

An Initial Understanding of the Proto-Ekoid-Mbe Noun Class System

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The noun class systems of the 8-10 Ekoid-Mbe languages have been given some attention over the past 45-50 years. Crabb (1969) in the late 1960's began comparing the Ekoid languages. Edmondson & Edmondson (Ms.) analyzed the Etung dialect of Western Ejagham and Watters (1980 and 1981) described the Ejagham noun class system with attention given to the variation among its three major dialects. Bamgbose (1967?) and Pohlig (1981) have provided us with analyses of Mbe. However, no one has published a reconstruction of the Proto-Ekoid noun class system, and no one has published on the Proto-Ekoid-Mbe noun class system.

In this study I will present my beginning understanding of the Proto-Ekoid-Mbe noun class system. I will also compare aspects of this system with other Bantoid groups such as Proto-Grassfields and Proto-Bantu. The study will also take into consideration comments of Good on the morphological behavior of East Benue-Congo noun class systems (to appear).

Bamgbose, Ayo. 1967?. Nominal classes in Mbe. *Afrika und Ubersee*, Band XLIX, pp. 32-53.

Crabb, David. 1969?. Ms. Some noun class comparisons.

Good, Jeff. Eastern Benue-Congo noun classes, with a focus on their morphological behavior. (chapter in forthcoming volume on Comparative-historical studies in East Benue-Congo)

Pohlig, James N. 2013. The noun class system in Mbe. SIL International. Ms.

Edmondson, Eileen and Tom Edmondson. Noun classes in Etung.

Watters, John R. 1980. Noun Classes in the Grassfields Bantu Borderland. *Southern California Occasional Papers in Linguistics* No. 8.

Watters, John R. 1981. A phonology and morphology of Ejagham. Doctoral dissertation. University of California, Los Angeles. (Available at