § 6.3.1, both the LE and the *tsɔ'ə* morphemes can be interpreted in a similar manner in declarative sentences. As such, the responses in (30b) and (30c) with the use of the LE morpheme and *tsɔ'ə* 'only', respectively, explicitly entail that only the widow's dance group will come. Hence, both answers may be considered as direct responses to the wife's inquiry. In line with Hartmann and Zimmerman's 2007 observation in Hausa, it should be noted that *tsɔ'ə* 'only' in Awing seems to have a stronger entailment. However, this does not mean in Awing that exhaustivity with the LE morpheme is merely implied: it is clear to

the addressee in both (30b) and (30c) that only the widow's group will come, so much that she can be certain that the Kwi'foh's will not come. It will appear that the switch of entailment and presupposition (cf. chapter 6 § 6.3) is what makes the exhaustivity of *tsó'ə* 'only' apparently stronger than that of LE. That is, while 'only' presupposes that the widow's dance group will come and asserts that no other group will be there, LE presupposes that a dance group will come and that no other dance group will be there and asserts that the dance group will be the widow's group. So, the assertion (of 'only') that no other dance group will be there seems to trump the latter (of LE) indicating the actual dance group. However, part of the difference could also lie in the fact that LE has a 'composite' presupposition, that is, plus the exhaustivity reading, LE incarnates an existential presupposition (cf. chapter 6 § 6.3); I leave such technical semantic details for future research.

This section has provided additional data substantiating the argument in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) that the LE morpheme is interpreted as an exhaustive particle when it associates with focused elements. In particular, the fact that the LE morpheme is not only pragmatically incompatible in certain contexts but its combination with certain non-focus elements like non-specific indefinite NPs results to ungrammaticality is a strong indication that LE's exhaustivity is not implied contextually. Rather, LE's exhaustivity can be considered as part of its semantics. We will now proceed to the syntax of exhaustive focus. Emphasis is on verb focus and negation which, as we will see, cannot be accounted for via the syntactic analysis proposed in Fominyam & Šimík (2017). After briefly highlighting where the difficulty lies, I probe on the syntax of negation and conclude with a new perspective on verb focus which sees the focalized verb as a separate entity from the infinitive one.

7.5 Verb focus

Verb focus in most West African languages exhibits verb doubling (see, e.g., Vata: Koopman 1984; Tuki: Biloa 1997; Gungbe: Aboh 2006; Kabiye: Collins & Essizewa 2007; Krachi: Kandybowicz & Torrence 2016). In the majority of Grassfields languages (e.g., Nweh: Nkemnji 1995; Mbə̀lɔ̀gi: Ngu 2008; Bafut: Tamanji 2009; Medumba: Zimmermann & Kouankem 2012; Limbum: Becker & Nformi 2016, among many others), the verbal form that shows up with the focus operator/marker undergoes a nominalization process and takes an infinitival affix, thus functioning as a gerund. In Awing, the focused verb takes the infinitive suffix *-nə́*. When the verb's final syllable has the same syllabic structure as the infinitive

suffix (i.e., *nə*), the nominalization process is perceived via a high (or rising) tonal modification.

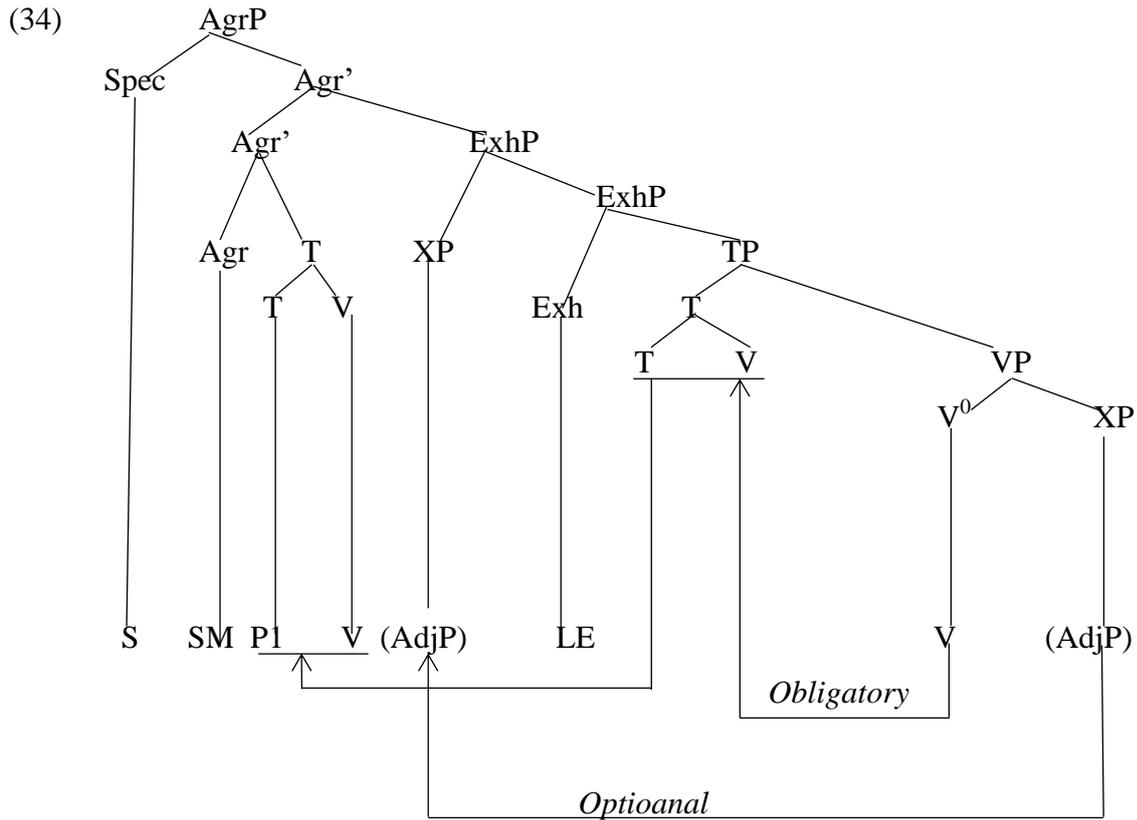
As discussed in section 7.2, information focus including verb focus is not marked in Awing (cf. example 3b). Exhaustive verb focus, on the other hand, is achieved by doubling the verb and having the exhaustive particle (LE) in a position preceding the infinitival/focalized copy. This section is primarily concerned with verb focus and negation but before we get into negative clauses, a brief summary of verb focus in affirmative clauses is in order. Since exhaustive reading requires the alternative(s) to be explicit, example (31a) provides a (type of) context that enables the use of verb focus via doubling in Awing. Observe from (31b) to (32b) that adjoining elements (including the indirect object) can precede or follow the focused verbal copy (i.e., that which is preceded by the LE morpheme).

- (31) a. Alombah a pe' n-náanə (ndəsê)
 Alombah SM P1 N-sit ground
 'Alombah sat (on the ground)'
- b. Alombah a pe' ŋ-gwũə (ndəsê) ló wũə-nó (ndəsê)
 Alombah SM P1 N-fall ground LE fall-INF ground
 'Alombah FELL (on the ground)' (he did not sit voluntarily)
- (32) a. Neh a pe' n-dzúnə ŋgəsáŋə (məsânə) mbo Tsefor
 Neh SM P1 N-buy maize morning from Tsefor
 (məsân) ló zú-nó (məsânə)
 morning LE buy-INF morning
 'Neh BOUGHT maize from Tsefor (in the morning).'
- b. Neh a pe' n-dzúnə ŋgəsáŋə (məsân) ló zú-nó
 Neh SM P1 N-buy maize morning LE buy-INF
 (məsânə) mbo Tsefor (məsânə)
 morning from Tsefor morning
 'Neh BOUGHT maize from Tsefor (in the morning).'

There is no perceptible semantic or pragmatic difference when adverbials precede or come after the focalized verbal copy. The main point to note as far as verb focus in affirmative clauses is concerned is that neither the focused verbal copy nor any adjunct can intervene between the finite verb and the direct object:

- (33) a. Neh a pe' n-dʒúnə ɲgəsáj mbo Tsefor ló ʒú-nó
 Neh SM P1 N-buy maize from Tsefor LE buy-INF
- b. *Neh a pe' n-dʒúnə ló ʒú-nó ɲgəsáj mbo Tsefor
 Neh SM P1 N-buy LE buy-INF maize from Tsefor
- c. *Neh a pe' n-dʒúnə mbo Tsefor ɲgəsáj ló ʒú-nó
 Neh SM P1 N-buy from Tsefor maize LE buy-INF
- d. *Neh a pe' n-dʒúnə məsânə ɲgəsájə mbo Tsefor ló ʒú-nó
 Neh SM P1 N-buy morning maize from Tsefor LE buy-INF
- e. *Neh a pe' ló ʒú-nó n-dʒúnə ɲgəsájə mbo Tsefor
 Neh SM P1 LE buy-INF N-buy maize from Tsefor
 Int 'Neh BOUGHT maize from Tsefor (in the morning).

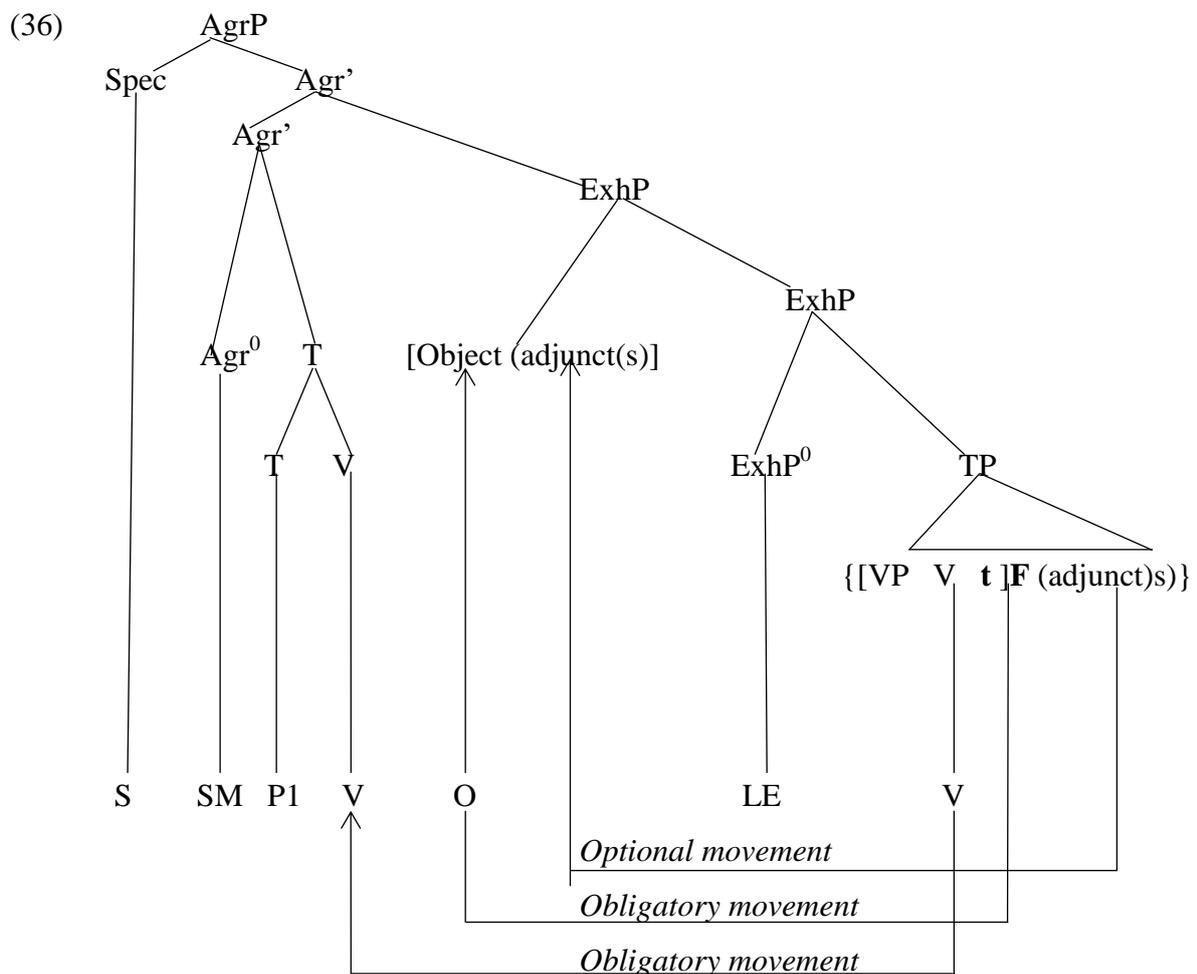
Also notice from (33e) that the focalized verbal copy cannot occur before the finite copy. Hence, verb focus will have the following (simplified) order: S-V_{finite}-O-adjunct-V_{loc}-adjunct). Syntactically, it has been shown (in chapter 5 and 6 in support to the argument in Fominyam & Šimík 2017) that the LE morpheme has a fixed position immediately dominating TP. The conclusion in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) is that verb doubling is motivated by the requirement to associate the exhaustive particle with the verb. That is, when the verb moves to AgrP, the copy has to be overt in its base position in order to permit the Exh particle which is below AgrP to associate with the lower copy. Such an association thus forces both copies of one and the same chain to be overtly realized. So, an intransitive verb focus construction like that in (31b) will be represented as in (34) below, where movement of the verb is obligatory for inflectional purposes.



Verb focus therefore has a parallel representation with subject and object focus, where LE dominates TP, Agr triggers the subject to its specifier position (which is ignored in the above representation) and the verb moves through TP and adjoins to Agr. The main difference between verb and other focus categories is that since the verb moves to AgrP (for inflectional purposes), a spell out of a lower copy is mandatory, because this will constitute the only way by which LE can associate with the verb. Now, the fact that adverbials can optionally occur before LE in, crucially, intransitive clauses confirms the argument in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that there is an adjoining position at the edge of the exhaustive phrase. This position will serve as the landing site for the direct object in transitive clauses. The movement of the direct object out of the TP is said to be obligatory for two reasons: either it would intervene between LE and the lower doubled verb, or the verb would not be prominent enough to be interpreted as the focus. The idea that the verb might not be prominent enough stems from the fact that the verb is not actually a maximal project (which suggests that LE associates with the smallest VP containing the verb). The likely intervention of the object between LE and the verb, necessitating object movement to the edge of ExhP, stems from the argument that the lower verbal copy has to be the closest constituent that LE asymmetrically c-commands. So, since we now know that adverbials can optionally move to the edge of the

exhaustive phrase while the verb's internal argument has to get there obligatory, transitive construction like the one in (32) or (35) below will have the representation in (36).

- (35) a. Alombah a nə m-fi əpa píwu (mbo Tsefor məta)
 Alombah SM P2 N-sell bag DEF to Tsefor market
 lə fi-nə (mbo Tsefor məteenə)
 LE sell-INF to Tsefor market
 ‘Alombah SOLD the bags (to Tsefor in the market)’



Although movement of the object in (36) is said to be obligatory, the movement in question is not motivated by a syntactic requirement, parallel to verb movement in the same structure. Object movement can rather be equated to what Fanselow (2003) labels as ‘altruistic movement’ in German which, among other things, accounts for the scrambling of an object out of the VP in order to permit lower element(s) within the domain to be focused. Verb focus can therefore be accounted for via the same syntactic mechanism used for other focus

categories; but this system encounters a challenge once negation is involved, which we now turn to.

7.5.1 Verb focus and negation; a potential problem

We will now take a look on verb focus and negation. Recall that verb focus has a S-V-O-V_{loc} order, where adjuncts can occur before or after the focused verb. The syntax of such a constellation is said to have two obligatory movements: the finite verb (i.e., that which is not preceded by the focus operator) moves to AgrP and the object gets to an adjoining position above ExhP. Since LE associates with a focus within its scope, the lower copy then has to be overtly realized. However, when the construction is negated, surprisingly, the finite copy can show up in a position below the focused one. This is shown in (37a) with an intransitive verb and in (38a) with a transitive verb. Examples (37b) and (38b-e) demonstrate other possibilities.

- (37) a. məjî mə nə ŋ-kě (ndzɔ'ə) ló mə-nó mə pô
 food SM P2 N-NEG wedding LE finish-INF finish NEG
 'The food wasn't FINISHED (at the wedding)' (Somebody hid it)
- b. məjî mə nə ŋ-kě (ndzɔ'ə) mə ló mə-nó pô
 food SM P2 N-NEG wedding finish LE finish-INF NEG
 'The food wasn't FINISHED (at the wedding)' (Somebody hid it)
- (38) a. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô mbo Tsefor ló fi-nó fi pô
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF sell NEG
 'Neh didn't SELL beans to Tsefor' (She gave him for free).
- b. a nə ŋ-kě ndzô mbo Tsefor fi ló fi-nó pô
 SM P2 N-NEG beans to Tsefor sell LE sell-INF NEG
 'She didn't SELL beans to Tsefor' (She gave him for free)
- c. a nə ŋ-kě ndzô ló fi-nó mbo Tsefor fi pô
 SM P2 N-NEG beans LE sell-INF to Tsefor sell NEG
 'She didn't SELL the beans to Tsefor' (She gave him for free).
- d. a nə ŋ-kě ndzô fi mbo Tsefor ló fi-nó pô
 SM P2 N-NEG beans sell to Tsefor LE sell-INF NEG
 'She didn't SELL the beans to Tsefor' (She gave him for free).

- e. a nə ŋ-kě ndzô fĩ ló fi-nó mbo Tsefor pô
 SM P2 N-NEG beans sell LE sell-INF to Tsefor NEG
 ‘She didn’t SELL the beans to Tsefor’ (She gave him for free).

What the data in (37) and (38) basically show is that as far as nothing intervenes between the first negation particle (NEG1) and the direct object, the ordering of the finite verb, the focused verb and the adjunct(s) is not constrained. For now, word order with verb focus and negation can be summarized thus: S-NEG1-O-V_{foc}-V_{finite}-NEG2 or S-NEG1-O-V_{finite}-V_{foc}-NEG2 (simplified: S-O-V-V), and adjuncts can occur anywhere between the direct object and the second negation particle (NEG2). It can therefore be noted at this point that the main difference between affirmative and negative verb focus with respect to word order is: S-V-O-V for affirmative and S-O-V-V for negative.

Now, the discussion on verb focus in affirmative clauses maintains that the direct object can intervene between LE and the lower copy of the verb thus necessitating movement of the object to the edge of ExhP. This suggests that the Awiing grammar could be OV at some level of representation. The data in (37) and, in particular, (38), where the direct object shows up before the verbs seem to confirm this position. However, it also constitutes the main challenge to the analysis that has been pursued thus far, specifically the idea that verb doubling is because LE needs an overt verbal copy within its scope. As shown in (37) and (38), both copies seem to be c-commanded by the LE morpheme. The question then is why would the verb need to be doubled if both copies are under the scope of LE? Among other things, we will see that this is because LE cannot associate with verbal categories. However, a holistic response to this question would necessitate preliminary understanding of the syntax of negation, which we turn to in the following section. For the time being, keep in mind that contrary to what is said in relation to the position of the direct object and NEG1 in (38), namely that nothing can intervene between them, if the finite verb is realized with an aspectual category, it can be positioned between NEG1 and the direct object (i.e. S-NEG1-[ASP-V]-O-V_{foc}-NEG2), see (39a) below.

- (39) a. Neh a nə ŋ-kě **zá m-fĩ** ndzô mbo Tsefor ló fi-nó pô
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG HAB N-sell beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF NEG
 ‘Neh didn’t often SELL beans to Tsefor’
- b. *Neh a nə ŋ-kě **fĩ** ndzô mbo Tsefor ló fi-nó pô
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG sell beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF NEG

- c. *pó kě zúnə ɲgəsáɲé pô (VO)
 they NEG buy maize NEG
 Int: 'They have not bought maize'

However, the VO order can be licensed in negative clauses by the aspectual slot. Hence (40c) can be reformulated with an aspectual marker as in (41) below.

- (41) pó kě zǎ n-dzúnó ɲgəsáɲé pô (VO)
 they NEG HAB N-buy maize NEG
 'They don't often buy maize'

When the verb of the main clause is negated the order of the complement clause remains same as that of affirmatives, that is VO; attempting to use the OV order will result in ungrammaticality (42c).

- (42) a. Tsefor a kwáɲ ɲgǎ pó zúnə ɲgəsáɲé (VO)
 Tsefor SM think that they buy maize
 'Tsefor thinks that they bought maize'
- b. Tsefor a kě kwáɲ ɲgǎ pó zúnə ɲgəsáɲé pô (VO)
 Tsefor SM NEG think that they buy maize NEG
 'Tsefor does not think that they bought maize'
- c. *Tsefor a kě kwáɲ ɲgǎ pó ɲgəsáɲé zúnə pô (OV)
 Tsefor SM NEG think that they maize buy NEG
 Int: 'Tsefor does not think that they bought maize'

When the complement clause is negated, the order is OV (43a) and the VO order is also banned (43b), but again an aspect can license the VO order in the complement clause, as can be seen in (43c).

- (43) a. Tsefor a kwáɲ ɲgǎ pó kě ɲgəsáɲé zu pô (OV)
 Tsefor SM think that they NEG maize buy NEG
 'Tsefor thinks that they did not buy maize'
- b. *Tsefor a kwáɲ ɲgǎ pó kě zúnə ɲgəsáɲé pô (VO)
 Tsefor SM think that they NEG buy maize NEG
 Int: 'Tsefor thinks that they did not buy maize'

- c. Tsefor a kwájŋ ŋgǎ pó kǎ zá n-dzúnǎ ŋgǎsájŋ pǒ (VO)
 Tsefor SM think that they NEG HAB N-buy maize NEG
 ‘Tsefor thinks that they don’t often buy maize’

So, root and embedded clauses have the same word orders as far as negation is concerned: OV and VO when an aspect is present. This is different from V2 Germanic languages where movement within the VP domain can be motivated at the CP layer. Also note that the verb can show up with the aspectual marker after the object:

- (44) a. pó kǎ ŋgǎsájŋ zá n-dzúnǎ pǒ (OV)
 they NEG maize HAB N-buy NEG
 ‘They don’t often buy maize’
 b. Tsefor a kwájŋ ŋgǎ pó kǎ ŋgǎsájŋ zá n-dzúnǎ pǒ (OV)
 Tsefor SM think that they NEG maize HAB N-buy NEG
 ‘Tsefor thinks that they don’t often buy maize’

But the verb cannot strand the aspect in a position after NEG1 when it shows up after the object:

- (45) a. *pó kǎ zá ŋgǎsájŋ n-dzúnǎ pǒ (OV)
 they NEG HAB maize N-buy NEG
 Int: ‘They don’t often buy maize’
 b. *Tsefor a kwájŋ ŋgǎ pó kǎ perǎ ŋgǎsájŋ n-dzúnǎ pǒ (OV)
 Tsefor SM think that they NEG still maize N-buy NEG
 ‘Tsefor thinks that they don’t buy maize again’

In ‘control’ clauses, the object (of the infinitival verb) can felicitously occur before the superordinate verb in negative clauses but not in affirmatives. See the examples in (46) and (47), where the negative (b) examples permit the OV order, contrary to the affirmative ones in (c).

- (46) a. Tsefor a (kǎ) tǎ n-doonǎ mǎ-kǎ’-nǎ sǎg (pǒ)
 Tsefor SM NEG PROG N-want INF-climb-INF mountain NEG
 ‘Tsefor (does not) want(s) to climb the mountain’

- b. Tsefor (a) kě səg tə n-doonə mə-kó'-né pō
 Tsefor SM NEG mountain PROG N-want INF-climb-INF NEG
 'Tsefor does not want to climb the mountain'
- c. *Tsefor (a) səg tə n-doonə mə-kó'-né
 Tsefor SM mountain PROG N-want INF-climb-INF
 Int: 'Tsefor wants to climb the mountain'
- (47) a. Tsefor a (kě) mbí ŋ-kəŋ mə-zú-né ŋgəsájə (pō)
 Tsefor SM NEG ITE N-like INF-buy-INF maize NEG
 'Tsefor (does not) like(s) to buy maize again'
- b. Tsefor a kě ŋgəsájə mbí ŋ-kəŋ mə-zú-né pō
 Tsefor SM NEG maize ITE N-like INF-buy-INF NEG
 'Tsefor does not like to buy maize again'
- c. *Tsefor (a) ŋgəsájə mbí ŋ-kəŋ mə-zú-né
 Tsefor SM maize ITE N-like INF-buy-INF
 Int: 'Tsefor likes to buy maize again'

Analogous to the data in (46) and (47), the object in serial verb constructions can precede both verbal copies and show up in a position immediately after NEG1 in negative clauses, as shown in (48b) and (48c). Example (48d) shows that the OV order is not possible in affirmative clauses.

- (48) a. Alombah a ghen m-fé məjî mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM go N-give food to Tsefor
 'Alombah has gone and given food to Tsefor'
- b. Alombah a kě məjî ghen m-fé mbo Tsefor pō
 Alombah SM NEG food go N-give to Tsefor NEG
 'Alombah did not go and give food to Tsefor'
- c. Alombah a kě məjî mbo Tsefor ghen m-fé pō
 Alombah SM NEG food to Tsefor go N-give NEG
 'Alombah did not go and give food to Tsefor'
- d. *Alombah a məjî ghen m-fé mbo Tsefor
 Alombah SM food go N-give to Tsefor

‘Alombah has gone and given food to Tsefor’

Only the direct object occurs before the verbs in example (48b); but in (48c) both objects precede the verbs. Note, however, that only the indirect object cannot precede the verb while the direct object occurs in a postverbal position (49a). Moreover, parallel to what happens in the postverbal position, reversing the order of the objects in the preverbal position is disallowed (49b).

- (49) a. *Alombah a kě mbo Tsefor ghen m-fé mǎjî pô
 Alombah SM NEG to Tsefor go N-give food NEG
 Int: ‘Alombah did not go and give food to Tsefor’
- b. *Alombah a kě mbo Tsefor mǎjî ghen m-fé pô
 Alombah SM NEG to Tsefor food go N-give NEG
 Int: ‘Alombah did not go and give food to Tsefor’

Although the ungrammaticality of the sentences in (49) is not mainly due to the order of the objects (see the discussion pertaining to the examples in (37) and (38) above), it is important to mention that scrambling of the indirect object to a position above the direct object is generally unacceptable. As shown in chapter 3 § 1, the direct object must precede the indirect object in affirmative sentences.³⁹ Now, the fact that the objects cannot be reserved in the

³⁹ This is contrary to the claim in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), where the indirect object is said to be able to scramble over the direct object, as in (ib). This order is said to exhibit restricted information structuring possibilities with respect to question answer pairs. For example, the constituent that is crossed over, namely the direct object cannot be focalized. While it is true that particular contexts and sentence intonation might allow the indirect object to be scrambled over the direct object, such a sentence is considered by the majority of Awing speakers as illicit. In the same way, while only the direct object (iia) or both objects (iib) can occur before the LE morpheme in what has been termed as the topic-focus construction in chapter 4, having only the indirect object in presubject position is not accepted. I should note, however, that this contradiction does not constitute a problem to the analysis in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) since the data was used to merely strengthen the argument that there is an adjoining position above LE (assumed to be null in cases like (ib)). As I already argued in this chapter, the adjoining position above LE can be proven without appealing to such data.

- (i) a. Ngwe fi ndzô mbo Aghetse
 Ngwe sell beans to Agehtse
 b. *Ngwe fi mbo Aghetse ndzo
 Ngwe sell to Agehtse beans
 ‘Ngwe sold beans to Aghetse’
- (ii) a. ndzô ló fi Aghetse mbo Ngwe
 beans LE sell Agehtse to Ngwe
 b. ndzô mbo Ngwe ló fi Aghetse
 beans to Ngwe LE sell Agehtse
 c. *mbo Ngwe ló fi Aghetse fi ndzô
 to Ngwe LE sell Agehtse sell beans

preverbal position suggests that object licensing in negative clauses must be respected and it appears that NEG1 has a role in that. Fominyam (2018) proposes a case system in Awing where NPs are merged with intrinsic case and all they need is a ‘case checker’ in the system. The assumption that NEG1 may have a role in the case requirement of the direct object implies that (in addition to the verb, the SM and prepositions; Fominyam 2018), NEG1 is a ‘case checker’ in Awing. If this is correct, nothing has to intervene between NEG1 and the element whose case needs to be checked, namely the direct object. Adverb placement in Awing seems to confirm this requirement. First, note that VP internal adverbs cannot occur between the verb and the object in affirmative clauses (50b).

- (50) a. Aghetse a nə n-dzánkə n-naŋnə məjî míwə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-quickly N-cook food DEF
 ‘Aghetse cooked the food quickly’
- b. *Aghetse a nə n-naŋnə n-dzánkə məjî míwə
 Aghetse SM P2 N-cook N-quickly food DEF
 Int: ‘Aghetse cooked the food quickly’

The reason why the adverb cannot show up between the verb and the object is because Awing, arguably, has the following templatic order: SM>T>NEG>ASP>ADV>V and, presumably, preverbal (or VP internal) adverbs or any aspectual element must be adjoined to the verb (see the discussion in chapter 3 § 10 where postverbal adverbs are derived substantives that are used as prepositional phrases obligatorily after the direct object). We will return shortly to the assumption that aspectual or/and adverbial elements have to be adjoined to the verb in the next section. For now, see from (51c) that the OV order does not permit an adverb to intervene between NEG1 and the object. Example (51b) shows that, analogous to aspectual markers (cf. example 45), the adverb must show up with the verb.

- (51) a. Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě zánkə n-náŋnə məjî míwə pô
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG quickly N-cook food DEF NEG
 ‘Aghetse did not quickly cook the food’ (Adv-V-O)
- b. Aghetse a nə ŋ-kě məjî míwə zánkə n-náŋnə pô
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG food DEF quickly N-cook NEG
 ‘Aghetse did not quickly cook the food’ (O-Adv-V)

‘It is Aghetse who sold beans to Ngwe’
 OR ‘The beans was sold by Aghetse to Ngwe’

- c. *Aghetse a nə η-kǎ zǎŋkə məjî míwə n-náŋnó pô
 Aghetse SM P2 N-NEG quickly food DEF N-cook NEG
 Int: ‘Aghetse did not quickly cook the food’ (*NEG1-Adv-O)

Let us then assume that NEG1 is a Case checker in Awing. As such, it can be provisionally stated that the object can optionally occur after or before the verb in negative clauses and its Case requirement will be met. Such a conclusion will, however, be missing one vital piece, namely the fact that (excluding serial verb constructions), the VO order in negative clauses is possible only when the aspectual (or adverbial) slot is activated, consider once more the contrast in (40c) and (41) repeated below as (52a) and (52), respectively.

- (52) a. *pó kě zúnə ηgəsáŋé pô (VO)
 they NEG buy maize NEG
 Int: ‘They have not bought maize’
- b. pó kě zá n-dzúnó ηgəsáŋ pô (VO)
 they NEG HAB N-buy maize NEG
 ‘They don’t often buy maize’

Hence, the aspectual/adverbial slot has a vital say in the VO/OV alternation in negative clauses. The role of this slot in negative clauses will be clarified in the next section.

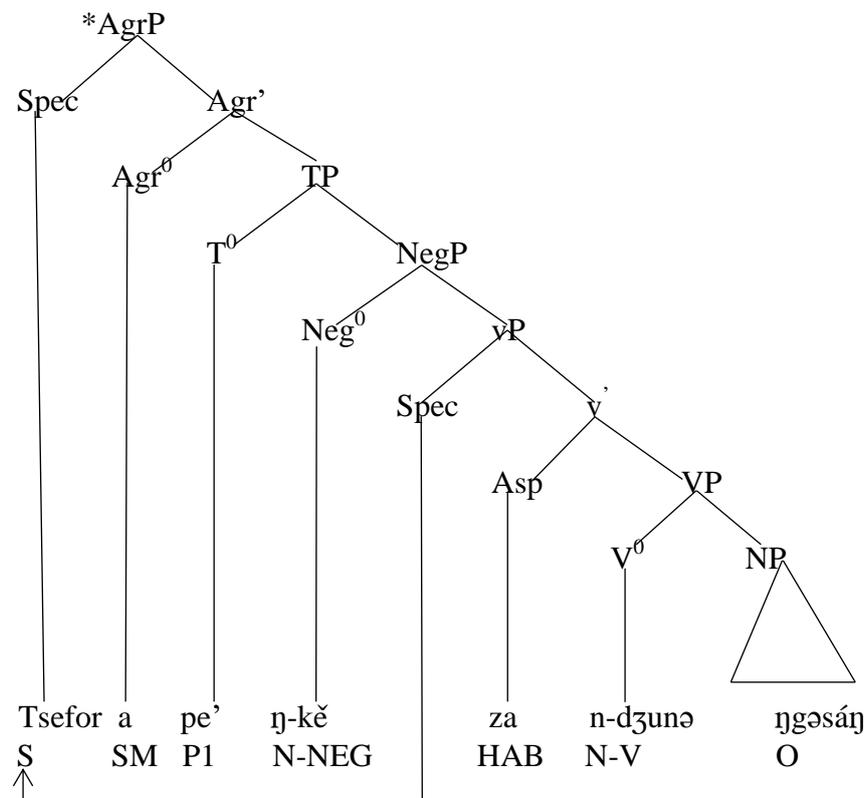
7.5.2.2 *Engaging the syntax of negation in Awing*

One of the pioneer works that tackled VO vs OV alternation in (Western) Bantu is Koopman’s (1984) verb-movement analysis in Vata, where the VO versus AuxOV order is analysed in terms of Aux blocking movement of the verb to a position before the object. Without getting into much details, the core of such an analysis in Awing will imply that Awing is head-final (i.e., OV) and the VO order in affirmative clauses is derived by moving the verb over the object. So in negative clauses NEG1 will block the verb from reaching AgrP, maintaining the underived OV order. I will argue in what follows that negation actually blocks verb movement to AgrP in Awing. However, Awing cannot be conceived as a head-final language with respect to the verb phrase since the language generally exhibits most properties that are characteristic of SVO languages. For instance, Awing has prepositions rather than postpositions; complementizers are clause-initial and the relative clause follows

the head noun; the noun phrase shows mixed orders: some modifiers (i.e. possessives, demonstratives and articles) come after the noun, while colours and ‘quantifiers’—including elements like ‘only’ and the cardinal number one) precede the noun. Hence, it is logical to assume that the VP is head-initial and the occurrence of the object before the verb in negative clauses is the derived order.

Also, we have seen that there seems to be an ‘attachment’ between the aspectual (or/and adverbial) slot and the verb. Recall that this can be manifested, for example, if the verb occurs after the object the aspect cannot be stranded in the position after NEG1. This seems to suggest that aspectual or adverbial elements are some kind of ‘light verb’ (Chomsky 1995) in Awing. If this is correct, they will be merged as, say, heads of vP (Larson 1988). Appealing to the ‘vP shells’ supposes that the direct object is generated within the VP layer (either as the complement of V (resulting in VO) or in the specifier of the V (resulting OV). Given that Awing generally demonstrates head-initial characteristics, the direct object will be generated as the complement of the verb and we will have the (basic) derivation in (54), where NEG2 is ignored.

(53)



If negation prevents V-to-Agr, the verb remains in its base generated position and only the subject moves to SpecAgrP to satisfy the EPP requirement. The derivation in (53), as it is, is

- (55) a. Tsefor a kě ηgəsáj yí/yó zu pô
 Tsefor SM NEG maize F1/F2 buy NEG
- b. Tsefor a kě yí/yó zu ηgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM NEG F1/F2 buy maize NEG
- c. Tsefor a yí/yó kě ηgəsáj zu pô
 Tsefor SM F1/F2 NEG maize buy NEG
 ‘Tsefor will not buy maize’

- (56) a. *Tsefor a kě ηgəsáj pe’/nə zu pô
 Tsefor SM NEG maize P1/P2 buy NEG
- b. *Tsefor a kě pe’/nə zu ηgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM NEG P1/P2 buy maize NEG
- c. Tsefor a pe’/nə η-kě ηgəsáj zu pô
 Tsefor SM P1/P2 NEG maize buy NEG
 ‘Tsefor did not buy maize’

Thus, not only do FT markers precede NEG1 analogous to PT markers, they behave like aspectual markers and adverbials in negative clauses. The question then is: should the FT markers be considered as light verbs, too? A simple response to this question could be positive, since we know from chapter 3 § 7.1 that the F1 and F2 are the only tense markers that (still) show morphological and semantic traits of the verbs from which they are derived, that is, ‘come’ and ‘up’, for F1 and F2, respectively. Nonetheless, considering all these elements as some form of verbs and having them head vPs would suppose that constructions like those in (57), where the verb is preceded by F2, HAB an and adverb, would have three adjoining vPs.

- (57) a. Tsefor a kě ηgəsáj yo zá pyádnə zúnə pô
 Tsefor SM NEG maize F2 HAB really buy NEG
- b. Tsefor a kě yo zá pyádnə zúnə ηgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM NEG F2 HAB really buy maize NEG
 ‘Tsefor will not certainly often buy maize’

For completeness, note that the order of the so-called light verbs is fixed: FT>ASP>ADV (also see chapter 3 § 10). So, if this order is altered be it after the object (58a), or preceding the object (58b), the sentence will result to ungrammaticality. Moreover, see in (58c), as

expected, that the direct object cannot separate any or all of this elements from the verb. And finally, (59) show, again as expected, that the FT can remain in the position preceding NEG1 while both the aspectual and adverbial slots ‘control’ the vPO vs OvP alternation in negative clauses.

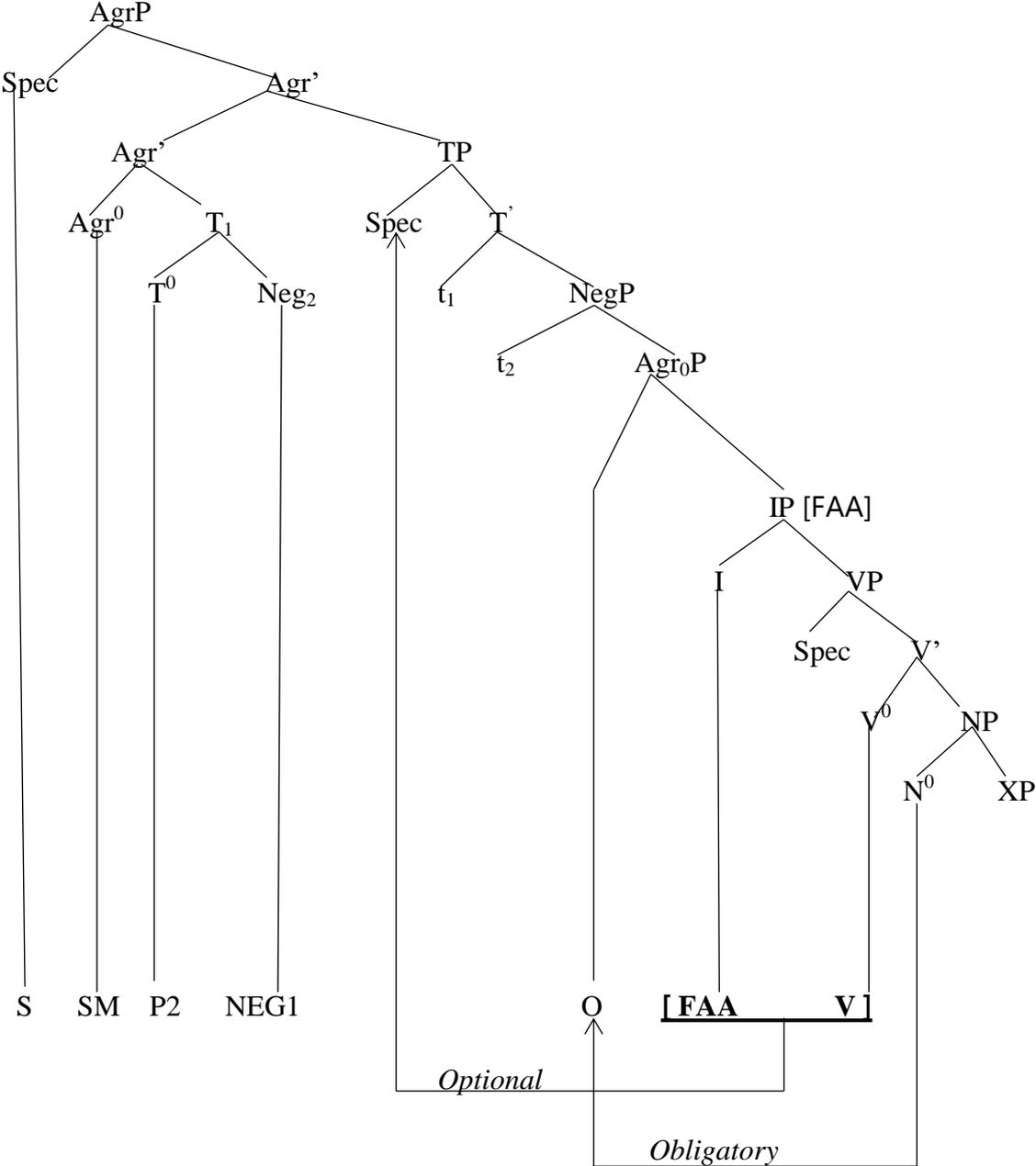
- (58) a. *Tsefor a kě ηgəsáj pyádnə zá yó zúnó pô
 Tsefor SM NEG maize really HAB F2 buy NEG
- b. *Tsefor a kě pyádnə zá yó zúnó ηgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM NEG really HAB F2 buy maize NEG
- c. *Tsefor a (yó) kě (yo) (zá) pyádnə ηgəsájə zúnó pô
 Tsefor SM F2 NEG F2 HAB really maize buy NEG
 Int: ‘Tsefor will not certainly often buy maize’
- (59) a. Tsefor a yó kě zá pyádnə zúnó ηgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM F2 NEG HAB really buy maize NEG
- b. Tsefor a yó kě ηgəsájə zá pyádnə zúnó pô
 Tsefor SM F2 NEG maize HAB really buy NEG
 ‘Tsefor will not certainly often buy maize’

Leaving the exact morphological (and semantic) status of the FT, aspectual and adverbial categories and their fine structure within the ‘inflectional domain’ for future work, we can note for now that any and all of these categories have the capacity to alternate the vP-O O-vP orders in negative clauses. To avoid the adjoining problem, I will (re)-simplify the slot(s) containing either one or all of these elements as IP, an inflectional domain hosting F(uture tenses) A(spects) and A(dverbs) (FAA). Hence, we can take from here that Awing has IP-O versus O-IP/V order in negative clauses and that there is no derived V-O order.

We now return to the query concerning the position of the direct object in negative clauses. Although Awing does not have (overt) object agreement and object agreement cannot intrinsically be related to Case assignment (see, e.g., Baker 2012), I consider the direct object in negative clauses to have left the VP domain to a higher position, say, SpecAgroP (see, e.g., Chomsky 1981; Zaenen et al. 1985; Johnson 1991; Kandybowicz & Baker 2003). I can only speculate at this point that this is because a negated verb cannot ‘check’ the accusative Case. So, just like any other NP in Awing, the direct object has an inherent Case feature that has to be checked by means of ‘prepositioning’, that is, having the NP as the complement of the case

checker. Relying on the structural relation between NEG1 and the direct object in negative clauses, it can be assumed that analogous to the SM, prepositions and affirmative verbs (Fominyam 2018), NEG1 is a Case checker in Awing. From this perspective, the Awing NEG1 might be viewed (without further discussion) as a kind of ‘verbal’ category. The negated verb would then be a sequential process, similar to serial verb constructions. If this is correct, the derivation of the negative clauses would have the representation in (60).

(60)



- (62) a. Tsefor a má (n-dzá) n-dzúnó ηγασάηə
 Tsefor SM NEG N-HAB N-buy maize
 ‘Tsefor does not (often) buy maize’
- b. *Tsefor a má ηγασάηə (n-)dzá n-dzúnó
 Tsefor SM NEG maize N-HAB N-buy
 Int: ‘Tsefor does not often buy maize’

The ungrammaticality of (62b) is due to the placement of the object. When the monopartite negation strategy is employed, word order must remain same as in affirmative clauses (i.e., SVO). Negation via the monopartite strategy is therefore not an issue since it can be accounted for via the same syntactic mechanism used for affirmatives.

Concentrating on the bipartite negation marker, observe once more that the final negation particle (NEG2) is ignored in the representation in (60). I assume that NEG2 is a scopal element that resides in the CP domain. Hence, once the derivation is complement, the entire clause is scrambled to SpecNEG2, resulting in NEG2 showing up as the last element of the clause. We saw in the preceding section that when the verb of a matrix clause in negated NEG2 still occurs as the last element in the embedded clause (cf. 42b). The same scenario can be observed in relative clauses (63), where NEG2 always shows up sentence-final. What is curious with negative relative clauses, though, is that the matrix verb has to be in a position after the relative clause: compare the affirmative clause in (63a) against the negative one in (63b); also see in (63c) that having the verb ‘buy’ in the matrix clause will render the constellation illicit.

- (63) a. Neh nə n-dzúnə ηγασάη pá’a Tsefor a fíηó
 Neh P2 N-buy maize RM Tsfor SM sell
 ‘Neh bought the maize that Tsefor sells’
- b. Neh nə η-kě ηγασάη pá’a Tsefor a fíηó zu pô
 Neh P2 N-NEG maize RM Tsfor SM sell buy NEG
 ‘Neh did not buy the maize that Tsefor sells’
- c. *Neh nə η-kě zú ηγασάη pá’a Tsefor a fíηó pô
 Neh P2 N-NEG buy maize RM Tsfor SM sell NEG
 Int: ‘Neh did not buy the maize that Tsefor sells’

However, and not surprisingly, if the verb is realized with an aspectual marker the FAA cluster can either show up in the matrix clause or after the relative clause:

- (64) a. Neh nə ŋ-kě zá n-dzúnó ŋgasáŋ pá'a Tsefor a fíŋó pô
 Neh P2 N-NEG HAH N-buy maize RM Tsfor SM sell NEG
 'Neh was not often buying the maize that Tsefor sells'
- b. Neh nə ŋ-kě ŋgasáŋ pá'a Tsefor a fíŋó zá n-dzúnó pô
 Neh P2 N-NEG maize RM Tsfor SM sell HAH N-buy NEG
 'Neh was not often buying the maize that Tsefor sells'

It was concluded via the various morpho-syntactic and semantic tests in chapter 6 § 6.6 that the head noun of a relative clause is base-generated outside the modifying clause.⁴⁰ Hence, it is logical to assume that the object's Case would be satisfied by the matrix verb and a null pronominal element binds the predicate of the verb in the embedded clause in affirmative sentences like that in (63a). The issue would then be to explain how the matrix verb plus or without the habitual marker end up in a position after the relative clause in negative sentences. In other words, we want to know whether the position of the verb in (63b) and (64b) is derived from that in (64a), or it is the other way round. Now, note that the object adjacency

⁴⁰ The example in (iii) below, where negation within the relative clause cannot 'force' the object to show up after NEG1 might be seen as another indication that the object did not originate from within the relative clause: since it is argued here that in negative clauses NEG1 and the object must be adjacent for Case purposes.

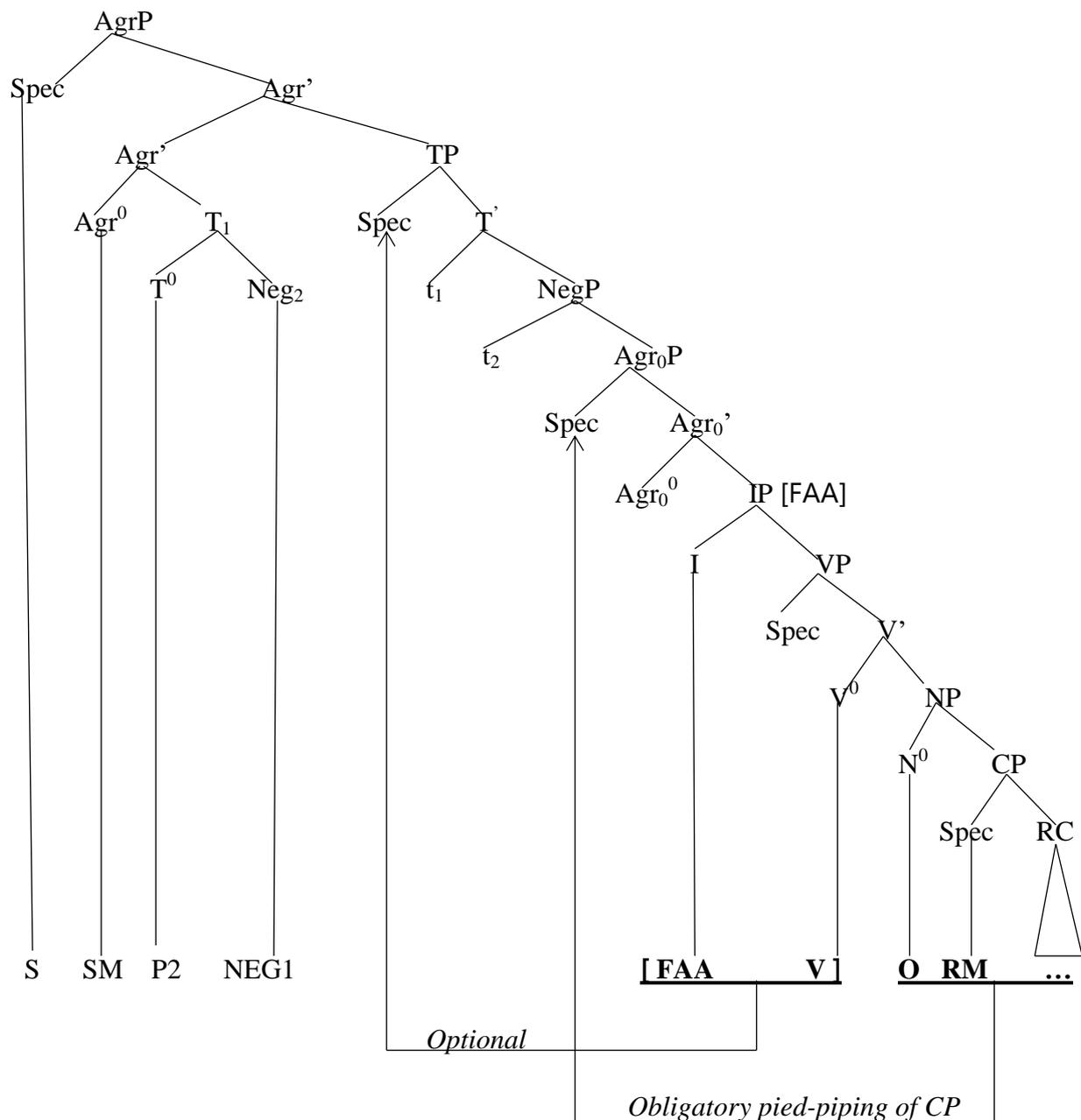
- (iii) Neh nə n-dzúnə ŋgasáŋ pá'a Tsefor a kě chi' (*ŋgasáŋ) pô
 Neh P2 N-buy maize RM Tsfor SM NEG sift maize NEG
 'Neh bought the maize that Tsefor did not sift'

It might be questioned whether it is possible in the first place to have the object in such a position. Having the object after the embedded verb in relative clauses is not possible in affirmative clauses in Awing as well. However, we saw that in 'control' clauses and serial verb constructions (cf. examples 46 & 47), the object can either occur before or after the verbs in negative constructions. Moreover, cross-linguistically, the head noun of a relative clause can occur within the relative clause. An example is Tagalog (an Austronesian language spoken in the Philippines), where Aldridge (2017) show that the head of a relative clause can surface in three distinct positions: preceding the clause, immediately following the embedded verb, and in argument position within the clause:

- (iv) a. ang libro=ng b<in>ili ng babae *(External head)*
 nom book=lk <pfv>buy gen woman
 'the book which the woman bought'
- b. ang b<in>ili ng babae=ng libro *(Stranded internal head)*
 nom <pfv>buy gen woman=lk book
 'the book which the woman bought'
- c. ang b<in>ili=ng libro ng babae *(Incorporated internal head)*
 nom <pfv>buy=lk book gen woman
 'the book which the woman bought' *(Aldridge 2017:2)*

rule which forbids a bare verb (i.e., e.g., without an aspectual element) from intervening between NEG1 and the object applies in sentences that are modified by relative clauses, too (cf. 63c). This suggests that the verb and the aspect move to a higher position. So, an example like (64a) would be derived from (64b). The derivation of such relative clauses would then have a parallel representation to that in (60), only that the complement of the verb will also have as complements a CP, as shown in the diagram in (65).

(65)



The diagram in (65) shows that the object is scrambled together with the CP to SpecAgrOP. As such, either the bare verb or the verb plus the aspectual marker show up after the relative clause, as in (63b) and (64b), respectively. The optional movement would then generate cases where the verb plus the aspect precede the relative clause, as in (64a).

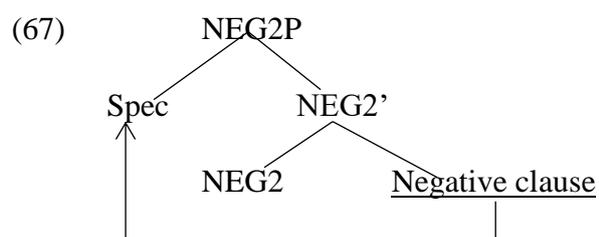
It has been shown that negative clauses are different from affirmative clauses in that while the direct object obligatory occurs after the verb in affirmative sentences, it can show up after the verb and before NEG1 in negative clauses. Without discussing the morphological status of NEG1, I consider the latter performing a verbal role in negative clauses and propose a system where the direct object obligatorily moves to a position immediately before NEG1 to facilitate Case checking. We identified a cluster containing the verb and other inflectional categories viz. future tense, aspects and adverbs (and labelled it FAA). Such a cluster can be scrambled to a position above AgrOP (considered here as SpecTP), thus permitting what seems to be VO-OV alternation in negative clauses. Another observation that distinguishes affirmative clauses from negative ones is that there seems to be two inflectional domains in negative clauses: one preceding NEG1 hosting (all) tense markers and the so-called FAA cluster which has been shown to be separate from (that preceding) NEG1.

A final aspect that further differentiates negative from affirmative clauses, and which appears to challenge the proposal here, is that the object and the verb void of aspectual marking obligatorily occur in a truncated forms in negative clauses. For illustration, consider the examples in (66), where both the object and the verb must occur in the non-truncated forms in the affirmative clause in (66a), but they must be truncated in the negative clause in (66b). (Examples like (66a), where the verb is not truncated is because the final schwa needs a high tone to express the imperfective/progressive aspect, see the discussion on aspectual marking in chapter 3 § 5).

- (66) a. Tsefor a pe' n-dʒu*(nə) ηgəsáŋ*(é)
 Tsefor SM P1 N-buy maize
 'Tsefor bought maize'
- b. Tsefor a pe' η-kě ηgəsáŋ(*é) ʒu(*nə) pô
 Tsefor SM P1 N-NEG maize buy NEG
 'Tsefor did not buy maize'

It is argued in chapter 4 that truncation can serve as a signal that an element has been displaced in Awing clause structure. This will suggest that both the verb and the object in

negative clauses might not be sitting in their base generated positions, which constitutes an apparent problem to the proposal that I have put forward here, namely that the verb in an example like that in (66b) is in its base generated position. However, it seems that truncation of the verb in negative clauses tracks the proposal that the entire clause subsequently moves to SpecNEG2, as captured in (67). Notice from (68b) that the matrix verb immediately preceding the complementizer *ɲgɔ́* ‘that’ has to be truncated. If NEG2 is a CP category, as I argue, truncation of the verb is borne out via the same rule that applies to the verb in (68b).



- (68) a. Tsefor pe' n-dʒəə*(nə) mə́ jîə
 Tsefor P1 N-see mother his
 ‘Tsefor saw his mother’
- b. Tsefor pe' n-dʒəə(*nə) ɲgɔ́ mə́ jîə tó ɲ-gǎə
 Tsefor P1 N-see that mother his PROG N-come
 ‘Tsefor saw that his mother was coming’

The parallelism between the verb in negative clauses and that in matrix clauses does not imply that the matrix clause is moved to a specifier position; it rather suggests that elements that immediately precede CP categories indicate clausal boundary via truncation. Notice that the head noun of an affirmative relative clause has to be truncated, too. Consider (63a) repeated below as (69). The truncation of the noun in (69) can therefore be interpreted as a rule demarcating elements that immediately precede CP categories, and not as movement of the object.

- (69) Neh nə n-dʒunə ɲgasáɲ(*ɔ́) pá'a Tsefor a fɲɔ́
 Neh P2 N-buy maize RM Tsefor SM sell
 ‘Neh bought the maize that Tsefor sells’

The differences between affirmative and negative clauses noted here suggest that Awing negative clauses might be gearing towards ‘non-configurational’ clauses (see, e.g., Jelinek

1984, Baker 1996, Good 2007). For instance, the very idea that negative clause can accommodate two separate inflectional layers suggests that such constellations can permit adjunction of various categories, that is, from heads to (small) clauses. Also, disassociating the accusative case from the VP domain might imply a non-strict (internal) argument position, which is one of the features of non-configurational clauses. The overall aim of this subsection was therefore to illustrate that negative clauses in Awing already constitute an issue on their own. Hence, it should come as no surprise that the syntactic mechanism used for verb focus, and verb focus further constituting a kind of ‘non-configurational’ construction (with a discontinuous VP), crashes. Nonetheless, I consider what is presented here, in particular the observation that negation can permit adjunction to a larger extent and that negative clauses can have two IP layers a potential solution to the syntax of negation and verb focus. The overall discussion should therefore be viewed as a stepping stone for an in-depth research on negation in Awing, which goes beyond the scope of this work.

7.5.3 Verb focus; another perspective

I have proposed a phrase structure for negative clauses where the direct object obligatorily moves to a position immediately after NEG1 to facilitate Case checking. It has also been suggested that such a clause, which appears to have two inflectional domains, may be unrestrictive to adjunction. I will now modify the idea in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the focalized or infinitive verb that occurs with the exhaustive particle (i.e., the LE-V-INF cluster) is a lower copy of the finite verb that has been moved to Agr and propose that the LE-V-INF cluster is an(other) instantiation of adjunction. The crucial data suggesting that verb focus in Awing might not be a realization of both copies of one and the same chain is focusing of an infinitive verb. This is illustrated in the different examples in (70).

- (70) a. Tsefor a kóŋ (*wiŋə) ló mǎ-wiŋ-nǎ
 Tsefor SM love laugh LE INF-climb-INF
 ‘Tsefor loves LAUGING’ (not crying)
- b. Tsefor a loonǎ (*zu) ló mǎ-zu-nǎ ŋgǎsǎŋə
 Tsefor SM want buy LE INF-buy-INF maize
 ‘Tsefor wants TO BUY maize’ (not to sell it)
- c. Tsefor pyádnǎ n-doonǎ mǎ-zé’-nǎ (*finǎ) ló mǎ-ŋǐ-nǎ ŋgǎsǎŋə
 Tsefor really N-want INF-learn-INF sell LE INF-sell-INF maize
 ‘Tsefor really wants to learn TO SELL maize’ (not to buy it)

The data in (70) shows that when LE associates with an infinitive verb, doubling is not permitted. This suggests that verb doubling is not only a requirement for LE to obligatorily have an overt copy as complement but, crucially, the copy has to be a non-verbal one. Recall that for LE to associate with the infinitive verb, according to the analysis in Fominyam and Šimík (2017), recapitulated in section 5.3, the object is scrambled to an adjoining position above ExhP. Such a movement, which is considered as mainly to permit LE to identify the infinitive verb as the ‘maximal projection’ would be irrelevant when LE associates directly with the infinitive verb. This further suggests that the association of LE with the focused verb is an independent process that may not necessarily influence displacement of other syntactic constituents. We will return to what is actually meant by the focused verb is an independent process in a moment.

Meanwhile, it is important to briefly note that Awing does not have any special means to express verum or polarity focus (Gutzmann et al. 2020 also show that Bura, South Marghi and Hausa do not express such focus categories). Such notions are merely a result of discourse pragmatics in Awing. Hence, answer-hood focus targeting tense, aspect or the likes will receive no special encoding. Also, given that LE can only associate with a maximal projection that has nominal characteristics (e.g., gerunds), it follows that LE cannot associate with affixes to express ‘polarity focus’. Even adverbials (that still have verbal traits) cannot be focused via doubling (71a). To express the intended interpretation in (71a), one would need another adverb to intensify the meaning of that which is being ‘focused’ (71b), and such an option is not available for the other verbal affixes.

- (71) a. *Tsefor a pyádnə lə pyád-nə n-doonə mə-ʒu-nə ŋgəsáŋə
 Tsefor SM really LE really-INF N-want INF-buy-INF maize
 Int: ‘Tsefor REALLY wants to buy maize’
- b. Tsefor a lánǹə m-byádnə n-doonə mə-ʒu-nə ŋgəsáŋə
 Tsefor SM really N-really N-want INF-buy-INF maize
 ‘Tsefor REALLY wants to buy maize’

The discussion on so-called verum or polarity focus merely reinforces the position that LE only associates with nominals and even if adverbials can have verbal characteristics, they do not have infinitive morphology that can qualify them as gerunds. That said, we can return to the idea that the LE+V-INF cluster is an independent process. The issue is that instead of viewing the infinitive verb in such a cluster as either the original copy of the finite verb

(Fominyam and Šimík 2017), or a result of a copy triggered by a focus operator/marker (Collins and Essizewa 2007; Aboh and Dyakonova 2009), consider the copy as a nominal form of the verb merged directly as the complement of LE. Semantically, the LE+V-INF cluster (still) expresses the exhaustive meaning of the finite verb just that it constitutes an independent syntactic unit—parallel to postverbal substantive adverb that intensify the verb but form a separate prepositional phrase. This would entail that in a declarative sentence like that in (72), the LE+V-INF cluster is an adjoining constituent which can show up anywhere after the direct object.

- (72) Ngwe a pe' m-fi (*lǎ fi-nǎ) ndzô (lǎ fi-nǎ) mbo Tsefor
 Ngwe SM P1 N-sell LE sell-INF beans LE sell-INF to Tsefor
 (lǎ fi-nǎ) mǎsǎnǎ (lǎ fi-nǎ) mǎtá (lǎ fi-nǎ)
 LE sell-INF morning LE sell-INF market LE sell-INF
 'Ngwe SOLD beans to Tsefor in the market in the morning'

Now, notice that one can still pursue the argument that the position above ExhP (see the representation in (36) in § 7.5) can accommodate both objects and any additional adjunct(s), analogous to what happens in, for example, focusing of the locative adjunct in (73) below, where the objects and the temporal adjunct are scrambled above ExhP.

- (73) Ngwe a pe' m-fi ndzô mbo Tsefor mǎsǎn lǎ mǎtéénǎ
 Ngwe SM P1 N-sell beans to Tsefor morning LE market
 'It is in the market that Ngwe sold beans to Tsefor in the morning'

As earlier noted, this argument holds generally with declaratives but collapses in, specifically, negative clauses involving verb focus and negation. Recall that exhaustive focus does not require doubling of the focused XP, except with verb focus. Another case of focusing that involves verb doubling is postverbal subject clauses (i.e., V-S-V-O; see 74 below). However, such clauses express subject focus and verb doubling is attributed to Case requirement, Fominyam (2018). Hence, verb focus might have a different mechanism altogether, which negation unveils. The query then will be to determine the exact syntactic category of the LE+V-INF cluster. Consider it a gerundive 'small clause', where, parallel to postverbal subject construction like the one in (74), the exhaustive particle (also) serves as the 'phonological subject' (Mcfadden & Sunderesan 2018).

- (74) ló pe' m-fi Ngwe m-fi ndzô mbo Tsefor mäsâne
 LE P1 N-sell Ngwe N-sell beans to Tsefor morning
 'It is Ngwe who sold beans to Tsefor in the morning'

Let us now integrate the idea that the focused verbal cluster is an adjoining 'small clause' to the syntax of negation proposed in the preceding section. But before we do that, it is crucial to highlight that considering the focused verb as an adjoining constituent does not in any way nullify the syntax of non-verbal exhaustive focus, where LE is above TP and the focused XP is the first maximal projection that LE asymmetrically c-commands, e.g., the subject in (74).

7.5.4 The syntax of verb focus and negation

We are now in a position to conclude on the syntax of verb focus and negation. This will be done via a brief rundown of the main challenge and the various pieces that can be used to overcome the issue. We know that verb focus (except focusing of an infinitive verb) exhibits two verbal copies. As already noted, the main motivation behind the idea that two verbal copies are needed in verb focus was that since LE associates with an XP within its scope and the finite verb moves to a position above LE, the lower copy has to be overtly realized. Unfortunately, we saw in section 7.5.2 that in negative clauses the finite copy can show up in a position below the focalized one. The examples illustrating this in (37a) and (38a) with an intransitive and a transitive verb, are repeated below as (75a) and (75b), respectively.

- (75) a. mäjî mə nə n-kě (ndzó'ə) ló mε-nó mε pô
 food SM P2 N-NEG wedding LE finish-INF finish NEG
 'The food wasn't FINISHED (at the wedding)' (Someone hid it)
- b. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô mbo Tsefor ló fi-nó fi pô
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF sell NEG
 'Neh didn't SELL beans to Tsefor' (She gave him for free).

As we proceed, keep in mind that having the focalized verbal cluster in a position preceding the infinitive verbal copy is only possible in negative clauses. This can be further confirmed with focusing of a matrix verb: compare the examples in (76) with a negated matrix verb against those in (77).

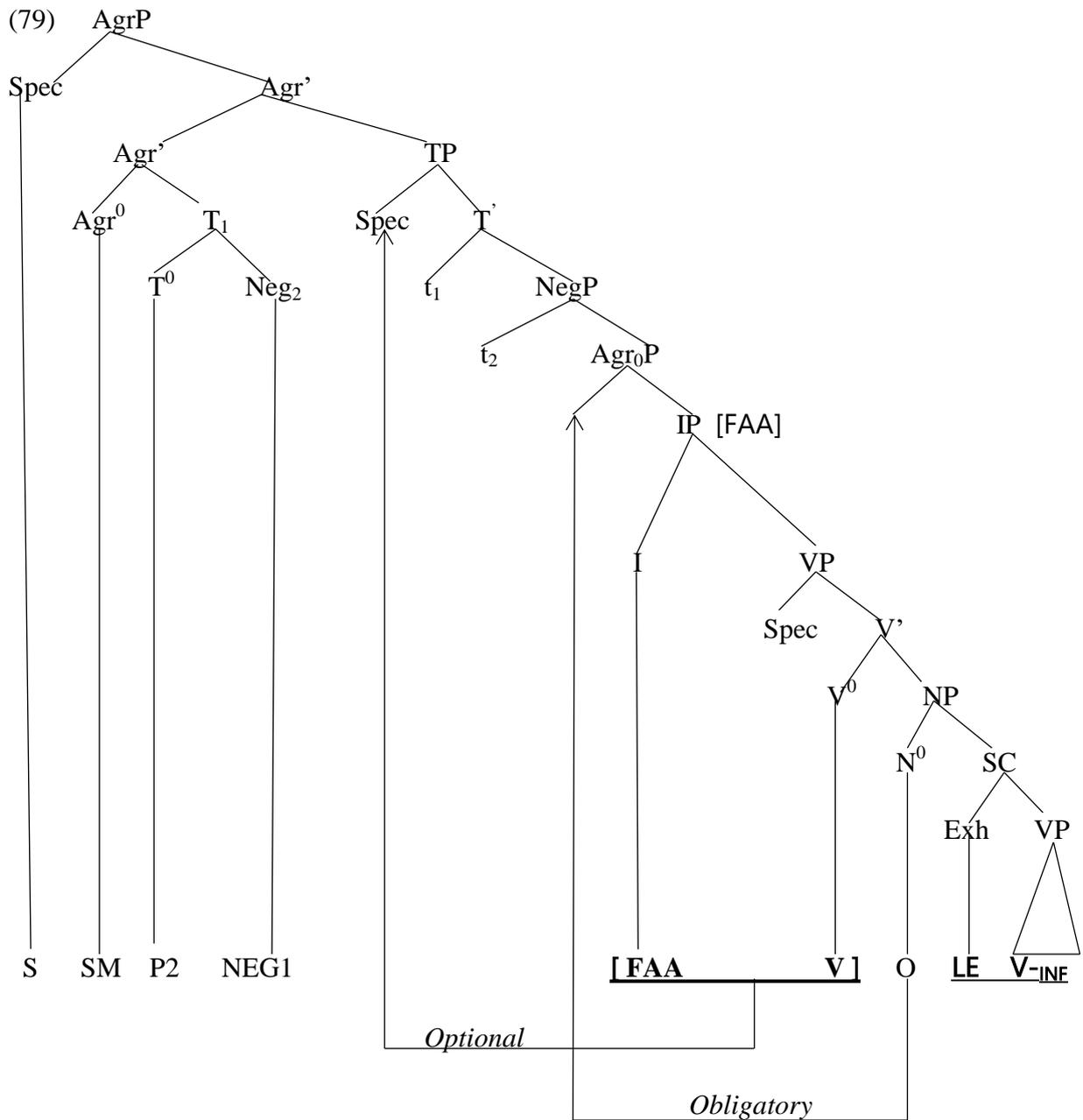
- (76) a. Tsefor a kă kwáj ló kwáj-nó ŋgá pó zunə ŋgəsáj pô
 Tsefor SM NEG think LE think-INF that they buy maize NEG

- b. Tsefor a kǎ lǎ kwáŋ-nǎ kwáŋ ŋǎ pǎ ʒunǎ ŋǎsáŋ pǎ
 Tsefor SM NEG LE think-INF think that they buy maize NEG
 ‘Tsefor does not THINK that they bought maize’ (he knows/said so)
- (77) a. Tsefor a kwáŋ lǎ kwáŋ-nǎ ŋǎ pǎ ʒunǎ ŋǎsáŋǎ
 Tsefor SM think LE think-INF that they buy maize
 ‘Tsefor THINKS that they bought maize’ (he is not sure or did not say so)
- b. *Tsefor a lǎ kwáŋ-nǎ kwáŋ ŋǎ pǎ ʒunǎ ŋǎsáŋǎ
 Tsefor SM LE think-INF think that they buy maize
 Int: ‘Tsefor THINKS that they bought maize’ (he is not sure...)

It has been shown that what matters the most in negative clauses is to have the direct object immediately after NEG1. Also recall that there is no problem having the IP cluster consisting of the verb and an inflectional category intervenes between NEG1 and the object. But only the verb cannot show up between NEG1 and object. Once more the examples in (39) is repeated below as (78), for convenience.

- (78) a. Neh a nǎ ŋ-kǎ zá m-fí ndzô mbo Tsefor lǎ fi-nǎ pǎ
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG HAB N-sell beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF NEG
 ‘Neh did not often SELL beans to Tsefor’
- b. *Neh a nǎ ŋ-kǎ fí ndzô mbo Tsefor lǎ fi-nǎ pǎ
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG sell beans to Tsefor LE sell-INF NEG
 ‘Neh did not SELL beans to Tsefor’

The question then was: why is the finite verb allowed in the position after the focused one in (75b) but cannot occur in between NEG1 and the object in (78b)? I argue in section 7.5.2.2 that this is because the IP cluster, and not the verb, can be displaced to the position after NEG1. Section 7.5.2.2 also concluded that negative clauses can accommodate two separate IP layers. This means that the verb in (75b), for example, is hosted in a full-fledged IP clause, just that when T(ense) A(spect) A(dverb) (TAA) is not activated the clause cannot be displaced. Now, the preceding section had it that the focused verb is another kind of clausal category. Verb focus and negation will therefore be dealing with a constellation consisting of (at least) three adjoining inflectional layers, as depicted in the diagram in (79).



If the IP cluster below AgrOP is realized without FAA, the result would be (80a). When any of the FAA category is present, we will have (80b). Movement of the FAA cluster to SpecTP will produce (80c). All these are cases where the finite verb precedes the adjoining small clause (SC) containing LE and the infinitive verb. Now, if the object happens to pied-pipe SC, analogous to the relative clause in (65), we will generate cases where the focused verb structurally shows up before the finite one, as in (80d) and (80e).

- (80) a. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô fĩ ló fi-nó pô
 Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans sell LE sell-INF NEG

‘Neh did not SELL beans.’

- b. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô zá n-fínó ló fi-nó pô
Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans HAB N-sell LE sell-INF NEG

‘Neh was did not often SELLING beans.’

- c. Neh a nə ŋ-kě zá n-fínó ndzô ló fi-nó pô
Neh SM P2 N-NEG HAB N-sell beans LE sell-INF NEG

‘Neh was did not often SELLING beans.’

- d. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô ló fi-nó fi pô
Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans LE sell-INF sell NEG

‘Neh did not SELL beans.’

- e. Neh a nə ŋ-kě ndzô ló fi-nó zá n-fínó pô
Neh SM P2 N-NEG beans LE sell-INF HAB N-sell NEG

‘Neh was did not often SELLING beans.’

Finally, it could be questioned why pied-piping of the relative clause is obligatory in (65) but pied-piping of the small infinitival clause is optional in (79). More generally, the question could be whether movement of elements in negative clauses induce any sort of pragmatic or semantic differences. Intuitively, there seems to be no difference in negative clauses with such movements. As to why the object obligatorily moves with the relative clause and not the focalized one, I can only speculate that this might be due to the additional role that the object assumes in the relative clause. That is, by assuming the role of the internal argument of the matrix verb and at the same time the ‘logical object’ of the embedded verb, there is a strong bond or a semantic operator that ties the object and the relative clause. As such, the object cannot be moved to a (new) position without the relative clause. No such bond seems to exist between the object and the focused verb since the latter functions as an adjoining element.

7.6 Summary

This chapter aimed to reinforce the position in Fominyam and Šimík (2017) that considers the LE morpheme in non-copular clauses an exhaustive focus marker and reconsider the analysis of verb focus proposed in the same work. Adopting an analysis of focus that differs from previous analyses in (Western) Bantu (e.g., Aboh 2004; Biloa 2013, 2020; Bassong 2014, among many others), I maintain that there is no F(ocus) head in Awing clausal projection that necessitate checking of a focus feature in terms of Rizzi (1997). Awing rather instantiates two kinds of foci: answerhood (or new information) and exhaustive foci. Answerhood focus is not

marked by means of any prosodic, morphological or morph-syntactic mechanism. Exhaustive focus is morphologically marked with the LE particle and this can either be done in a monoclausal or the biclausal structure. The focused constituent remains in its canonical position in both strategies (also see chapter 6 § 6). The biclausal strategy is then said to be motivated by notions like: irritation, provocation, surprise or level of politeness which are considered as ‘emphatic paralinguistic’ factors (Downing & Pompino-Marschall 2013:666) and do not constitute core notions of information structure (Chafe 1976; Krifka 2008).

Concentrating on the semantic contribution of the LE morpheme with the focused category, I first discuss corrective and alternative foci and argue that since they make use of the LE morpheme, they naturally express exhaustivity. I then proceed to show that non-specific indefinites and, arguably, universal NP/quantifiers render the use of the LE morpheme illicit and note that this is an indication that exhaustivity is part of LE’s semantics. Basing on exhaustivity diagnostics viz. Hartmann and Zimmermann’s (2007) notions of ‘non-exhaustive contexts’ and ‘inferences based on strong exhaustivity’; so-called ‘follow-up contexts’ (É. Kiss 1998) and Szabolcsi (1981) and É. Kiss (2016:677) test on the premise that a proposition represented by a conjoined NP entails the corresponding proposition where one of the conjuncts is dropped, I conclude that LE’s exhaustivity is part of its semantics.

On the syntactic side, I began by noting the difficulty that the analysis introduced in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) encounters with verb focus and negation. Data showing both verbal copies in a position below the LE morpheme (i.e., S-O-LE-V-V) demands a new explanation to the conclusion reached in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that verb doubling is because LE needs an overt verbal copy within its scope. To solve this issue, we spend some time investigating negation in Awing and found that the main requirement in negative clauses is that the object be adjacent to NEG1. Without discussing the morphological status of NEG1, I argue that NEG1 performs a verbal role in negative clauses and that this is because a negated verb cannot ‘check’ the accusative Case in Awing. From this, I propose a system where the direct object obligatorily moves to a position immediately after NEG1 to facilitate Case checking. A cluster containing the verb and other inflectional categories viz. future tense, aspects and adverbs (which is labelled FAA) is also identified in negative clauses. It is shown that such a cluster can be scrambled to a position above AgrOP (or SpecTP), thus permitting what seems to be VO-OV alternation in negative clauses. Considering the idea that negative clause can accommodate two separate inflectional layers, I speculate that adjunction of various categories, that is, from heads to (small) clauses can be

possible in negative clauses and further assume that Awing negative clauses might be gearing towards ‘non-configurational’ clauses (Jelinek 1984, Baker 1996, Good 2007).

Returning to the syntax of verb focus and negation, I conclude that the V-INF cluster (or focused verb) is neither the original copy of the finite verb (Fominyam and Šimík 2017), nor a result of a copy triggered by a focus operator/marker (Collins and Essizewa 2007; Aboh and Dyakonova 2009), but rather a nominal form of the verb merged directly as the complement of LE.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This work aimed to describe the Awing nominal and verbal systems and then clarify the role of a specific morpheme that is used with different notions of information structure. While chapters 2 and 3 respectively take a general look at the nominal and verbal systems, chapter 4 focuses on conditions determining the use of either long or short forms of both nouns and verbs. Chapter 5 introduces the LE morpheme, a polyvalent morpheme in Awing that can be used in copular clauses, with wh/focused constituents and as a contrastive topic marker, among other contexts. The chapter focuses on the use of the LE morpheme in copular clauses. Chapter 6 concentrates on wh-constructions and further clarifies the use of LE with wh-phrases and chapter 7 indicates the role of the same LE morpheme with focused constituents and then concentrates on the syntax of verb focus and negation in Awing. This chapter will present the main findings of this work in conjunction with potential areas of future research in Awing (§ 8.1) and an outlook to future research on the notion of focus marking (§ 8.2).

8.1 Summary

Chapter 2 is concerned with the Awing nominal system. Starting with derivational morphology viz. deverbals, nouns derived from adjectives, compounding, reduplication, among other processes that the language employ to create new words, the chapter goes on to present various elements that are used as nominal modifiers. Among other things, it is shown that some adjectives, the cardinal number ‘one’, quantifiers like ‘few’ and ‘many’ and the exhaustive particle ‘only’ show up before the noun and other modifying elements like possessives, demonstratives (in)definite articles as well as adjectives and plural cardinal numbers occur after the head noun. Adjectives and cardinal numbers that show up after the noun take an A(ssociative) M(arker) AM. Using Cinque’s (2005) evaluation of Greenberg’s (1963) universal 20, it is shown that the Awing DP system can generate more than 12 different word orders. The Awing data (and most Grassfields languages, e.g., Shupamem:

Nchare 2011, where more than 18 orders are attested) indicate that studies investigation the DP systems would benefit a lot by taking into account these languages.

While describing the various positions that nominal modifiers can assume within the Awing DP system, the chapter does not attribute much time to semantic effects that might result from different positions, e.g., when the possessive or the adjective precedes or follows the head noun. Such semantic details within the DP system and other morpho-phonological and tonal patterns that accompany word creations, e.g., the infixation of either /n/ or /nə/ with post-nominal adjectives might be relevant for future research. Moreover, it is argued that Awing, analogous to most Bantu language, has very few adjectives (Dixon 1982). Investigating adjectives and their various forms might equally constitute an inspiring strand of research in Awing and Grassfields in general (see, e.g., Tamanji 2009). In the same spirit, Awing has only three (main) colours: black white and red (in line with the classic study of colour terms in Berlin & Kay 1969), research on criteria that other colour terms in Awing apply to could also be a good research field for both linguists and anthropologists.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the description of verbal categories viz. tense, aspect, mood, verbal extensions, negation, adverbs and a homorganic N-prefix that attaches to the verb and other verbal categories. Before engaging into these verbal categories, an inventory of subject markers (SMs) is first presented. Five morphemes assume the role of subject markers in Awing, two of which serve as singular markers and the other three are used to express plurality. It is argued that, generally, the choice of the SM is immune to noun class reference. It is also shown that subject markers function as (free) pronouns, that is, when the subject NP can be inferred contextually.

The discussion on tenses in Awing begins by showing how Awing, analogous to most (Bantu) Grassfields languages, e.g., Medumba: Mucha (2016), has a symmetric graded tense system with three past and three future tense markers, in Awing. However, Awing has ‘compound tense clauses’, where the today past tense (P1) and yesterday or days/weeks before past tense (P2) markers are used simultaneously. The ‘accompanying’ tense marker is described as a ‘fake’ past marker because it seems to assume an aspectual role in such clauses. I conclude that the so-called compound tense clauses, where two past tense markers (and aspectual elements) can co-occur suggest that tense and aspect (in Awing) might be intertwined in ways that disassociating the semantics of one from the other can be nontrivial business. The Awing data therefore opens an avenue for semantic probing into the tense and aspectual systems in Grassfields.

Aspect is the only verbal slot in Awing that normally accommodates more than two elements (see, e.g., Nurse 2003:95-96) for a cross Bantu observation). The discussion on aspects first suggests that Awing can distinguish perfective from imperfective aspects at the pragmatic level (parallel to a tenseless language like Mandarin Chinese (Smith & Erbaugh 2005) or Wurmbrand's (2014) proposal that English sentences without overt morphological aspect marking obtain perfective interpretations). Discussing the various morphological aspects viz. progressive, habitual, iterative, and without getting into much prosodic details, it is suggested that past tense markers have low tones and future tenses and aspectual markers are realized with high tones. I claim that either there is some sort of tone spreading, or future tense and aspectual markers come with floating tones (as in Bàsàa: Hyman 2003:280) and suggest that the actual tonal patterns that tense and aspectual markers trigger on the verb could be of interest to phonologists.

Chapter 3 also focuses on a nasal prefix that sometimes shows up with verbal categories and the verb in Grassfields languages (e.g., Ghomala': Moguo 2011; Bafut: Tamanji 2014; Medumba: Keupdjio 2020). Parallel to tense marking, the description of the N-prefix has a simple categorization and a complex one. The simplistic view is that past tense markers, aspectual markers and the monopartite negation marker trigger the N-prefix while the bipartite negation marker and future tense markers do not trigger it in Awing. But the complex picture shows that the yesterday or far past tense (P2) marker has a variant that does not trigger the N-prefix, and unlike future tense markers that bleed the N-prefix within the clause, the P2 variant that does not trigger the N-prefix allows the following N-prefix triggering element (e.g., the aspect) to condition the following N-prefix bearer to take the N-prefix. It is also shown that unlike in 'simple clauses', where future tenses do not trigger the N-prefix, if a modal or verbal category is placed in sentence-initial position, and the future tense marker is within the clause, the verb necessarily takes the N-prefix.

Apart from Tamanji (2014), there is no systematic description of this phenomenon in Grassfields Bantu. Without presenting a holistic view, Keupdjio (2020:198-200) uses the N-prefix in Medumba to diagnose in-situ versus ex-situ verbs and suggests that the absence of the prefix on the verb indicates movement to the tense slot while its presence indicates that the verb has not moved. Since chapter 3 is mainly descriptive, the notion of verb movement is not invoked. However, I do not consider the N-prefix in Awing as an indication or not of verb movement in the following chapters. This is not meant to dispute Keupdjio's conclusion in Medumba; on the contrary, it is important to note such proposals and consider them in more

depth in future research in Awing and beyond. Tamanji (2014), on the other hand, is a very interesting description on the phenomenon in Bafut. Tamanji's conclusion on Bafut is that only verbs or auxiliaries that still preserve verbal traits have the ability to trigger the N-prefix on the following verb. Such a conclusion cannot be extended to Awing, though. Among other things, the main reason is that the only tense markers that clearly still share morphological forms and meaning with the verbs that they are derived from are those that prevent the N-prefix in normal circumstances. I therefore believe that this nasal prefix in Awing and Grassfields in general would constitute a good future research domain. As noted in the conclusive remarks in chapter 3, given that some elements within a category (i.e., negation and past tense markers) trigger the N-prefix while others do not, coupled with the fact that a specific category, e.g., future tense markers, prohibits the N-prefix in one context and appears to be the trigger of the prefix in another context, it would be advantageous to begin by investigating the semantics (and perhaps the diachronic side) of these (individual) elements/categories and how their meanings are influenced contextually.

While presenting verbal extensions, and without indicating their tones (although it can be argued in line with Leroy's 2007 claim on Mankon that the extensions have no underlying tones), I show that Awing basically has three verbal suffixes: *-tə -nə* and *-kə*. These suffixes have different meanings depending on the type of verbs that they occur with. It is therefore difficult or impossible to determine the meaning of any of them in isolation. This is consistent with claims that unlike in Southern Bantu languages, extensions are less productive in Bantoid languages (Watters 2003) and that extensions have limited set of verbs in Grassfields (see, e.g., Leroy 2007; Nurse 2008). Coupled to the difficulty in distinguishing the extensions in isolation, it is not obvious whether the extensions in Awing are merely C(onsonants) which are infixes between the verb's stem and the final schwa or the extensions have a CV structure, where the final schwa of the verb is deleted. These are some aspects that will deserve further clarification.

Awing grammar makes use of morphological markers to express negation, as it is the case in most Niger-Congo (Miestamo 2005). I show that there are two main negation strategies. The monopartite marker *má* preserves the SVO word order and the bipartite *kě...pô* alters the order to SOV but can maintain the SVO order when the aspectual category is present (parallel to the observation in other West African languages (e.g., Vata: Koopman 1984; Gungbe: Aboh 2005; Nupe: Kandybowicz 2008 among others), where aspectual and tense markers can change word order in a clause. I argue that generally both negation markers are used to

express sentential negation in Awing but that the monopartite marker can be used contextually to express VP negation. Elaborating on the bipartite marker, I show that the sentence final negation particle is disallowed in questions. Using Collins et al.'s (2017:17) elliptical answer test in negative contexts, I further demonstrate that while the preverbal negation particle can be used without the sentence-final negation particle, the reverse is impossible in Awing. Chapter 3 ends with adverbs by noting that genuine adverbs (parallel to adjectives) are very few in Awing and to bridge the gap Grassfields languages turn to use derived substantives (see, e.g., Tamanji 2009).

Chapter 4 aims to provide conditions that permit the shortening or deletion of the final syllables or vowels of nouns and verbs in Awing. The chapter begins by indicating three languages that demonstrate the long and short form alternation and concludes from the (on going) discussions in these languages that although the phenomenon may appear to relate to a specific language system, e.g., phonology or morphology, the most promising approach would be that set by Kenstowicz (1985) which tackles the phenomenon from a holistic perspective rather than relying on a particular language's system. With that in mind, I label the short forms in Awing as truncated forms and set out with the assumption that the truncated forms are derived from the long ones. It is first shown that truncation does not apply to all nouns: proper names and nouns derived via morphological processes cannot be truncated. Also, the truncated forms are not used as bare NPs, whether as subjects, objects or adjuncts. On the other hand, with the exception of the 1st person non-emphatic possessive determiner and all possessive determiners with the class 7 noun prefix, nouns take the truncated forms with all other modifiers (i.e., articles, demonstratives and possessives). Nominal truncation is summarized thus:

DP type	Truncated nouns	Non-truncated nouns
Bare nouns	✗	✓
CL-7 N + (all) POSS	✗	✓
(All) N + 1 st person non-emphatic SG. POSS	✗	✓
(All) N + 1 st person emphatic SG. POSS	✓	✗
CL-8 N + (all) POSS	✓	✗

N + (other) POSS	✓	-
N + (in)definites	✓	✗
N + DEM	✓	✗
Associative NPs	✓	✗
Plural nouns	✓	✗

The class 7 nouns occurring with all possessive determiners and all nouns occurring with the non-emphatic 1st person singular possessive determiner take the non-truncated forms. These are the exceptional cases that deserve future clarification. One peculiar aspect about the Awiing nominal system is that the noun generally takes the truncated form when the modifiers (i.e. possessives, demonstratives and articles) follow it but the noun cannot be truncated with modifiers (including: colour terms, ‘quantifiers’ the cardinal number one) that precede it. From this observation, and further using associative noun phrases, where the noun preceding the associative marker (AM) has to be in the truncated form and the AM agrees with the preceding nouns plus the fact that bare plural nouns systematically take the truncated forms in the subject position, I conclude that nominal truncation can be accounted for by assuming a DP analysis, where the truncated noun indicates movement within the determiner phrase (in the spirit of Abney 1987). The chapter does not make explicit claims as to whether movement within the DP system is for semantic motives (e.g., for focus effect) or morphological reason (e.g., agreement in number); It would be interesting to explore such details in future works.

Concerning verbal truncation, I identify three contexts in Awiing that distinguish the form of the verb. The first is described as a plurality conspiracy between the verb and its internal argument—direct object. It is shown that plurality and mass interpretation condition the verb to take the truncated form. According to Link (1983), this is because plurals come with the same underlying ‘lattice structure’ as mass nouns. However, there is an exception to this generalization which has to do with nouns that begin with the (class 7) *a*-prefix. That is, when the direct object begins with the *a*-prefix, the verb obligatorily takes the non-truncated forms. Since this is reminiscent to what is observed in the nominal system, I conclude that the (class 7) *a*-prefix is peculiar and should be kept aside from any generalization.

The second context conditioning elements, including the verb, to take the truncated form has to do with exhaustive focus. I follow Féry (2013) and consider this as prosodic alignment of exhaustive focus in Awiing. The Awiing data is compared against Eastern and Southern Bantu,

specifically Zula (Buell 2009) and Makhuwa (van der Wal 2011). It is noted, from the Makhuwa data and discussion in van der Wal (2011:1739), that if the short verbal form in Makhuwa is (merely) a reflex of exclusive interpretation, the situation in Awing and Makhuwa could be paralleled in the sense that the verbs in both languages take the ‘truncated’ form in exhaustive/exclusive focus contexts. The conclusion is that analogous to the notion of disjoint conjoint verb forms in Eastern and Southern Bantu, the Awing verb can take a truncated verb form (similar to a conjoint verb form) in exhaustive focus contexts. The main difference is that exhaustive focus in Awing triggers truncation on other forms than the verb, unlike in Bantu proper. This could have to do with the fact that Awing does not have an immediate after verb (IAV) focus position, as data from Aghem (Watters 1979), Zulu (Buell 2006) and Makhuwa (van der Wal 2006) seems to indicate; but see, e.g., Hyman & Polinsky 2007; Buell 2007,2009 against the IAV position as a focus position.

The third condition that causes the verb to take the short form is when truncation is used as a strategy to form yes-no questions in Awing. In doing so, Awing grammar disposes of notions like upward rising intonation and fast delivery rate that other Grassfields languages use (e.g., Bafut, Tamanji 2009). This questioning strategy mainly shows that Q(uestion)-formation can take place at the core VP-level in Awing. I conclude the chapter by noting that truncation in Awing, among other things, highlights the systematic nature of language. For instance, morpho-phonological processes involved in nominal truncation are actually indicating a covert syntactic mechanism. In the same perspective, the notion of prosodic focus alignment suggests that by using the LE morpheme to express exhaustive focus, the system signals the phonological component and the element immediately preceding the focus takes a short form.

There are however open questions that will need future consideration. For example, from a general view, it is not clear how the movement analysis proposed to account for nominal truncation relates to verbal truncation. Also, it is not explicitly stated whether what is considered as prosodic focus alignment and the plural condition for truncation are fully orthogonal to one another, or somehow related. Concerning the second query, my hunch at this point is that the notions of prosodic focus alignment and ‘lattice structure’, i.e., plurality and mass interpretation are not entirely related, but it would be important to consider such queries in any future endeavour.

Chapter 5 introduces the notion of information structure (IS) and since the LE morpheme constitutes the core of IS in Awing, the chapter first highlights the various contexts that the morpheme can be used in. It is shown that LE can be used as: a wh-focused operator; a topic

operator; a ‘background indicator’; an adversative conjunction; to form alternative questions; to form pseudo-cleft; and as a ‘Relator’ (in the sense of den Dikken 2006) in copular clauses and in constructions termed ‘topic-focus partitioned’. The multidimensional facet of the LE morpheme is emphasized because we believe that ignoring such aspects can influence theoretical stands (see, e.g., Matic’ & Wedgwood 2013; Fominyam & Tran 2019).

The chapter then concentrates on the LE morpheme in copular clauses with the primary aim to identify its syntactic and semantic roles. After presenting various copular constructions and elements that act as copulas in Awing, it is shown that in the present tense, where there is no explicit tense morpheme, the LE morpheme must be used to link the ‘subject’ and the predicate of the copular clause but when the copular clause has an explicit tense morpheme, the *pe* morpheme (which becomes *m-bə* when preceded by a past tense marker) shows up. Adjectival predicates are however peculiar as they can either have a null copula (Pustet 2003) or have the subject marker assume the role of the copula, as in Bantu Digo and Swahili (Gibson et al. 2017). I then proceed to determine the actual copular verb in Awing, that is, whether it is the LE morpheme or *pə* morpheme.

Examining the morpho-syntactic differences between the LE and *pə* morphemes in copular clauses, it is shown, among other things, that the SM cannot immediately precede the LE morpheme, and that LE is void of inflectional properties (i.e., cannot take the N-prefix). I conclude that the actual copular verb in Awing is the *pe* morpheme (literally construed as ‘be’). This copular verb is null when the copular clause is in the present tense. The absence (or presence) of the copular verb does not prevent the LE morpheme from showing up. I argue that this is because copular clauses in Awing have two types of information structure: Subject-focus and as Topic-focus and it is LE’s responsibility to mediate these functions. Technically, it is shown that pre-copular NPs in Awing can be interpreted in two ways: When the ‘subject’ is within the copular clause, say in SpecAgrP, the clause is described as Subject-focus and when the ‘subject’ is in a higher position, say, in the CP domain, the result is a Topic-focus partition. The fact that the pre-copular (topic) NP will have to occur in a higher position relates to the observation in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the ‘subject’ NP and the LE morpheme cannot simultaneously occur in the same side of the main verb, specifically in the preverbal position.

Having established that the *pe* morpheme is the actual copular verb in Awing and that LE’s role is that of a topic-focus and subject-focus mediator, the chapter proceeds to investigate the

type of focus involved in copular clauses. Following the idea in Destruel and Velleman (2014) and Grubic et al. (2018), that contrast is most felicitous only in contrastive contexts and wh-questions do not provide such contexts, it is shown via question-answer pairs that LE does not express contrast in copular clauses. Also, in line with Krifka (1999) and experimental studies in Bade (2016) and Tiemann & Bade (2016) demonstrating that the use of additive particles like ‘too’ and ‘also’ block covert (or pragmatic) exhaustivity operator or implicature, I show that LE is not an exhaustivity operator in copula clauses. I argue that the only focus effect that can be attributed to the predicate of the copular clause would have to do with Grice’s (1975) maxim of quantity. That is, a conversational exhaustive implicature which can be related to Zimmermann’s (2007) notion of ‘maximal list(ing)’. Following Heycock (2012), I maintain that the complement of the copular clause is ‘naturally’ interpreted as focus, by virtue of the new information that it conveys.

Distinguishing the exact role of the LE morpheme in Awing copular clauses contributes to the ongoing discussion across Bantu which often consider elements like the LE particle as either copulas that have become focus markers (e.g., Zerbian 2006) or focus markers that have become copulas (see, e.g., McWhorter 1994 for such a position on Swahili). The Awing data teaches us that the actual copular verb exists just that it is absent in the present tense, a pattern that has been observed in (non)-related languages like Kikuyu (Schwarz 2007), Guruntum (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2009), Polish and Czech (Tajsner 2018).

An aspect that this chapter (and the work in general) overlooked but that will need future clarification is whether the LE morpheme is the same morpheme or different morphemes having the same phonological form in the contexts enumerated in the beginning of chapter 5. If it turns out that we are dealing with the same morpheme, it will be relevant to investigate why a mere ‘Relator’ in copular clauses, as I argue, get ‘drafted’ for information structural purposes, where it gain a stronger semantics—e.g., exhaustiveness (Fomiyam & Šimík 2017). As noted in the conclusive remarks in chapter 5, answers to such queries will largely depend on the theoretical platform the researcher adheres to. For example, given that the LE morpheme appears to have a contrastive exponent in most contexts, it could be argued that it is the same morpheme functioning as a contrastive/exhaustive focus operator and as a contrastive topic particle, since both can be reanalysed as contrastive foci (Wagner 2012). Moreover, the type of ‘ambiguity’ observed for LE (e.g., focus vs topic) is not an exception to Awing. In Vietnamese for instance, the same morpheme is used to express two information structural notions, i.e., contrastive focus marking vs. contrastive topic marking (see, e.g., Tran

2009; Fominyam & Tran 2019). The phenomenon is also observed in some Slavic languages, see, e.g., Tajsner (2018) on Polish. Thus, solutions for such data in Awing may be applicable in these languages too. However, since this work does not aim to provide an analysis capturing the use of the LE morpheme in all contexts, we will leave such queries for another time.

Chapter 6 is concerned with *wh*-questions and begins in a descriptive style by presenting general properties of subject and non-subject *wh*-questions. The Awing data in connection with Grassfields, e.g., Nda'nda' and Fe'fe', where *wh*-subjects are felicitously realized in the preverbal subject position, contradict the claim in Bantu literature that *wh*-phrases are generally excluded from this position (see, e.g., Zerbian 2006:69–71; Wasike 2007:276–279; Fiedler et al. 2010:249; Zentz 2016:85).

The description shows that in Awing *wh*-subject and postverbal categories can occur either in-situ or in sentence-initial position. Having the *wh*-phrase in sentence-initial position results in a biclausal (cleft-like) structure, where the ex-situ *wh*-phrase is modified by a relative clause. It is however argued that, unlike arguments and the temporal adjunct 'when', having location 'where'; manner 'how' and rationale 'why' adjuncts in sentence-initial position is degraded in Awing. Such an asymmetry seems to be widespread in (West) African languages and it appears that the manner 'how' and rationale 'why' adjuncts display the ex-situ ban more than other postverbal categories (see, e.g., Torrence & Kandybowicz 2015 on Krachi; Keupdjio 2020 on Medumba; Kandybowicz et al. (in prep) on Ikpana; Fanselow et al. (submitted) on Tagbana and references cited in these works). Focusing on such asymmetries in Awing and beyond could constitute a good research domain. For instance, Keupdjio (2020:66) argues that event-modifying adjuncts in (Grassfields) Medumba cannot be used in sentence-initial position because such a position has an exhaustive operator which excludes such function denoting categories. On the other hand, this work shows that exhaustivity is a morphological exponent in Awing which can be felicitously associated with such adjuncts. I maintain that although some adjuncts are degraded in the ex-situ position in Awing, they can be felicitously used in emphatic paralinguistic contexts (Downing & Pompino-Marschall 2013).

A peculiarity with Awing grammar is that when the *wh*-subject is in-situ, the SM (or subject pronoun) cannot show up. Conversely, an ex-situ *wh*-subject necessitates the use of the SM in the embedded subject position. Using non-referential quantifiers like 'someone', 'nobody' and 'something', among other things, I argue, in line with Fominyam & Georgi (2021), that the subject pronoun is disallowed with a *wh*-subject in Awing because bare *wh*-phrases are

non-referential and that the subject pronoun generally does not show up with non-referential categories. This is different from previous analyses that either consider the non-availability of a proper subject marking form, or its absence, as either a result of the subject position being a default topic position (see, e.g., Bresnan & Mchombo 1987, Morimoto 2000, 2006; van der Wal 2009; Zerbian 2006a; Zeller 2008, among others) or due to an A-bar feature on the (wh-)subject NP (see, Baier 2018). Conversely, when the wh-phrase is in sentence-initial position, the subject pronoun is obligatory in the embedded subject position in Awing. I claim that the subject pronoun is used to satisfy the EPP subject requirement (à la McFadden & Sundaresan 2018). Also, the LE morpheme cannot be used with an in-situ wh-subject. In line with Fominyam & Šimík (2017), I demonstrate that this is due to the fact that the LE morpheme has a fixed position below the subject in the Awing clause structure.

The discussion on wh-questions also shows that Awing can realize multiple wh-questions. In such constellations, it is possible to have one of the wh-phrase in sentence-initial position. However, Awing grammar (analogous to German—Fanselow et al. 2011; Häussler et al. 2015) does not respect the wh-superiority condition (Kuno & Robinson 1972). The absence of superiority effects is common in African languages (see, e.g., Krachi: Torrence & Kandybowicz 2015; Yoruba: Adesola 2006; Akan; Saah 1994). But Awing is peculiar in that it seems to have anti-superiority in certain contexts. An experiment Fominyam et al. (in prep) shows that multiple wh-constructions are degraded when the wh-subject is promoted to sentence-initial position while the object wh-phrase remains in-situ. Such (apparent) anti-superiority effect plus island insensitivity in Awing have been observed in other languages (e.g., Moken, an Austronesian language spoken in Thailand, Baclawski Jr. & Jenks 2016) and might constitute an exciting research topic in Awing (Fominyam et al. (in prep)).

Chapter 6 also shows that in Awing, postverbal wh-phrases can be realized with or without the LE morpheme. Contra Aboh's (2007:309) claim that wh-phrases are of two kinds: focused and non-focused, I argue that (all) wh-phrases in Awing can be conveniently conceived as focalized elements in the sense that they behave – semantically – as inherently focused by denoting (implicit) alternatives (à la Horvath 1986). I do not claim, however, that their syntax involves a F(ocus)-triggering operator/feature (Haegeman & Guéron 1999; Sabel 2006). The computational mechanism of wh-phrases that I adhere to goes back to Hamblin's (1973) idea that the meaning of a question is the set of its possible answers. Building on Rooth's (1985) underspecified semantic notion of alternative focus, without appealing to the squiggle operator and its stronger semantics in Rooth (1992), I argue that wh-phrase implicitly specify

alternatives and that they can be computed with the help of a Q-operator in the C-domain. As such, the LE morpheme cannot be considered a focus marker in Awing (questions) given that its role is not to make available the alternatives that the focus interpretation depends on. I conclude that LE has existential and exhaustivity presuppositions in questions that do not only make its use contrastive with salient alternative(s), analogous to Destruel and Velleman's (2014) observation that contrast is needed for English clefts, but further presupposes an exhaustive answer.

The chapter ends with morpho-syntactic, semantic and phonological diagnostics showing that ex-situ wh/focused phrases are derived via a non-movement relation (in line with languages like Kikuyu and Duala (Sabel 2000); Bura (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2012); Kĩtharaka (Muriungi 2003) among many others). However, Awing exhibits, to an extent, a phenomenon relating to tonal modification on verbs that is considered a reflex of movement (see in particular, Korsah and Murphy 2019; Amaechi 2020). The difference between Awing and, e.g., Asanti Twi (Korsah and Murphy 2019), is that the tonal change is felt only on an embedded verb of a biclausal structures: Once there are two or more embedded structures, the tonal change is lost in Awing. This is different from Asanti Twi, where the change is said to be systematic and affects all embedded verbs (Korsah and Murphy (2019). I suggest, in line with Hartmann & Zimmermann (2012), that tonal modification on the embedded verb in a biclausal structure in Awing captures a semantic operator that links the predicate of the matrix verb to the interpretative site in the relative clause, and that, in Awing, when a clause intervenes between the wh-focused phrase and the interpretative site, the tonal reflex is completely obscured. Nonetheless, it might be relevant to probe further into this phenomenon in Awing and other tonal languages.

Chapter 7 has three main parts. I first provide data showing that Awing distinguishes two types of foci: morphologically unmarked focus (information focus) and morphologically marked focus. Morphological focus marking in Awing refers to the association of the focus particle LE with a focused category, which should not be considered same as 'focus markers' (FMs), e.g., in languages like Gungbe: Aboh 2004; Tuki: Biloa 2013, among others, which are said to be special particles marking the focus of the sentence. Basing on a number of diagnostics showing that exhaustivity is part of the semantics of the LE morpheme and not derived via contextual implicature, chapter 7 substantiates the claim in Fominyam & Šimík (2017) that the LE morpheme is a morphological exponent of a functional head Exh corresponding to Horvath's (2010) EI (Exhaustive Identification). Hence, there is no F(ocus)

head in Awing clausal projection and answerhood focus is not marked by means of any prosodic, morphological or morph-syntactic mechanism. Also, it does not matter whether we are dealing with a monoclausal or biclausal structure, focus is always realized in-situ in Awing. Such conclusions differ from previous analyses on focus in most (Western) Bantu (e.g., Aboh 2004; Bassong 2014; Biloa 2020, among many others) that rely on the cartographic approach which is based on a focus head and ‘criterial’ checking of a focus feature (Rizzi 1997; 2013, Cinque & Rizzi 2008, and related works).

Discussing the syntax of exhaustive focus and negation, it is first shown that analogous to most Bantu languages (e.g., Vata: Koopman 1984; Gungbe: Aboh 2006; Limbum: Becker & Nformi 2016) verb focus in Awing exhibits verb doubling. Fominyam & Šimík (2017) propose a system where the focus operator LE associates with a focus within its scope. It is argued that verb doubling is motivated by the requirement to associate the exhaustive particle with the verb. So, when the verb moves to AgrP, the copy has to be overt in its base position in order to permit the Exh particle which is below AgrP to associate with the lower copy. It is this requirement to association LE and the lower copy that forces both copies of one and the same chain to be overtly realized. This work however show new data in negative clauses where the finite copy can show up in a position below the focalized one.

To solve the issue I spend some time investigating negation in Awing and observe that, among other things, negative clauses differ from affirmative ones in that while the direct object obligatory occurs after the verb in affirmative sentences, it can show up after the verb and before NEG1 in a position preceding the verb in negative clauses (i.e., V-O and O-V). Without discussing the morphological status of NEG1, it is argued that this negation marker performs a ‘verbal’ role in negative clauses and a system where the direct object obligatorily moves to a position immediately after it to facilitate Case checking is proposed. A cluster containing the verb and other inflectional categories viz. future tense, aspects and adverbs is identified in negative clauses and labelled FAA. It is shown that such a cluster can be scrambled to a position above AgrOP (hosting the object), thus permitting what seems to be VO-OV alternation in negative clauses. One of the main conclusions from the discussion of negation is that adjunction (of various types, e.g., heads to (small) clauses) seems to be unrestricted in negative clauses in Awing.

Returning to the syntax of verb focus and negation, the chapter concludes by modifying the idea in Fominyam & Šimík (2017), namely that the focalized verb which occurs with the exhaustive particle is a lower copy of the finite verb that has been moved to Agr. It is argued

that the *LE-focused verb* cluster is an instantiation of adjunction. The conclusion is that verb doubling with verb focus in Awing is neither a realization of two copies of one and the same verb (Fominyam and Šimík 2017) nor a result of a copy triggered by a focus marker (Collins and Essizewa 2007; Aboh and Dyakonova 2009). Rather the focalized copy is said to be merged directly as the complement of LE forming a type of small adjoining clause. Its adjoining status explains why it can precede or come after the finite verbal copy.

We have now run through a summary of the main findings in chapters 2 through 7. The remainder of this chapter will present data from two Grassfields language that have to do with focalization. The concern is with morphemes that are ‘generally’ considered as focus markers.

8.2 Outlook

The observation that the LE morpheme, a focus operator, is used in different contexts in Awing is one of the main factors that influenced the choice of this research topic. Apart from showing that LE can occur in different contexts, this work has provided the meaning contribution of the LE morpheme with focused categories and it is argued that LE expresses exhaustivity. However, it is noted (in chapters 6 and 7) that the interpretation of the LE morpheme in most contexts includes a ‘contrastive’ exponent. In particular, data (in chapter 5) show that LE can be used as a contrastive topic marker and the adversative conjunction ‘but’ (although no formal analysis is provided in this work for both roles). According to Toosarvandani (2013), a conjunction like ‘but’ can assume the role of a focus operator. Wagner (2012) exploits a theory which can reanalyse contrastive focus and contrastive topic as focus. Thus, it can be very tempting to conclude that the LE morpheme is a focus marker; besides, the same morpheme shows up in copular clauses and it is commonly assumed in Bantu literature that copulas can eventually become ‘focus markers’ (e.g., Zerbian 2006) or that ‘focus markers’ can develop into copulas (McWhorter 1994).

Rather than ‘simplistically’ labelling LE as a focus marker in Awing, this work exploits the idea that focus “indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of a linguistic expression” Krifka (2007:6) and argue that both information focus and wh-constituents can be neatly incorporated in this view. Hence, the term ‘focus marking’ (Aboh 2004; 2010) as in using a morphological focus marker to mark the focus of a sentence cannot be applied in Awing. Instead, this work attempts to give a comprehensive view of the syntax and semantics of the LE morpheme in copular clauses and with focused constituents with the hope to inspire research that will focus on fine-grained analysis of such elements in Bantu and beyond. In what follows, data on focalization in two Grassfields languages is presented. The

main objective is to show that, parallel to Awing, new information focus is unmarked in Grassfields and that elements that associate with focus have different functions in these languages.

Compared to other Bantu languages, Grassfields languages seem to exhibit, to a greater extent, morphological focus operators. For example, Becker et al. (2019) argue that in Limbum exhaustive focus and information focus can be realized by two different particles. However, the general tendency seems to suggest that, analogous to Awing, information focus is unmarked in Grassfields. But these languages demonstrate a variety of focus operators that show up with ‘contrastive’ foci and in other environments, as data from Fe’fe’ and Ghomálá’ will illustrate.

8.2.1 Focus operators in Fe’fe’

This section presents focalization in Fe’fe’ through question-answer pairs. It is shown that this language has a focus operator (*mα*) that is optionally used with in-situ and ex-situ focused categories. In addition to this optional particle, another morpheme (*tα*) obligatorily shows up with postverbal ex-situ categories. Lappi (PC) indicates that the use of the *mα* morpheme generally induces a ‘contrastive’ interpretation, as evident in the English translations. Postverbal categories (i.e., object and adjuncts) can also show up with the *mα* morpheme in sentence-initial position, that is, plus the obligatory *tα* morpheme. Given that ex-situ (wh)-focused constituents, parallel to English clefts (Destruel and Velleman 2014), ‘generally’ express contrast, or exhaustivity (Keupdjio 2020) in Bantu (Grassfields), it will be interesting to know whether the use of the optional *mα* morpheme contributes in such interpretations. This section does not get into such details, though: the aim is to show the data and other environments that both elements can occur in, in an effort to motivate research that targets the semantics of such morphemes.

Subject focus in Fe’fe’ is not peculiar as the wh-subject and the corresponding response can be realized with or without the *mα* morpheme (1). The use of the *mα* morpheme gives rise to a cleft-like interpretation.

- (1) a. wá (mα) lá zā kwēle’ wāhā
 who FOC P3 eat plantain yesterday
 ‘Who (is it that) ate plantain yesterday?’

- b. Lappi (mα) lá zā kwēle' wāhā
 Lappi FOC P3 eat plantain yesterday
 '(It is) Lappi (who) ate plantain Yesterday'

The *mα* morpheme is optional with in-situ (wh)-object, see (2a) and (3a). The ex-situ counterparts in (2b) and (3b) show that the *tα* morpheme must follow the wh-focused constituents. I will label both morphemes as Foc(us operators).

- (2) a. Lappi zá (mα) ká
 Lappi eat FOC what
 'What did Lappi eat/what is it that Lappi ate?'
- b. (mα) ká *(tα) Lappi zā
 FOC what FOC Lappi eat
 'What is it that Lappi ate?'

- (3) a. á zā (mα) nkwēndák
 she eat FOC rice
 'She ate rice/RICE'
- b. (mα) nkwēndák *(tα) á zā
 FOC rice FOC she eat
 'It is rice that she ate'

For completion, see that adjuncts are realized in the same way as the object:

- (4) a. Sadembouo lá na' wúzā (mα) lāhā
 Sadembouo P3 cook food FOC how
 'How did Sadembouo cook the food?'
- b. (mα) lāhā *(tα) Sadembouo lá na' wúzā
 FOC how FOC Sadembouo P3 cook food
 'How is it that Sadembouo cook the food?'
- c. Sadembouo lá na' wúzā (mα) pi mǎ
 Sadembouo P3 cook food FOC with fire
 'Sadembouo cooked the food with gas/WITH GAS?'
- d. (mα) pi mǎ *(tα) Sadembouo lá na' wúzā
 FOC with gas FOC Sadembouo P3 cook food

‘It is with gas that Sadembouo cooked the food?’

The status of the *mα* morpheme as a ‘contrastive’ focus operator is somehow obvious in this language. But that of the obligatory *ta* morpheme following ex-situ focused constituents is less clear.⁴¹ Nonetheless, consider the data in (5) and (6); example (5) shows that the *ta* morpheme can be used as an ‘alternative conjunction’, a function inclining to focalization since it has to do with alternatives. In (6a) and (6b) the morpheme is interpreted as, say, quantifiers. In (6c), it apparently serves the same quantifying role, although the specific meaning could not be deduced.

- (5) Lappi mu nzā tok ta kwεε’
 Lappi ASP eat banana CONJ plantains
 ‘Is Lappi eating banana or plantains?’

⁴¹ It is tempting to conclude (from a strict cartographic perspective) that *ta* is a focus marker with the sole role to trigger the focused phrase from within the clause to the ex-situ position (cf. Lappi in prep). Such a conclusion may be reached by observing data like that in (i) through (iii) which show that *ta* is neither a relative marker nor a subordinate conjunction/complementizer. Instead, it is the optional focus operator (*mα*) that can be used as a relative marker (ii) and also as the conjunction (iii). The same *mα* shows up as the copula (iv) and as what, I will tentatively qualify as ‘consequential modal’ in (v). It suffices to note (for now) that these elements have different functions in the language, parallel to what is shown for LE (in chapter 5) in Awing.

- (i) a. mbā’ ká sα’ zā wúzā lá henā
 man REL come eat food REL go
 ‘The man who ate the food is gone.’
 b. ŋwa’ni yi ngǎ ywēn la tʃə ndom lǎk
 book REL I buy REL lie on chair
 ‘The book that I bought is on the chair.’
- (ii) Ngǎ yíi mvūā mα ǎ mɛ mfāt mbαα no
 I saw dog REL he PROG eat meat your
 ‘I saw a dog that was eating your meat.’
- (iii) Ngǎ ʒīi mα pěn fǎ’ zě’ε kwa’ pəpē’
 I know that you work today really well
 ‘I know that you work really well today’
- (iv) a. zēn zǎ mα Lappi b. Lappi mα zēn zǎ
 name my cop Lappi Lappi cop name my
 ‘My name is Lappi’ ‘Lappi is my name’
- (v) a. o zóp ā, mα ngǎ nʃwíi
 you beat me ? I shout
 ‘If you beat me, I will shout.’
 b. mbak lō, mα nʒí nʃīā
 Rain fall, ? road slippery
 ‘If it rains the road will be slippery’

- (6) a. yǎ'-ŋwα'nǐ sα' tα ndʒə
 students come until much
 ‘Many students came’
- b. a kα zā wúzā tα
 he P3 eat food much
 ‘He has eaten (much) food.’
- c. Lappi pí Happi fāt ngofat tα yāā mīē
 Lappi and Happi eat maize ? LINK finish
 ‘Lappi and Happi eat the maize completely’

Relying on these quantifying meanings and in particular the use of *tα* in (6c) to indicate, say, ‘*the perfective aspect*’ of the action, it seems to me that focalization exploit such intensifying or perfective meaning component in an opposite way to express the exclusion of some/all alternatives. So, *tα* in Fe’fe’ might turn out to be an exhaustive focus marker while *mα* merely indicates contrast. If this is the case we should expect a situation where *tα* can also be used in a postverbal position to express object or adjunct exhaustivity. Unlike in Awing, e.g., (7a), such an expectation is not borne out in Fe’fe’ (7b).

- (7) a. a kɔ' lɔ məkwunə
 she eat Ehx rice
 ‘It is rice that she ate.’
- b. á zā *tα/mα nkwēndǎk
 she eat FOC rice
 ‘It is rice that she ate.’

Perhaps exhaustivity is primarily an issue of sentence-initial position in Fe’fe’ (as in Medumba, Keupdjio 2020) and *tα* is an overt exhaustive head; Or *tα* is an(other) agreeing relative marker/head (see fn 41) that must show up with postverbal foci in sentence-initial position? For example in Tuki the same morpheme *odzu* is considered as a focus marker and a relative marker (Bilola 2013:426).⁴² I have no evidence at this point for such conclusions, though. It suffices to note for now that these elements might be used to express focus notions which might not be intrinsically related to the denotation of focus itself. To conclude the discussion on Fe’fe’, observe in (8) below that parallel to the use of *tα* in (6c), *mα* is used with

⁴² Tuki is a Southern Bantoid language spoken in Cameroon.

an adverb and its actual meaning is not obvious. My hunch is that just like adverbs, quantifiers or modals can intensify/quantify verbal categories, so too do these focus operators mediate the interpretation of focus alternatives by supposing partial or complete exclusion.

- (8) Happi sǒh ndhī zǐ mǝ wahā
 Happi wash cloth his ? fast
 ‘Happi washes his clothes quickly’

Let us now turn to Ghòmálá’, another Grassfields language that shows an unusual aspect where (wh)-subject and postverbal focused categories have different focus operators.

8.2.1 Focus operators in Ghòmálá’

In Ghòmálá’, a wh-subject can be questioned with or without the *né* morpheme (9a).⁴³ The corresponding focus constituent can be realized in three different ways: either with or without *né* morpheme (9b), or with the same morpheme but with a falling tone (9c).

- (9) a. wǎ (né) kǎ né mkólêsi
 Who FOC P2 cook rice
 ‘Who (is it that) cooked rice?’ (OR: the rice was cooked by who?)
- b. Símō (né) kǎ né mkólêsi
 Simo FOC P2 cook rice
 ‘(It is) Simo (who) cooked rice?’ (OR: the rice was cooked by Simo)
- c. Símō nê kǎ né mkólêsi
 Simo FOC P2 cook rice
 ‘(It is) Simo (who) cooked rice?’

The data in (9) suggest that either Ghòmálá’ has two subject focus operators, or the same morpheme undergoes a tonal prosodic change, for reasons yet to be determined. Another curiosity is that *nǎ* with the high tone can be used to express the passive voice, see the translations in (9a) and (9b).⁴⁴ It also appears that the form of the verb can determine the

⁴³ The Ghòmálá’ data and judgement was provided by Blaise Mkounga, a linguistic Ph.D. student in the university of Yaoundé I Cameroon.

⁴⁴ According to Mkounga, this (focus) operator *nǎ* in the position preceding the tense marker is the (only) standard means to form passives in Ghòmálá’:

choice of the subject’s focus operator (or perhaps it is the other way around), e.g., the focus operator with the falling tone might not be used with infinitive verbs. Exploring the intricacies between the verb and these focus operators go beyond the aim of this section. However, the fact that the focus operators have a semantic connection with the verb explains to some degree why it can be used to obtain the passive voice, which also highlights the affinity that the Fe’Fe’ focus operators have with verbal categories. Apart from this (additional) passive voice interpretation, the semantic difference between the two focus operators is not obvious. According to Mkounga (PC), the focus operator with falling tone indicates that ‘the speaker knows for sure that it is Simo who cooked the food’ whereas that with the high tone simply provides the new information. Such an intuition might be paralleled to Becker et al. (2019) conclusion in Limbum that exhaustive (or contrastive) focus and information focus are realized by two different particles. However, unlike in Limbum, the information focus in (9b) can drop both focus operators. Also, it will be important to investigate more on the notion of ‘truth’ invoked by the informant in (9c).

With the (wh-)object, Ghòmálá’ exhibit two different focus operators:

- (10) a. Sîmō ká né (â/pâ) kã
 Simo P2 cook FOC what
 ‘What did Simo cook/What is it that Simo cooked?’
- b. Sîmō ká né (â/pâ) mkólêsi
 Simo P2 cook FOC rice
 ‘Simo cook rice/It is rice that Simo cooked?’

According to the informant, the absence of either of the focus operators in (10a) “means that the speaker is asking for a simple information: He does not know what Simo cooked but at least he knows that he cooked something...” and the use of either â or pâ suggests that “...the speaker thinks that Simo cooked X but it seems that it is not actually X, but Y or Z that he cooked.” The informant could not clarify the difference between the two morphemes in the question. However, the answer in (10b) was considered as contrastive but *pâ* is said to have an

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- (vi) a. Tâmo ká há gǎfē yá bí Tálá
 Tamo P2 give maize LINK to Tala
 ‘Tamo gave maize to Tala.’
- b. Tâmo *(ná) ká há gǎfē yá bí Tálá
 Tamo ? P2 give maize LINK to Tala
 ‘The maize to Tala was given by Tamo.’

additional ‘truth-value’. Adjunct focus in this language also exhibits two different focus operators and the initial judgement parallels that of object: both are said to express contrast (cleft-like interpretation) but one has an additional ‘truth-value’. Ghɔ́málá’ therefore seems to express three different focus interpretations: information focus, contrastive and, perhaps exhaustive. Apart from information focus, the notion of contrast and what is described as ‘truth-value’ (which I am tentatively qualifying as exhaustive) will have to be clarified. But that is not all: the language also has ex-situ strategies, where, apparently, no focus operator is used (11a):

- (11) a. á bǎ kǎ yǎ Símō kǎ né a
 it COP what REL Simo P2 cook REL
 ‘What is it that Simo cooked?’
- b. á bǎ mkólêsi tǎ Símō kǎ né
 it COP what ? Simo P2 cook
 ‘It is rice that Simo cooked’

Note that the sentence-initial *á* in (11) is not a focus operator.⁴⁵ The examples in (11) are said to have parallel interpretations with those that make use of the ‘contrastive’ operators in-situ.

⁴⁵ The examples in (viii), where the focus operator can be used after the copular verb suggest that *á* glossed as the expletive is not the focus operator. Also, the status of the *tǎ* morpheme in (11b) and (viic) is not obvious but Mkounga maintains that it is (another) focus operator. It could actually be, just like the obligatory sentence-initial *tǎ* in Fe’fe’. However, this will imply that the example in (viic) where the focus operator *á* is optional can take two focus operators and this will be the only construction that will felicitously double such operators in Ghɔ́málá’, unlike in Fe’fe’, where such doubling is possible with all postverbal ex-situ categories.

- (vii) a. Símō kǎ né (â/pâ) bvǔ kǎ m-kǒ
 Simo P2 cook FOC potatoes or beans
 ‘Did Simo cook potatoes or beans?’
- b. ywǎ yǎ Símō kǎ né a kǎ bǎ (â/pâ) bvǔ kǎ m-kǒ
 thing REL Simo P2 cook REL P2 be FOC potatoes or beans
 ‘The thing that Simo cooked was potatoes or beans?’
- c. á bǎ (â) bvǔ kǎ m-kǒ tǎ Símō kǎ né
 it be FOC potatoes or beans ? Simon P2 cook
 ‘Is it (actually) potatoes or beans that Simo cooked?’

My hunch is that *tǎ* is a complementizer, but that will have to be determined in future work. What is interesting in the alternative questions in (vii) is that, parallel to Awing, see (viii) below, the focus operators in Ghɔ́málá’ can be omitted. It would be interesting to outline the various meaning and consequences of these elements in such examples. For example I claim (in chapter 7) that the omission of the focus operator in Awing could imply that either items or just one of the alternatives was bought or still nothing was bought. However, the focus operator in the Awing question implies that the questioner is not only ‘certain’ that something was bought but also assumes that only one of the alternatives holds. So, perhaps these different meaning components that the Awing LE morpheme incarnates are expressed by the different focus operators in Ghɔ́málá’.

On a final note, see in (12) that the postverbal object focus operators can also be used in copular clauses:

- (12) a. Tâmô b́ (â/pâ) dzûʔ-gǒ (Predicational)
 Tamo be FOC work-farm
 ‘Tamo is (actually) a farmer.’
- b. Gēdjâ a b́ (â/pâ) Tâmo (Specificational)
 owner-house my is FOC Tamo
 ‘My husband is (actually) Tamo.’
- c. mô b́ #(â/pâ) caʔá (Equative)
 Person be FOC ground
 ‘Man is ground/ humans amount to nothing.’

Omitting the focus operators in the predicative (12a) and specificational (12b) clauses is fine; having them would imply ‘correctness’, per Mkounga’s intuition. This suggests that (12a) and (12b) without the focus operator could amount to non-exhaustive propositions, that is, if these elements maintain their information roles in such clauses (which they appear to). On the other hand, if the speaker omits the focus operator in the equative clause in (12c), the result would be a mere comparison and will fail to yield the intended (idiomatic) meaning: ‘humans are worth nothing’. Note that ‘man’ cannot be ‘mud’ and the omission of the focus operators will specify just this literal meaning, which seems to be rejected by the native speaker. The primary difference between Ghómálá’ and Awing copular clauses is that unlike in Ghómálá’, the copular verb in Awing generally shows up with tense markers. The crucial difference is that Awing has a focus operator that always shows up in copular clauses but it is deprived of the focus semantics, namely exhaustivity that it expresses in non-copular clauses. The reverse seems to be true for Ghómálá’, but once more it might be interesting to investigate the differences between these particles in such clauses; according to Mkounga the *pâ* morpheme,

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- (viii) a. Alombah a ʒu(nə) (ĺ) mətó’ə ké ndzô
 Alombah SM buy LE potatoes or beans
 ‘Did Alombah buy potatoes or beans?’
- b. a ʒu(nə) (ĺ) mətó’ə
 SM buy LE potatoes
 ‘He bought potatoes’

parallel to object focus, has a stronger entailment of 'truth'. Generally, what the data on Ghómálá' suggest is that different morphemes can be used to mark different notions of focus.

I have presented data on Fe'fe' and Ghómálá' that show different focus operators. Such operators are not only used with focalization but also show up in other environments. The hope is that this will serve as an incentive for research that goes beyond the overwhelming tradition of labelling such elements as focus markers without any attempt to investigate their semantics.

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