A Description of Dzә (Jenjo) Nouns and Noun Phrases, an Adamawa Language of Northeastern Nigeria

P. Benson
Federal University Wukari,
PMB 1020, Katsina-Ala Road, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria


Dzә [jen] is an Adamawa language spoken in some parts of Taraba, Adamawa and Gombe states in Northeastern Nigeria. The study presented in the article syntactically describes nouns and noun phrases in Dzә. In an attempt to document Dzә and taking into consideration that Dzә is an under-investigated and under-documented language, the result will provide important data to typological research and to linguists working on Adamawa languages. The study adopts a descriptive research design in collecting, describing and analyzing the data. The data was obtained from fieldwork in December 2014, personal observations of daily conversations, introspection and the Dzә Bible. In the article, a brief overview of the phonology and tone of Dzә is provided. It also shows the different kinds of nouns, pronouns and noun phrases in Dzә; simple and complex noun phrases. The language is rich in pronouns, consisting of subject pronouns, object pronouns, reflexive pronouns, interrogative pronouns and possessive pronouns. As it is with most African languages, the elements that constitute a noun phrase occur after the head noun. These elements are articles, demonstratives, possessives, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, genitive constructions (inalienable and alienable possessives) and relative clauses. This is a preliminary study of Dzә and it is open for further research and contributions.

Keywords: Dzә, nouns, noun phrases, Jenjo, Adamawa.

Introduction

Dzә [jen] is an Adamawa language spoken in some parts of Adamawa, Taraba and Gombe States, Northeastern Nigeria. The original name of the language is Dzә but it is widely known as Jenjo. It is a minority language that belongs to the poorly studied Adamawa languages. Its speakers are predominantly in Jen (their capital home), Karim-Lamido local government area of Taraba State. The number of Dzә speakers is also not yet known.
With this in mind, there is a need to describe the minority languages in Nigeria especially those of Northeastern Nigeria so as to prevent them from dying.

According to T. Givón, nouns in any language includes words that express the most time-stable concepts, e.g. rock, tree, mountain, house etc [1, p. 51]. E. T. Payne further states that to determine whether any given word is a noun or not, one must first determine the morphosyntactic characteristics of prototypical nouns. Then the grammatical category of a questionable word can usually be determined according to how closely the word follows the morphosyntactic pattern of prototypical nouns [2, p. 33]. However, there will always be some truly ambiguous examples as well as words that function sometimes as a verb and sometimes as a noun depending on the context. There is also the issue of nominalization. For example, in Dzə ‘i’ is a nominal marker which turns verb into noun lébí is ‘sing’ vàbí is ‘singer’. Their idea is prescriptive rather than descriptive. On the other hand, A. Radford states that a noun phrase is a phrase whose head is a noun, for example a structure such as “The king of Utopia” is a noun phrase comprising the head noun “king”, the complement “of Utopia” and its specifier (determiner) “the”. Therefore, noun phrase is a phrase consisting of a noun and other dependents and the noun serving as the head of the phrase [3, p. 87]. This study describes the nouns and noun phrases in Dzə. The study adopts descriptive research design in collecting, describing and analyzing the data. The sections that follow describe the phonology, tone and noun phrases in Dzə.

The phonology of Dzə

Consonants

According to N. K. Othaniel, there are 33 consonant phonemes in Dzə language [4]. The consonant phonemes are symmetrical in terms of voicing. These consonant phonemes are shown in the table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Dzə consonant sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bilabial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plosive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affricate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approximant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vowel

The vowel inventory of Dzə consists of nine distinct oral vowels, seven nasalized vowels and six breathy vowels (Table 2–4).
Table 2. Oral vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+ATR VOWELS</th>
<th>-ATR VOWELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>front</td>
<td>central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Nasalized vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>front</th>
<th>central</th>
<th>back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>close</td>
<td>ɨ̃</td>
<td>ɨ̃</td>
<td>ʊ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td>ɛ̃</td>
<td></td>
<td>ɔ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>ə̃</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Breathy vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>front</th>
<th>central</th>
<th>back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʊ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td></td>
<td>ɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td></td>
<td>ə̤</td>
<td>ɑ̤</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tone

The Dz̩ language has contrastive three level tone: H, M, L. Example: H: bí ‘song’, M: bî ‘metal’ L: bi ‘word’. There are also two contrastive contour tones which are H/L, H/M, M/L, H/R, L/R, M/R.

Nouns and Pronouns

Nouns may be derived from verbs by using the nominalizer prefix –i. Most of the derived nouns refer to doer. See table 5 below. Detailed description of nominalisation is not relevant here. Here are the examples.

Table 5. Nominalized Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Nominalized form</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tenwá</td>
<td>announce</td>
<td>i-tenwá</td>
<td>announcer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsiki</td>
<td>mourn</td>
<td>i-tsiki</td>
<td>mourner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzòwé</td>
<td>travel</td>
<td>i-dzòwé</td>
<td>traveller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lé</td>
<td>sing</td>
<td>i-lébi</td>
<td>singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dz̩̄</td>
<td>buy/sell</td>
<td>i-dz̩̄-niŋ</td>
<td>buyer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following section describes the different types of nouns in Dzə.

**Proper Names (Nouns)**

“proper names are nouns that are used to address and identify particular persons or culturally significant personages or places” [2, p. 39]. Examples of such nouns in Dzə are:


b. Person: Fillah ‘Fillah’, Filalo, Fijamilo, Kanmilə “these are all common names of Dzə people.

**Count and Mass Nouns**

Count nouns refer to things that can be counted and mass nouns refer to substances like water, sand, air and wood [2, p. 41]. The plural form of count nouns in Dzə are marked by the plural marker ‘e’ examples are: ye ‘chicken’ è-yè ‘chickens’, yó ‘pig’ e-yò ‘pigs’, idzwà ‘dog’ e-idzwà ‘dogs’, pìṣahù ‘school’, e-pìṣahù ‘schools’, ninpù ‘goat’ e-ninpù ‘goats’. Examples of mass nouns are niỳmari ‘rice’, niỳyi ‘beans’, miỳ̃ water and hywà ‘country’, kàntùŋ ‘sugar’ nywì ‘oil’ t̀unjwè ‘salt’ and more below. The following comes either under the count nouns or mass nouns.

**Common Nouns**

General names of place, person and thing. They are not capitalised. Examples are:

(2) a. Place: hywà ‘country’ (Lit. land), lòmwè ‘market’, kwòfì ‘church’, pìparable ‘place of worship’.


**Concrete Nouns**

Names of persons, places and things that are tangible with one or more of the senses.


b. Place: fòniỳ ‘farm’, pìsahù ‘school’.


**Abstract Nouns**

Names idea, feeling and quality. Examples:

Compound Nouns

These are nouns that are formed by joining two simple nouns. Examples are:

a. ifi + a + iyé = ifaïye 'female'
b. imwà + ibwì = imwaibwi 'boy'
c. nììy + tsíkù = nììytsíkù 'pillow'
d. nììy + chi + nììy = nììychìnììy 'wealth'
e. imwà+sahu =imwaïsahu 'student'
f. ijì + na+si+nììy =inìïnaïnììy 'teacher'
g. nwà+kà+vò =nwàkàvò 'clan'

Pronouns

There are several pronouns in Dzà. Some occur as subject and others as object pronouns. The following are the examples of pronouns found in Dzà (Table 6, 7).

Table 6. Subject pronoun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>n ‘I’</td>
<td>bì ‘we’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>à ‘you’</td>
<td>bò ‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>ò ‘she/he’</td>
<td>ë ‘they/it’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Object pronoun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>mì ‘me’</td>
<td>bì ‘us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>mò ‘you’</td>
<td>bò ‘you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>wò ‘her/him’</td>
<td>ë ‘them’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possessive Pronoun

The possessive pronouns in Dzà are formed by adding a genitive marker “à” before the object pronoun (singular) and the possessive morpheme “vò” before an object pronoun (plural) (Table 8). Except for 3rd person which is a subject pronoun.

Table 8. Possessive Pronoun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>à mì ‘mine’</td>
<td>à vò bì ‘ours’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>à mò ‘yours’</td>
<td>à vò bò ‘yours’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>à ó ‘hers/his’</td>
<td>à vò lò ‘theirs’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflexive Pronoun

The reflexive pronouns in Dzə are formed by prefixing a morpheme ‘ku’ which literally mean ‘head’ to the object pronouns. The 3rd person singular uses object pronoun wə when it comes to reflexive pronoun to when the prefix ‘ku’ is attached. See the table 9 below.

Table 9. Reflexive Pronoun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>kú mi ‘myself’</td>
<td>kú bɨ ‘ourselves’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>kú mə ‘yourself’</td>
<td>kú bɨ ‘yourselves’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>kú wó ‘her/himself’</td>
<td>kú lə ‘their selves’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nouns and Pronouns as head of NP and their categories

It is universally known that nouns and pronouns form the head of a noun phrase. This no different with Dzə. Noun phrase usually occurs with other elements which include determiners, numerals, genitives, modifiers, relative clauses, noun classifiers and the head noun [2, p.86].

(6) o wú dò 3.sub come yesterday ‘he came yesterday’.

(7) e-ije ni tsəwə si libənì pl-woman DET marry LOC proud ‘married women are proud’.

(8) e-ìfì ni tsò ivò si wù pl-person DET crown king LOC come ‘people that crown king are coming’.

(9) mngbó ni di pi vado ni dé e-ʋə ìhyənì flood DET take place last time DET destroyed pl-house many ‘the flood that happened last time destroyed many houses’.

(10) bì fì bá ni a wùka ni 1sub.pl slaughter goat DET 2.sub come DET ‘we slaughtered the goat you brought’.

Nominal Identification

The following are the nominals in Dzə that are identified based on syntactic criteria.

(11) a. jə lé ‘that pot’

pot that
The lexical items appearing in the position where ‘pot’, ‘hoe’, ‘brother’, ‘house’ etc are consider nominals other categories cannot substitute them.

**Interrogative Pronouns**

Interrogatives pronouns in Dzə are:

(12)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>akè</th>
<th>‘which’</th>
<th>wò</th>
<th>‘who’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pwâné</td>
<td>‘how much’</td>
<td>bàdé</td>
<td>‘what’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bè</td>
<td>‘where’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Simple Noun Phrase**

Simple noun phrase is categorized by nouns and determiners such as articles, demonstratives, possessive pronouns, adjectives quantifiers (some, many, a few, each, and every) numerals. Demonstratives imply ‘pointing to’ or demonstrating [2, p. 103]. Consider the following.

**Articles**

There is only one type of article in Dzə and the definite articles. It is also used to mark agreement. Determiners can appear with both animate and inanimate, human and non-human entity. The definite article de can only be used when the noun has been mentioned before. And can occur both in the subject and object positions.

(13)  
| vòdáka | de |
| city | DET |
| ‘the city’ |

(14)  
| bè | de |
| rope | DET |
| ‘the rope’ |

**Demonstratives**

Demonstratives can occur any where in the noun phrase except the pre-head position. They could be proximal, medial or distal.
Possessives form parts of the determiners in Dzə noun phrase. They occur after the head noun in the phrase.

(16) 
\[ \begin{align*}
\text{jì} & \quad \text{mì} & \quad \text{‘my child’} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{my} & \quad \text{‘your child’} \\
\text{jì} & \quad \text{mò} & \quad \text{‘our child’} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{your} & \quad \text{‘their child’} \\
\text{jì} & \quad \text{bì} & \quad \text{their} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{our} & \quad \text{‘his/her child’} \\
\text{jì} & \quad \text{lé} & \quad \text{‘his/her child’} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{‘his/her child’} \\
\text{jì} & \quad \text{wò} & \quad \text{‘his/her child’} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{‘his/her child’} \\
\end{align*} \]

Adjectives

(17) 
\[ \begin{align*}
\text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{fìenyì} & \quad \text{‘small heart’} \\
\text{heart} & \quad \text{small} & \quad \text{‘large heart’} \\
\text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{akà} & \quad \text{‘beautiful heart’} \\
\text{heart} & \quad \text{large} & \quad \text{‘good heart’} \\
\text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{hìli} & \quad \text{‘old heart’} \\
\text{heart} & \quad \text{beauty} & \quad \text{‘old heart’} \\
\text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{àpìkò by} & \quad \text{‘good heart’} \\
\text{heart} & \quad \text{good} & \quad \text{‘good heart’} \\
kwílì & \quad \text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{‘old heart’} \\
kwílì & \quad \text{ßìjì} & \quad \text{‘old heart’} \\
\end{align*} \]
Numerals in Dzô like every other language are categorized into cardinal and ordinal. The cardinals start counting from one to five, it then changes numbering from six referring back to one. Six is 'sibling of one', seven is 'sibling of two' until the number ten. Eleven is referring back to ten which means 'ten sprang one, ten sprang two continue to fifteen. Reference is made to fifteen at sixteen which is fifteen sprang one continuous to twenty. From twenty upward to three hundred, reference is made to twenty. Thirty is twenty sprang ten, thirty-five is twenty sprang fifteen, forty is two twenties and that pattern continues. Example of cardinals:

(18) a. tsiŋ  'one'
    juŋ  'two'
    ʈə  'three'
    ɲə  'four'
    məni  'five'
    yi-tsiŋ  'six'
    yi-juŋ  'seven'
    yi-tə  'eight'
    yi-ɲə  'nine'
    ɲə  'ten'
    ɲə dʒi tsiŋ  'eleven'
    ɲə dʒi juŋ  'twelve'
    ɲə dʒi tə  'thirteen'
    ɲə dʒi  'fourteen'
    ɲə li  'fifteen'
    li dʒi tsiŋ  'sixteen'
    li dʒi juŋ  'seventeen'
    li dʒi tə  'eighteen'
    li dʒi ɲə  'nineteen'
    uŋ-tsùŋ  'twenty'
Their examples in noun phrase are as follows:

(19) b. è-ilòŋ \(\text{bwa}t\)ò
   PL-calabash three
   'three calabashes'

c. è-fò
   PL-pot \(\text{bwa}p\)ò
   four
   'four pots'

Ordinals in Dzə are dependent on the genitive marker ‘\(\text{a}\)’ which is attached to the cardinal number except for the first and last which are ‘\(\text{nwatsi}\)’ and ‘\(\text{tsitw}o\)’. ‘Second’ is \(\text{a}j\text{ù}ŋ\) or \(\text{a}n\text{ì}ŋ \text{jù}ŋ\), ‘third’ \(\text{a}t\text{ì}ŋ\), ‘fourth’ \(\text{a}p\)ò and ‘fifth’ \(\text{a}m\text{ì}ŋ\ò\).

(20) a. jì a
   child GEN \(\text{ni}ŋ\) \(\text{jù}ŋ\)
   eye two
   'second child'

   For \(\text{nwatsi}\) ‘first’, there is a lexical item \(\text{na}\) which literally means ‘hand’ but \(\text{tsitw}o\) ‘last’ does not have that. So we can have:

b. jì na \(\text{nwatsi}\)
   child hand first
   'first child'

c. jì \(\text{tsitw}o\)
   child last

Quantifiers

Dzə quantifiers are parts of determiners in Dzə noun phrase and they occur after the head noun in a phrase. This study correponds with A. Lusekelo whose study in Nyakyusa noun phrase attests that determiners are post-nominal and is true for many other African languages [5, p. 306]. Consider:

(21) e-ijè \(\text{tsw}òni\)
   PL woman quant
   'few women'

   e-ijè \(\text{ihy}à\text{n}iŋ\)
   PL woman quant
   'many women'

Other universal quantifiers are listed below:

(22) kè ‘any/each’
    hè ‘all’
    àkò ‘some’
    tsìŋ tsìŋ ‘each’

Genitive constructions

A possessive noun phrase contains two elements; a possessor and a possessed item. Sometimes the possessor is referred to as the genitives [2, p. 104]. Like any other lan-
guage, the genitive constructions in Dzə have both inalienable and alienable possession. The inalienable juxtaposed two nouns to show possession (possesse possessor). While the alienable use the genitive morpheme və to show possession (possesse genitive marker possessor).

**Inalienable Possessive**

(23)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive</th>
<th>Possessor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nwa</td>
<td>Esther</td>
<td>‘Esther’s mouth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nịŋ</td>
<td>mí</td>
<td>‘my eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nə</td>
<td>mí</td>
<td>‘my mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mothe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ywá</td>
<td>Mídafi</td>
<td>‘Mídafi’s stomach’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stomach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tʃiwi</td>
<td>Mídafi</td>
<td>‘Mídafi’s neck’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hiwí</td>
<td>Mídafi</td>
<td>‘Mídafi’s brother/sister’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The examples show the closeness between the possesse and the possessor. The posseseees are not on their own but dependent on a larger entity or relation.

**Alienable Possessee**

Distance is created with the marker in between the possessees and the possessors.

(24)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessee</th>
<th>Possessor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èmwaibwi</td>
<td>və</td>
<td>Yeso’s disciples’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disciples</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. idzwa</td>
<td>və</td>
<td>‘Nlabefi’s dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>Nlabefi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. dọŋ</td>
<td>və</td>
<td>‘Nlabefi’s dance’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance</td>
<td>gen</td>
<td>Nlabefi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Complex Noun Phrase**

S. M. Dryer states that a complex noun phrase contains more complex modifiers such as genitive or possessive construction and relative clauses, as in English *London’s mayor* or *the mayor of London* [6]. The examples of complex noun phrases in Dzə can be seen below.
Adjectives are limited in Dzə. They have the ability to modify the head noun and they usually follow the noun. See the above examples.

(26) nịngàbè vọ èifi fàngwà
evil gen pl-people 'evil of people world'

The head noun of the above example is nịngàbè 'evil' while the prepositional phrase vọ èifi fàngwà 'of people world is its complement.

Coordinative

Dzə allows noun phrases that are formed by coordinating two noun phrases. That is additive coordination is present in the nominal system. The examples are:

(27) a. kwọn bẹ́ ntsilé
tortoise and rabbit
b. ntsilé dè bẹ́ nǎndọn̄j
rabbit DET and spider
‘the rabbit and spider’

The word bi ‘and’ is a coordinator. It conjoins the two noun phrases ntsilé dè ‘the rabbit’ and nǎndọn̄j ‘spider’ together. once the first NP contains the determinant de, the second NP do not need the definite article, sometimes there is no need of the definite article so long as it has been mentioned before in the conversation.

Relative construction

The relative marker nị is used in relative construction. Relative clauses in Dzə appear after the noun head in the phrase. The structure of the relative clause modifier is N. Rel.

(28) pị nị à wàkọ nị
hoe dem 2sub break dem
‘the hoe that you broke’
(29) e-imwọ de nị ngọkọ keke nwa nịnyà
pl-children DET dem ride bicycle mouth road
‘the children who rode bicycles on the road’
(30) ò bọ è kọ́ nị nwaàkọ mọ̀ nị
he see 3pl elder which hold spear det
‘he saw the elder who held the spear’
The word *ni* is a relative pronoun, demonstrative pronoun and a completive depending on the context it is used. These relative pronouns are used to link or connect the noun (nominal) with the rest of the clause or phrase.

**Multiple NP extension**

Other NP extension in Dzə noun phrase may contain adjectives and other elements. Adjectives modify the head noun and almost always follow the head noun.

(32) *dɔrɔ̀ ahu apikɔŋ*

book new nice

‘a new nice book’

Adjectives can co-occur as post-modifiers in Dzə. If this two adjectives co-occur, it is ungrammatical for *apikɔŋ* ‘nice/good’ to appear before *ahu* ‘new’. *Ahu* ‘new’ will always occur first in a phrase like this. Other examples are:

(33) *iʃe amwili jumwɔhe*

woman fat beauty

‘a fat beautiful woman’

(34) *jo ni mwiili kankan*

pot DEM large big

‘that large big pot’

(35) *dɔrɔ̀ ni tsiŋ kahye ni*

book DEM one red DEM

‘this one red book’

In (35), whatever the arrangement of adjectives after the head noun *dɔrɔ* ‘book’, it is grammatical. But is more common to hear speakers place the *tsiŋ* ‘one’ before *kahye* ‘red’. See also example (36) below.

(36) *e-bá lè jũŋ kòbi ni*

PL-goat DEM two black DEM

‘those two black goats’

(37) *kè kɔakuli tɔŋsɔ kwɔ de ni*

every chair in room DET COMPL

‘every chair in the room’.

The phrase in (37) shows how NP can be extended in Dzə with the qualifiers. The determiner *kè* ‘every’ precedes the head noun *kɔakuli* ‘chair’ *kè* selects only count nouns in Dzə. This agrees with M. J. Rugemalira [7] where distributive determiners of this kind ‘each and every’ are pre-nominal. This is one of the rare circumstances in Dzə where determiner precedes the head noun in a noun phrase that contains prepositional phrase.
(38) ke e-kwi ibwi mi afili amwili ni kɔbi le be kabu kwakwali
quart pl-old man poss tall fat det black dem with leg bow
‘each of those my five tall fat black men with bow legs’.

The plural can precede the adjective of age to show number agreement as in e kwi ibwi
‘old men’. It means that adjectives can mark plurality in Dzə.

Conclusion

This study described the Dzə nouns and noun phrases. It demonstrated the different
kinds of nouns and noun phrases. The elements that constitute noun phrase in Dzə ranges
from determiners, possessives, demonstratives, numerals, and quantifiers. As expected,
these elements are mostly post-modifiers. From the study, we understand that determin-
ers are agreement markers in Dzə. This is just a preliminary study of the Dzə nouns and
noun phrases. There is a lot that has not been looked into. There is a need for in-depth
description of Dzə.

Abbreviations

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ADJ</td>
<td>COMPL</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>NPST</td>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>3SUB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>complete negative</td>
<td>determiner</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>locatives</td>
<td>non past</td>
<td>possessive</td>
<td>plural</td>
<td>third person subject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References

7. Rugemalira M. J. The structure of the Bantu noun phrase. SOAS Working Papers in Linguistics,

Author's information:

Peace Benson — peacebenson71@yahoo.com

Received: May 22, 2020
Accepted: September 21, 2020
Язык джен относится к семье адамава и распространен в некоторых районах штатов Тараба, Адамава и Гомбе Северо-Восточной Нигерии. Рассматриваются существительные и именные группы в языке джен. Поскольку джен недостаточно изучен и описан, статья предоставляет важные данные для типологических исследований и для лингвистов, работающих с языками адамава. Данные были получены в результате полевых исследований в декабре 2014 г., личных разговоров, наблюдений и изучения Библии на языке джен. Представлены краткий очерк фонологии и тонов языка джен, а также различные типы существительных, местоимений, простых и сложных именных групп. В языке джен много местоимений: личные, объектные, возвратные, вопросительные и притяжательные. Как и в большинстве других африканских языков, элементы, которые составляют именную группу, стоят после основного существительного. К таким элементам относят артикли, указательные и притяжательные местоимения, прилагательные, числительные, генитивы (притяжательные и непритяжательные) и определительные придаточные предложения. Эта статья — предварительное исследование языка джен, которое открывает путь для его дальнейшего изучения.

Ключевые слова: джен, существительные, именные группы, адамава, дженджо.

Статья поступила в редакцию 22 мая 2020 г., рекомендована к печати 21 сентября 2020 г.

Контактная информация:

Бенсон Пис — peacebenson71@yahoo.com