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Towards a comparative description of the Adamawa languages of Mumuye-Yendang and Leko groups

The paper presents an attempt of comparative analysis of some Adamawa languages of Mumuye-Yendang (Yendang, Waka, Maya (Bali), Kugama, Gengle) and Leko (Nyong and Samba Leko) groups. All these languages are very scarcely documented (some word lists and articles on specific topics, eg. numeral systems).

The data were collected during linguistic expedition to Eastern Nigeria in January-February 2012, 2013 and 2014. During the expeditions the following work was done: thematic vocabularies, sociolinguistic questionnaire, basic grammar questionnaire, systematic morphosyntax questionnaire.

The following comparative results are going to be presented:
basic sociolinguistic information: names of the languages and ethnic groups, dialectal varieties, collection, checking and correction of wordlists, basic phonological peculiarities, means of forming plural forms, pronominal systems, basic numerals, nominal predication: constructions of qualification, identification, locative and presentative constructions, verbal constructions, elements of noun phrase syntax, elements of kinship terms systems.

As an example of data which are going to be presented we show below the comparative analysis of pronominal systems and basic numerals.

Pronominal systems. (1, 2 person, Sg)

1 Sg	Subject		Object		Possessiv
	Independe	Aff	Independe	Aff	
Yenda g	mɛkˀ	a-	mɛkˀ	-n	maŋ
Wakka	(i)mí	á-	mí	-úŋ	(m)ámì
Maya Bali)	mo	m-		-m	amò, -m
Nyong	má	ñ	má	-ɔ, -	máŋ

2 Sg	Subject		Object		Possessi e
	Independen	Aff	Independe	Aff	
Yenda g	məkˀ	mə	məkˀ	-mə	bɔ
Wakka	(i)mú	mú	mú	-ú	(ɓ)ògɛ̀
Maya Bali)	nyoŋ	ŋ-		-ŋ, -	aó, -ré
Nyong	mo	mo	mo(kɔ)	-nɔ, n	múŋ

Preliminary reconstruction	Yendang/ Wakka/ Maya Bali)/ NNyong

1 sg	mI/ma
2 sg	mU

Numeral systems

Though the Adamawa languages are ones of the least studied languages within the Niger-Congo macro-family their numerical systems have attracted some attention. In [Boyd 1989] we can find a lot of data for numerals of various Adamawa groups and some hypotheses about possible reconstruction. Since the appearance of Boyd's overview some new data on the Adamawa languages have appeared, e.g. [Fabre 2004], grammar of Samba Leko. Some data about numerals can be also found in the word lists [Blench, date of application 10.04.2015], [PanLex, date of application 08.05.2012]. Besides that in 1212-2014 my colleagues and I made some field studies

	Maya	Kpasham	Yoti	Yendang	Waka	Teme	Kugama	Gengle	Kumba	Mumuye (Zing)	Samba Leko
3	*tat*	*tat*	*taat*	*tat*	*taaʔ*	*tat*	*nēsà*	*kasat*	*saat*	*tat*	*toora*
4	*nat*	*nat*	*naat*	*nat*	*naaʔ*	*nat*	*nēhè*	*kaŋat/kayat*	*naat*	*dneero*	*naara*

of Adamawa languages of Maya-Yendang (Yendang, Wakka, Maya, Kugama, Gengle) and Leko (Nyong) groups in Adamawa province of Nigeria. So, here 3 aspects concerning numerals are presented: 1) common roots for the languages (mostly numerals 1-5, 10), 2) a diversity of not only roots but also strategies (e.g. 8 = X + 3, X + 4, 5+3 etc) for 6-9, 20-40, 100, 1000, 3) analogical changes that influence greatly the numerical systems (3-4 - most common, 2-3-4, 2-3-4-5).

1) Common roots are rather easily found for 1-5, 10. In case of 3 and 4 many parallels with other Niger-Congo languages can be observed:

We can also see some possible innovations confirming internal grouping for 1, 2, and 5 in Mumuye and 1 and 2 in Samba Leko and Nyong.

2) Numerals 6-9 can also show some meaningful innovations assisting in the distributing the languages into groups, but they also show some interesting typological variety in the strategies forming numerals (6+) in closely related langauges (e.g. 8):

	Maya Kpasham Yoti	Yendang Waka Temne	Kugama Gengle Mumuye (Zing)	Kumba	Samba Leko	Nyong
8	nV + 3	*bɔ̄lā + 4* *Bala + 4* *Gbola +4*	*ò-nā + 4* *Oŋoŋ + 4* *Nawa + 4*	*5 + 3*	*Dagwaʔ*	*durtea*

3) Analogical changes are also of great importance in numerical systems of the Adamawa languages. We are going to show some cases demonstrating it, e.g. analogical (submorphemic) tuning of 3 and 4 in various languages:

	Maya	Kpasham	Yoti	Yendang	Waka	Teme	Kugama	Gengle	Kumba	Mumuye (Zing)	Samba Leko	Nyong

3	*tat*	*tat*	*taat*	*tat*	*taaʔ*	*tat*	*nēsà*	*kasat*	*saat*	*tat*	*toora*	*tara*
4	*nat*	*nat*	*naat*	*nat*	*naaʔ*	*nat*	*nēhè*	*kaŋat/kayat*	*naat*	*dneero*	*naara*	*nara*