

A Leipzig-Jakarta Vocabulary Reconstruction and Sound Correspondence based Sub-grouping of North Edoid

By

’Demola Lewis

University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract

North Edoid (NE) has only been described as a node off Edoid with North Western and North Central branches (Elugbe, 1989; Lewis, 2013). Though two hundred words of Edoid vocabulary were reconstructed in Elugbe (1989); neither the proto-vocabulary of North Edoid nor that of either of its branches has been reconstructed. As a result of this dearth of reconstruction, the types of sound correspondences in North Edoid have not been adequately described. This study, therefore, proposes to reconstruct the Leipzig-Jakarta list for Proto-North Edoid, starting with its composite Proto-North Western Edoid and Proto-North Central Edoid; and to document sound correspondences across North Edoid.

The choice of the Leipzig-Jakarta list stems from evidential, rather than intuitive judgements about the non-borrowability of its words, and the fact that (LJL) has not been explored in Edoid studies. If this same list is reconstructed for other Edoid groups, it would help to establish uniformity in comparison among Edoid scholars, who up till now, have worked on different self-determined lists. The compendium of sound correspondences to emerge from this work will be compared in kind and frequency with those catalogued by Brown, Holman and Wichmann (2013); and the rarity or frequency of such correspondences will help to discover the specific features and innovations which bind members of specific nodes, and distinguish one node from the others.

Data comprise LJL 100 words from 12 North Central and 8 North Western Edoid languages (See Appendix¹). Corresponding sounds of stems and affixes would be compared for regularity, as well as the plausibility and direction of sound change. Thus, judgements would be made about proto- North Central; North Western and North Edoid vocabulary reconstructions. Cognacy of words will be determined by the extension of sound correspondences across the languages. Sound correspondences would be the sole basis for subgrouping within NE, We shall use the Automated Similarities Judgement Program (ASJP) developed by Brown et al (2013) to build a phylogentic tree with the prescribed 40 items of vocabulary.

Table 1 contains four items from the Leipzig Jakarta List. Consider the item bone with the following reflexes:

1. Prefix Vowel: a ~ u ~ i

*a : unpredictable, unaffected by the consonant quality

2. C₁: kp ~ g^w ~ w

*kp: Unpredictable: voiceless with double articulation and intervocalic.

3. V₁: u ~ o ~ a

*o: the forms with kp/gb have it; u was likely raised from o position due to the presence of kp.

4. *ka: was a suffix that has been dropped in other varieties.

¹ For items have not been acquired. They would be in by the time of the conference.

Table 1: Sample data of cognacy across North Edoid

NCE	Bone	Fire	Ear	Heavy
Okpuje	ákpūkà	ērā	é:xò	ṽkúa
Sabo	ākpó:kà	ērāi	é:xò	ṽkuài
Ososo	ùg ^w à	ēdf ā	éxò	ōyóyò
Ghotuo	ūg ^w ā	rīrā	ì:hòwě	ìjéhè
Sasaru	ùwá:	erā	wózó	ūkò:nì
Ikhin	ìg ^w à	ērā	éyò	ókūā
Arokho	úg ^w à	írá	éxò	òxòxòū
Uroe	ákpókà	ìrè	éxò	ṽx ^w ài
Igwe	ìg ^w à	īrā	éxò	ṽxòxò:nì
Ake	ìg ^w à	ērā	éxò	īmókua
Uneme	úg ^w à	èrāmì	érò	émégua
Uokha	āgbókà	ìrāi	éhò	òkua
NWE				
Okpella	úg ^w à	èxàrì	éjò	ìkòkò
North Ibie	úg ^w à	èrè	éjò	khò
Ikpeshi	òg ^w à	-	íẏèbì	úbòbò
Okpe	óx ^w à	édẏāmì	óẏò:dì	òkò
Atte	úg ^w à	èrārì	ésò	xò
Enwa	óg ^w à	èrāyì	ésòyì	òlòxò
Akuku	ù:wà	éẏà	éẏò	dìdẏè
Okpamheri	úwà	wéẏa	wózó	ukpòwrami
Proto	*akpoka	*era	*esò	*òkò

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