“The nominal classification of Western Ngəmba”

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Background

- Ngəmba is a language variety belonging to the Eastern Grassfields Bantoid group.
- It has been classified by Dieu & Renaud (1983: 124) and the Ethnologue (Eberhard et al. 2022) as a dialect of Ghɔmálá?, which they call Ghɔmálá?-West and Ghɔmálá?-Ngemba, respectively.

The alternative names of Ngəmba are:

- Bamileke-Bamendjou (Joshua project)
- Ngemba-Ghɔmálá? (Glottolog), and
- **Western Ngəmba** (Watters 2003) (adopted in this talk)

- The Ethnologue code Ghɔmálá?-bbj
- ISO 639-3.

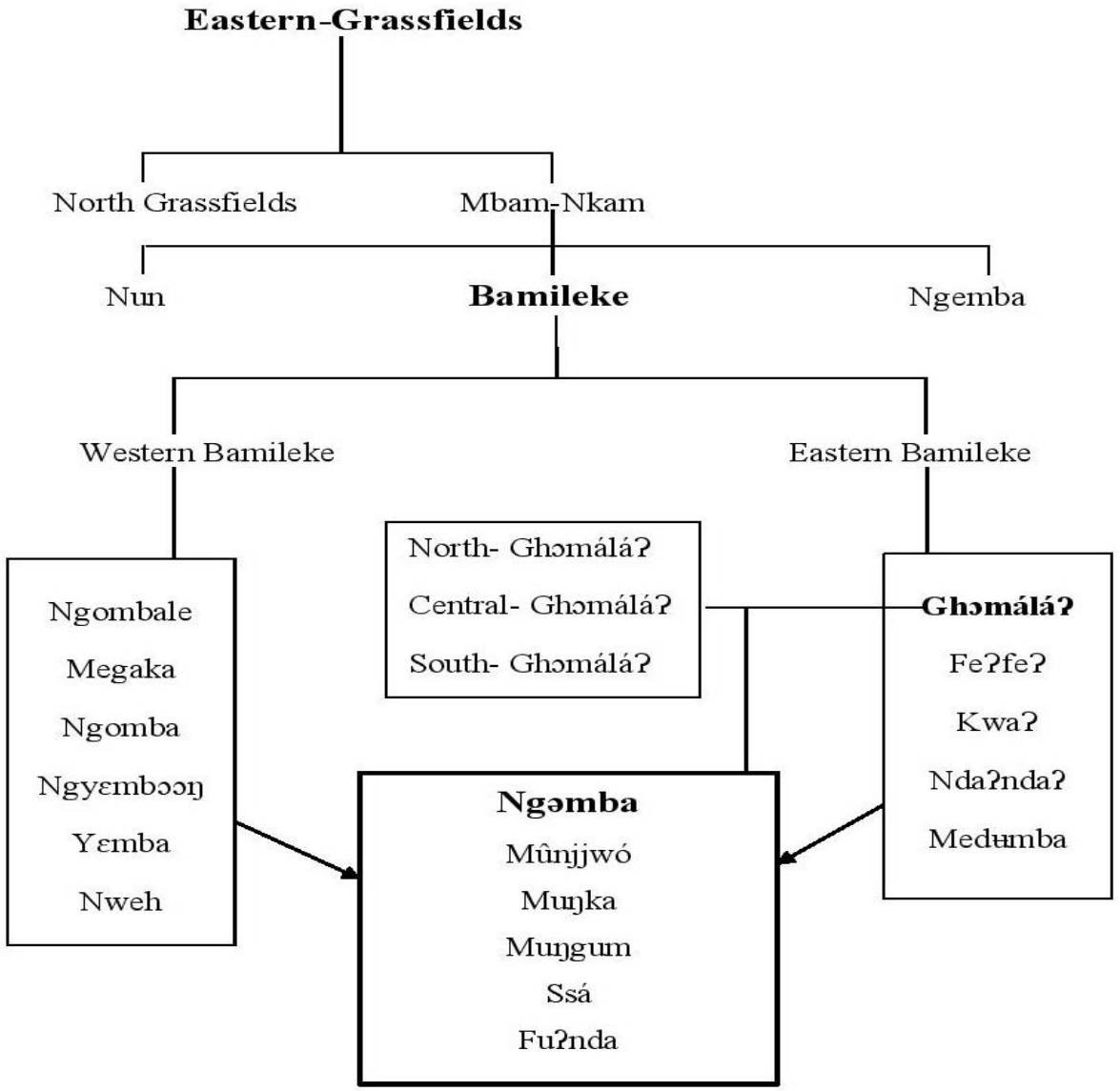


Figure 1: The linguistic affiliation of Ngəmba within Eastern Grassfields (Source: Mekamgoum 2022)

Background Cont.

Ngəmba has five dialects with very high which share a very high degree of mutual intelligibility

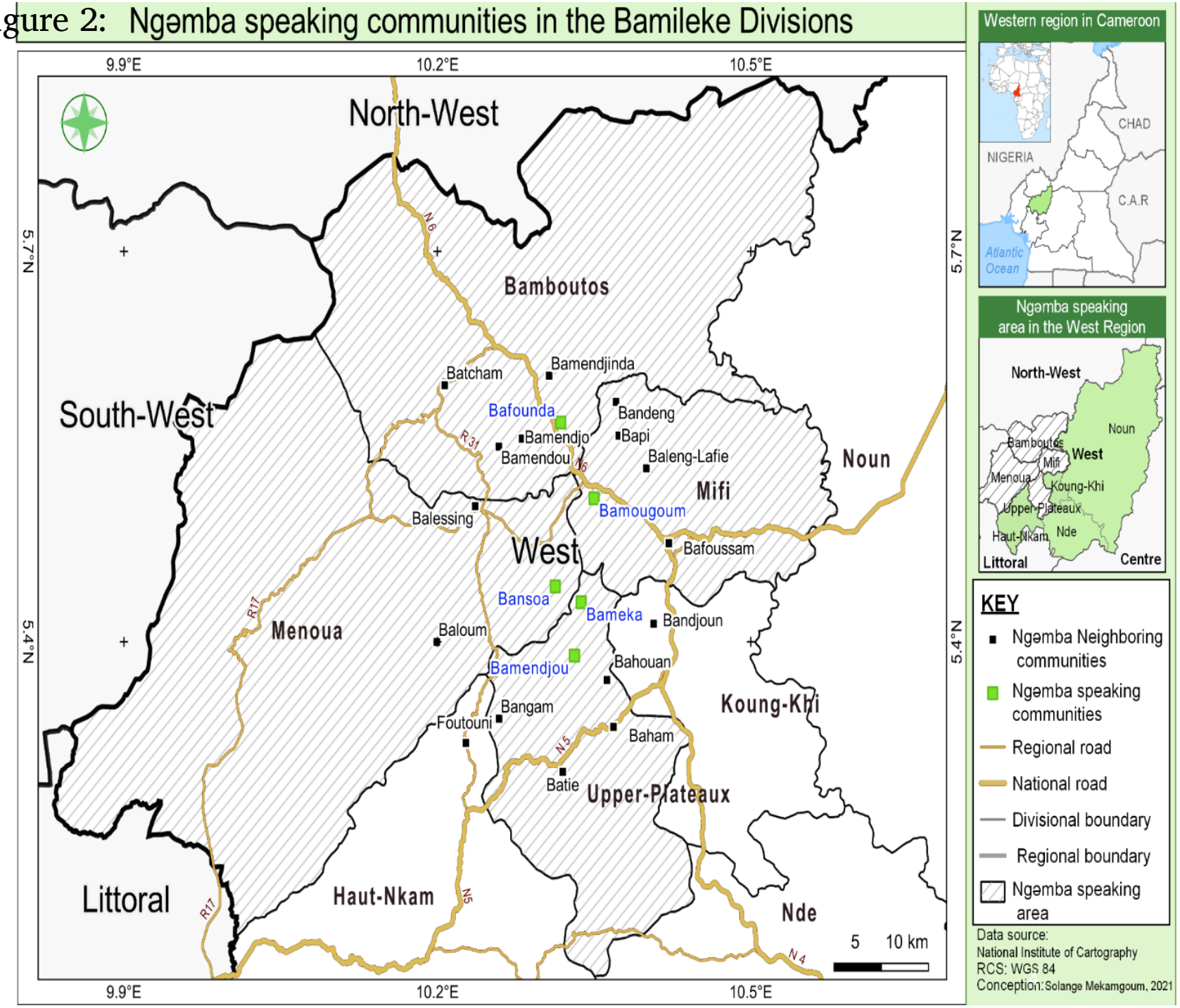
Watters (2003: 233) has identified **Ngəmba** as a Western variety of Ghɔmálá? that serves as "**transition dialect between the two**" **Bamileke language groups, i.e. Eastern and Western Bamileke** (Hyman (1972: 7-9)

Background Cont.

Ngəmba is spoken in Western Cameroon, precisely in:

- Bamendjou and Bameka (Upper-plateaux Division)
- Bamougoum (Subdivision)
- Bansoa (Menoua Subdivision)
- Bafounda (Bamboutos Subdivision)

Figure 2: Ngəmba speaking communities in the Bamileke Divisions



Objectives

1. Present the agreement (AGR 1,2…), gender (I, II…), nominal form (NF) and deriflection classes of Ngəmba based on the approach developped by Tom Güldemann & Ines Fiedler (2019)
2. Provide a very brief overview of the numeral classifier (CLF) system of Ngəmba (Mekamgoum & Kiessling 2022 for more)
3. Show how the two systems interact to form the nominal classification system of the language

Agreement system

Generally in Eastern Grassfields languages, the “only modifiers that agree with the noun class system in its fullest array are the possessive pronouns” (Hamm 2011: 19).

- In Ngəmba: **There are eight agreement classes reflected on pronominal and contrastive possessive pronouns**

- In all, there are five sets of agreement targets based on the number, consonant, and tone concords with the nouns. These are:
  - Anaphoric and contrastive possessives
  - Demonstratives and the question word for selection ‘which’
  - Relative clause marker
  - ‘What’ and ‘who’
  - Numerals

Agreement system Cont.

AGR	Number	Consonant-tone agreement	NF	Semantics
1	SG, TN	w/ø-L	*Ø- MƐ(N)\MɄ́(N)-* *Mə̀-* *N-* *M-/ŋ-* *Nə̀-*	complex, but includes all humans and verb nominalisation in the sense of 'way of doing X'
2	PL	p-H	*Pə̀-* *PƆ́-* *Mə̀-*	humans
3	SG, TN	w/ø-H	*Ø-*	complex
5	SG, TN	ts-H	*Nə̀-*	Complex
6	PL, TN	m-H	*Mə̀-* *M-* *N-/Ø-?*	non-humans
7	SG, TN	zh/ø-H	*Ø-*	complex
9	SG, TN	zh/ø-L	*Ø-*	complex
10	PL	ts-H	*Ø/(Mə̀-)*	three domestic animals, thing and cooking tripod

Table 1: Full agreement system of Ngəmba based on number, consonant and tone concord vs. nominal form classes

Overview of the full agreement system as reflected on contrastive and anaphoric possessive pronouns

	SG					PL		
AGR	**1(w-L)**	**3 (w-H)**	**5 (ts-H)**	**7 (zh-H)**	**9 (zh-L)**	**2 (p-H)**	**6 (m-H)**	**10 (ts-H)**
1SG	*wà*	*wá*	*tsá*	*zhá*	*zhà*	*pá*	*má*	*tsá*
2SG	*wɔ̀*	*wɔ́*	*tsɔ́*	*zhɔ́*	*zhɔ̀*	*pɔ́*	*mɔ́*	*tsɔ́*
3SG	*wwi*	*wwí*	*tstsí*	*zhzhí*	*zhzhi*	*ppí*	*mmí*	*tstsî*
DU1 + 2	*wɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*wɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*tsɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*zhɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*zhɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*pɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*mɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*tsɔ̀ghɔ̀*
1PL.EXCL	*wək*	*wák*	*tsák*	*zhák*	*zhək*	*pák*	*mák*	*tsák*
1PL.INCL	*wǿ*	*wǿ*	*tsǿ*	*zhǿ*	*zhǿ*	*pǿ*	*mǿ*	*tsǿ*
2PL	*wʉ*	*wʉ́*	*tsʉ́*	*zhʉ́*	*zhʉ*	*pʉ́*	*mʉ́*	*tsʉ́*
3PL	*wop*	*wóp*	*tsóp*	*zhóp*	*zhop*	*póp*	*móp*	*tsóp*

Table 2: anaphoric and contrastive possessives of Ngəmba

Overview of the full agreement system as reflected on postnominal possessive pronouns

	SG					PL		
AGR	**1(w/ø-L)**	**3 (w/ø-H)**	**5 (ts-H)**	**7 (zh/ø-H)**	**9 (zh/ø-L)**	**2 (p-H)**	**6 (m-H)**	**10 (ts-H)**
1SG	*ø-à*	*ø-á*	*tsá*	*ø-á*	*ø-à*	*pá*	*má*	*tsá*
2SG	*ø-ɔ̀*	*ø-ɔ́*	*tsɔ́*	*ø-ɔ́*	*ø-ɔ̀*	*pɔ́*	*mɔ́*	*tsɔ́*
3SG	*ø-i*	*ø-í*	*tstsí*	*ø-i*	*ø-i*	*ppí*	*mmí*	*tstsî*
DU1 + 2	*wɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*wɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*tsɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*zhɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*zhɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*pɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*mɔ̀ghɔ̀*	*tsɔ̀ghɔ̀*
1PL.EXCL	*wək*	*wák*	*tsák*	*zhák*	*zhək*	*pák*	*mák*	*tsák*
1PL.INCL	*wø̀*	*wø̀*	*tsø̀*	*zhø̀*	*zhø̀*	*pø̀*	*mø̀*	*tsø̀*
2PL	*wʉ́*	*wʉ́*	*tsʉ́*	*zhʉ́*	*zhʉ́*	*pʉ́*	*mʉ́*	*tsʉ́*
3PL	*wop*	*wóp*	*tsóp*	*zhóp*	*zhop*	*póp*	*móp*	*tsóp*

Table 3: postnominal possessives of Ngəmba

Examples of agreement classes with (postnominal and contrastive) possessives as targets

(1) *ŋ-è(n)* *ø-ɔ̀*
ŋ-person(1) **1**-2SG.POSS
'Your person'

(2) *p-ɔ̀* *p-á*
P-person(2) **2**-1SG.POSS
'My people'

(3) *w-ə́k* *ø-mbàŋá*
3-1SG.EXCL.POSS **Ø**-pot(3)
'Our pot (not someone else's)'

(4) *zhzh-ì* *ndǽ*
9-3SG.POSS **Ø**-house(9)
'His/her house (not someone else's)'

(5) *nə-hák* *ts-ɔ́*
Nə-twin(5) **5**-2SG.POSS
'Your twin'

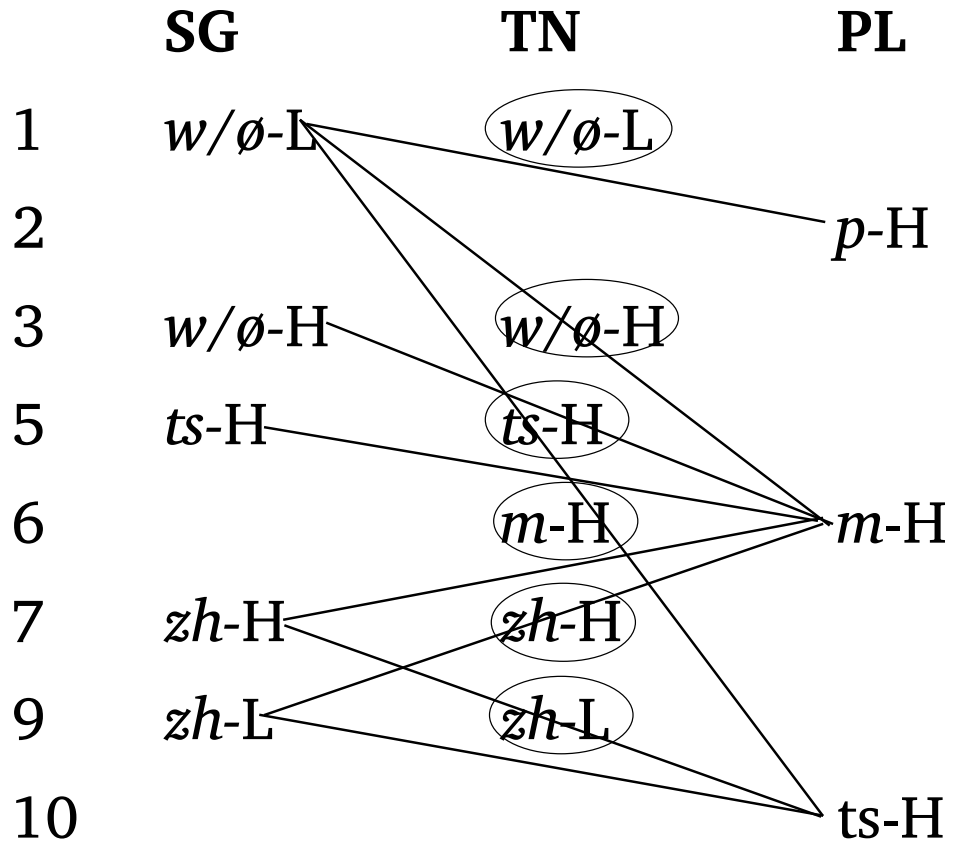
(6) *mə-hák* *m-á*
MƏ-twin(6) **6**-1SG.POSS
'My twins'

(7) *zhzh-ə́k* *ø-zhzhwo*
7-1SG.EXCLPOSS **Ø**-thing(7)
'Our thing'

(8) *ts-á* *(mə)-tso*
10-1SG.POSS (**MƏ**)-thing(10)
'My things'

Gender system

Figure 3: Gender system of Ngəmba



The 08 agreement classes of Ngəmba map into 09 paired genders and 6 single-class genders

- No AGR class is dedicated to a single number feature
- Except for AGR2 and AGR10, all other AGR classes in Ngəmba occur with transnumeral nouns
- AGR2 (PL) is dedicated to human nouns, AGR6 is the class for general plural, and AGR10 (PL) has only 06 members identified thus far: 03 domestic animals (dogs, chickens, and goats), two concrete nouns (things, cooking tripod) and 01 abstract noun (negative behaviours)
- Thus, in the gender system, non-transnumeral singular nouns pair with one of the plural AGR, i.e. 2, 6, 10

Examples of agreement classes with (postnominal and contrastive) possessives as targets

(1) ***ŋ-è(n)*** ***ø-ɔ̀***
ŊŋŊ-person(1) **1**-2SG.POSS
'Your person'

(2) ***p-ɔ̀*** ***p-á***
P-person(2) **2**-1SG.POSS
'My people'

(3) ***w-ə́k*** *ø-mbàŋá*
3-1SG.EXCL.POSS **Ø**-pot(3)
'Our pot (not someone else's)'

(4) ***zhzh-ì*** *ndǽ*
9-3SG.POSS **Ø**-house(9)
'His/her house (not someone else's)'

(5) *nə-hák* ***ts-ɔ́***
Nə-twin(5) **5**-2SG.POSS
'Your twin'

(6) *mə-hák* ***m-á***
MƏ-twin(6) **6**-1SG.POSS
'My twins'

(7) *zhzh-ə́k* *ø-zhzhwo*
7-1SG.EXCLPOSS **Ø**-thing(7)
'Our thing'

(8) *ts-á* ***(mə)-tso***
10-1SG.POSS (**MƏ**)-thing(10)
'My things'

Reduced agreement class sets based on other targets

AGR class	Number	Demonstratives and 'which?'	Relative clause marker and postnominal demonstratives	what and who' (human vs. non-human)
1, 9	SG	*w-*	*ø-*	*ø-*
3, 7		*zh-*		
5, 10	SG + PL	*ts-*	*ts-*	
2	PL	*p-*	*p-*	*pə-* 'who'
6		*m-*	*m-*	*mə-* 'what'

Table 5: reduced agreement class sets and their respective targets

Table 6: Agreement class based on '**which**'

Number marker	Class	CPX-e-H
SG	1, 3	*wé*
	7, 9	*zhé*
SG + PL	5, 10	*tsé*
PL	2	*pé*
	6	*mé*

Number	AGR class	Anaphoric/postnominal				Contrastive		
		proximal	near-hearer		distal	proximal	near-hearer	distal
marker		*CPXa-LH*	*CPXɔ-M/a-HM*		*CPXe-LH*	*CPXa-L*	*CPXɔ-L*	*CPXe-L*
SG	1, 3	*wǎ*	*wɔ*	*wáa*	*wě*	*wà*	*wɔ̀*	*wè*
	7, 9	*zhǎ*	*zhɔ*	*zháa*	*zhě*	*zhà*	*zhɔ̀*	*zhè*
SG + PL	5, 10	*tsǎ*	*tsɔ*	*tsáa*	*tsě*	*tsà*	*tsɔ̀*	*tsè*
PL	2	*pǎ*	*pɔ*	*páa*	*pě*	*pà*	*pɔ̀*	*pè*
	6	*mǎ*	*mɔ*	*máa*	*mě*	*mà*	*mà*	*mè*

Table 7: (non)-emphatic **spatial demonstratives**

Illustration

(9) **Which**?

w-é ***ŋ-ě***

1-which ***ŋ***-person.QINT (1)

'Which person?'

(10) **Anaphoric definite demonstrative**

ŋ-è ***w-é***

ŋ-person(1) **1**-ANA.DEFN

'The specific person we both know'

(11) **Relative clause**

ŋ-èn *è* *ɔ̀* *ttɔ̌* *lá*

ŋ-person(1) REL 2SG.IPF call.P1 DEF

'The person that you called has come.'

(12a) ***zh-ě*** *kɔ*

7-DIS ***ø-***what

'What is that over there?' (nHUM)

(12b) ***m-ə̌*** ***mà-kɔ́***

6-DIS ***MƏ***-what (nHUM)

'What are those (things) over there?' (Lit. those are the what…?'

(13a) *w-ě* *wɔ́*

1-DIS ***ø-***who (HUM)

'Who is that over there?'

(13b) *p-ə̌* ***pà-wɔ́***

2-DIS ***PƏ***-who (HUM)

'Who are those (people) over there?' (Lit. those are the who…?'

Nominal form class system.

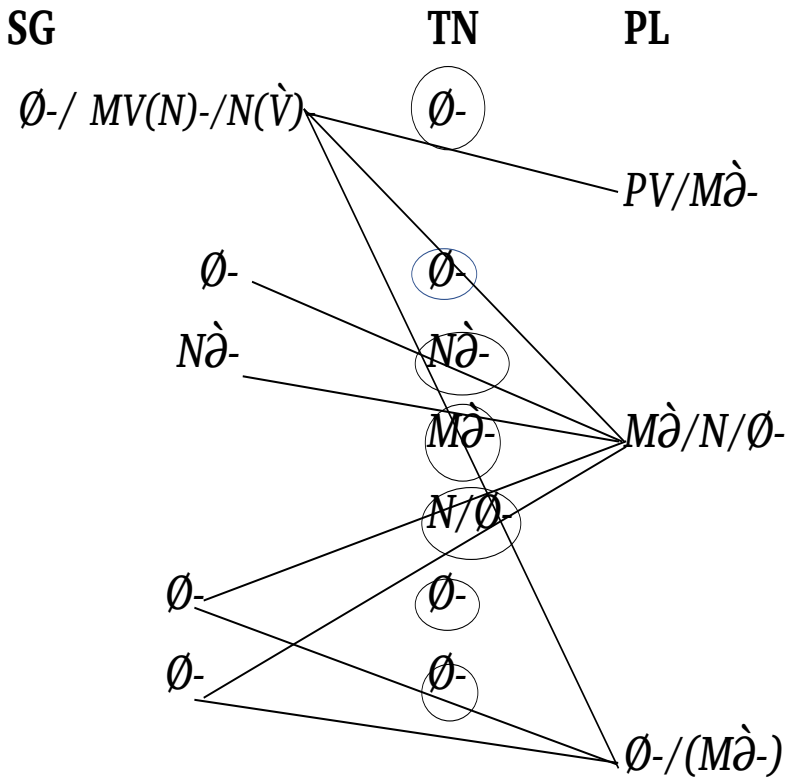


Figure 4: Deriflection system of Ngəmba

AGR	NF	Form	Number	Examples
1	*Ø*	—	TN, SG	*sɔ́k* 'pepper', *tɛ́t* 'father'
		m-, ŋ-	SG	*m-ɛ́* 'child', *ŋ-è* 'person'
	MV(N)-	*mɛ(n)/mʉ́(n)-mə-*	SG	*mɛ́n-dʉ̀* 'adult', *mʉ̂*-mmà 'sibling', *múm-pù?* 'knife'
			SG	*mə-ŋkkhʉ́* 'kid', *mə-ŋgɔ́ép* 'chicken'
	N(V̌)-	*n/ŋ/m-*	SG, TN	*n-dúm* 'male', ŋ-gʉ̀ 'guest', m-bəzháŋ 'groundnut'
		nə-	SG	*nə-zhìn* ɔ 'your way of walking'
2	*PV-*	*pə/pɔ́-*	PL	*pə-ŋkkhʉ́* 'kids', *pɔ́-mámma* 'siblings'
	Mə̀-	*mə-*		mə-ghʉ̀ 'guests', *mə-fɔ* 'chiefs'
3	*Ø*	—	SG, TN	*ssó* 'face', *ŋwá?* 'honey'
5	*Nə̀-*	*nə-*	SG, TN	*nə-ssɔŋ* 'tooth', *nə-ttŏ* 'palm nut'
6	*Mə̀-*	*mə-*	PL, TN	*mə-ssɔŋ* 'teeth', *mə-táttá* 'ants', *mə-lù?* 'wine'
	N/Ø-?	*m/ø-?*	PL, TN	*m-bbó* 'hands', *m-bum* 'eggs', *ŋgwáŋ* 'salt'
7	*Ø-*	—	TN, SG	*ŋwá?* 'bees', *ŋgəsáŋ* 'corn', *tthwó* 'head'
9	*Ø-*	—	SG, TN	*ntú?* 'cup, *ná?* 'sauce'
10	*Ø/(Mə̀-)*	*—/(mə̀-)*	PL	*ŋgɔ́ép* 'chickens', *mbbvɔ́* 'dogs', *mpphʲœ́* 'goats' *ppfə́ppfít* 'cooking tripod', *(mə̀-)tsó* 'things, *fà?* 'negative manners'

Table 4: nominal form class system alongside examples

Agreement class based on numerals and *sɨ̀ʔɨ́* 'how many'

When it comes to counting, there are nouns:

- A. that index their noun class directly on the numeral by selecting the appropriate agreement class marker

- B. Those that need numeral classifiers: sortal or mensural numeral, that categorizes the counted items for their shape and texture

Overview of the agreement class system for numerals

Semantic category	AN(imate)	INA(nimate)			
Reduced AGR class reflected on DEM and ‘which’	*p´-/m´-*	*m´-*	*w`-/w´-*	*zh´-/zh`-*	*ts´-/ts´-*
AGRn	*Mə́-*	*M-íN/M-ít-*	*W-ít-*	*ZH-ít-*	*TS-ít-*
AGRn class	2/6	6	1,3	7,9	5,10

Table 7: concordial prefix agreement for numerals and the question word *sú?ú* ‘what number of?’

Number	**Singular**			**Plural**	
class	1, 3	3, 7	5, 10	AN	IAN
‘one’	*wít-mɔ̀?ɔ́*	*zhítmɔ̀?ɔ́*	*tsítmɔ̀?ɔ́*		
‘two’	*wítppa*	*zhítppa*	*tsítppa*	*mə́ppa*	*mímppa*
‘three’	*wíttét*	*zhíttét*	*tsíttét*	*mə́tét*	*míntét*
‘four’	*wítnə́kkhwà*	*zhítnə́kkhwà*	*tsítnə́kkhwà*	*nə̀kkhwà*	*mítnə́kkhwà*
‘five’	*wíttɛ̀*	*zhíttɛ̀*	*tsíttɛ̀*	*mə́tɛ̀*	*míntɛ̀*

Table 4: Illustrations of postnominal numerals from one to five

A. Nouns that allow direct counting: **split of class 6 for ∓animate**

(14) Split of class 6 along ∓ animate in numeral concord

convergence of class 2 and 6 in numeral concord

(a) *mà-nàm* ***m-ák*** ***má-tét***

MƏ-animal **6**-1PL.EXCL.POSS **6.AN**-three

'Our three animals'

(b) *mə-tápɛ̀lɛ̀* ***m-ák*** ***mín-tét***

MƏ-table **6**-1PL.EXCL.POSS **6.IN**-three

'Our three tables'

(c) *p-ɔ̀* *p-ák* ***má-tét***

P-people **2**-1PL.EXCL.POSS **2.AN**-three

'My three persons'

Nominal classification based on nouns that do not allow direct counting

Ngəmba NumCl are grouped into two broader categories according to semantic criteria (sortal and mensural)

1. **Sortal** classifiers apply to nouns of high countability and subdivide counted nouns according to haptic criteria such as shape

2. **Mensural** classifiers provide nouns of low countability with a unit of measure in terms of aggregation or partition types

(Source) meanings of numeral classifiers

sortal classifiers	KERNEL, HORN, STICK, HANDLE, STAIN, HEAD, GRAIN, WELL/BOREHOLE <BUCKLED>, <LONGISH_FLEXIBLE>, <SIZABLE_ROUNDISH TUBER>,
mensural classifiers: aggregation	PILE, PACKAGE, BUNCH, POD, TUFT, <HAND>
mensural classifiers: partition	MORSEL, LUMP, SPROUT, SHORT PIECE, SLICE, FRAGMENT, FLAT SIDE, MEAGRE PORTION, <EXTENDED PART>

Overview of the sortal sortal classifiers (1)

classifier (source form)	(source) meanings of classifier items
***mbaŋ* (1/6) 'kernel'**	small roundish objects: groundnut, bean, corn, rice, taro, palmnut, macabo, African plum, person [...]
***ndɔ́ŋ* (9/6) 'horn, whistle'**	oblong objects : sweet yellow yam, African plum, okra, a type of fibrous tuber, groundnut pod, <oblong containers>like ampoules and small flacons for medicininal products.
***njáŋ* (3/6) 'stick'**	longish rigid objects: wood, broom, tooth, hair, injection (shot of injected fluid), word , grass and vegetable.
***ŋgɶ̀m* (?/6)'grain'**	smallish grainy objects with curvy outlines: nut, bean, corn, fish, cricket, mosquito, worm, word [...]
***pằp* (7/6) 'stain'**	flat objects: leaf, plot of land, textile ,iron sheet, plank [...]
tă (7/6) 'well, borehole'	sizable roundish objects: avocado, orange, pineapple, coconut, papaya, mango, onion, tomato, bigger stone, well [...]
***tthwó* (7/6) 'head'**	sizable roundish objects: cabbage, pineapple, papaya, faeces, soil, salt, stone.

Table 5: Sortal classifiers with transparent meanings

Overview of the sortal classifiers (2)

classifier (source form)	(source) meanings of classifier items
nɔ̀ʔ **(?/6)**	objects with a non-straight buckled shape: banana, plantain, sweet potatoes, cassava, worm
ntɛ̀ **(?/6)**	long flexible string-like objects: thread, liana, cable
tœ́m **(?/6)**	sizable roundish solid tubers: macabo, taro, Irish potato

Table 6: Sortal classifiers with non-transparent meanings

Overview of the mensural classifiers (1): Aggregation

classifier (source form)	(source) meanings of classifier items
ncwaŋ **(?/6)**	items that come in multiple extensions: plantain, banana, cobweb, types of bird nets
nchʉ́ **(?/6) 'sprout, offshoot'**	plant offshot: macabo, pepper, taro, tomato plant
nəkǎʔ **(5/6) 'pile, heap'**	pile or heap: grass, vegetable, firewood, ants , cloth […]
nəpǔʔ **(5/6) 'package, parcel'**	bundle wrapped in a cover: koki, textile, money, book […]
ŋgɛ́ **(?/6) 'pod'**	pods: kolanut
tǔʔ **(?/6) 'tuft'**	tuft of very short stubbly items: grass, hair, thread
tstshɔ̀ **(?/6) 'bunch'**	items that come in a natural bunch: plantain, banana

Table 7: Numeral classification in terms of aggregation

Overview of the mensural classifiers (2): Partition

classifier (source form)	**(source) meanings of classifier items**
***pàk* (?/6) 'slice, peeling'**	part: any part of a whole that is obtained by **splitting**
***kə̀m* (?/?) 'short piece, cut section'**	part: any part of a whole that is obtained by **cutting**
***ssá* (5/6) 'flat side' < *nəssă?* 'buttock'**	flat elevated surface: house, farm
***ntá?* (?/6)**	extension separated from an organic whole: tree branch, tears, water, liana, bamboo, wood, leg, arm
***khʉ̀m* (?/6) 'morsel, piece'**	compact lump or conglomeration of solid and hard/tough items: stone, stony soil, clay, block, meat, hard couscous morsel
***mbə̀?* (?/6) 'lump'**	bundle or malleable ball of items: cooked couscous, kneaded soil; firewood, liana, grass
***nchʉ́* (?/6) 'sprout, offshoot'**	plant offshoot: macabo, pepper, taro, tomato plant
***nə̀ghă?* (5/6) 'meagre portion'**	meagre portion: meat, food, person, plot of land
***pă?* (?/6) 'fragment, broken piece'**	piece: meat, wood, yellow yam, macabo

Table 8: Numeral classification in terms of partition

3. The emergence of numeral classifiers

The source nouns of most sortal and mensural classifiers retain the full gamut of their nominal properties, as is evident from their potential to derive distinct plural forms, mostly assigned to class 6, and to trigger noun class agreement

(3) (a) *mə̀ wě **tà? tthwó***
1SG have one head
'I have one head.'

(b) *mə̀ tstsɔ **tà? tthwó** **nánássĭ***
1SG eat one CLF < HEAD pineaaple
'I have eaten one pineapple.'

(4) (a) *sǎ ŋe ka **mə́-tthwó** mim-**ppa** we*
none person NEG 6-head 6IN-two have
'Nobody has two heads.'

(b) *mə̀ tstsɔ **nánássĭ** **tthwó** **ppa***
1SG eat pineapple CLF < HEAD two
'I have eaten one pineapple.'

Two types of syntactic constructions radically different

a) In plural numeral classifier constructions <u>involving numerals higher than the neutral 'one'</u>, the numeral follows the classifier which comes after the enumerated noun, yielding the sequence **N [CLF NUM]** .

(5) *lɔ̂ktă sŏp **ssá? njàŋ tɛ̀** nəl i*
doctor prick needle CLF<STICK five on O3SG
'The doctor gave him/her six injections.'

b) Constructions <u>involving the numeral 'one'</u> present an exact mirror image with the numeral preceding the classifier which in turn precedes the enumerated noun, i.e., **[NUM CLF] N**.

(6) *lɔ̂ktă sŏp **ta? njàŋ ssá? nəl i***
doctor prick one CLF<STICK needle on O3SG
'The doctor gave him/her one injection.'

4. Syntactic properties of NumCl constructions (2)

(7) *lɔ̂ktă sŏp **ssáʔ** **nəl** **i** **léʔ-a** **ta** **njàŋ** **tɛ̀***
doctor prick needle on O3SG day-PROX until CLF<STICK five
'The doctor gave him/her as much as six injections today.'

(8) *lɔ̂ktă sŏp **ssáʔ** **nəl** **i** **léʔ-a** **βə** **ndăʔ** **tàʔ** **njàŋ***
doctor prick needle on O3SG day-PROX EMPH only one CLF<STICK
'The doctor gave him/her just one injection today.'

Both singular and plural numeral classifier constructions allow for split by insertion of adjuncts such as adverbials and prepositional phrases

4. Syntactic properties of NumCl constructions (3)

(9) Inseparability of classifier + numeral

(a) *lɔ̂ktă* *sŏp* ***ssá?*** ***njàŋ*** ~~**nəl i*~~ ***tɛ̀***
doctor prick needle CLF < STICK on O3SG six

(b) *lɔ̂ktă* *sŏp* ***tà?*** ~~**ndă?*~~ ***njàŋ*** ***ssá?*** *nəl i*
doctor prick one only CLF < STICK needle on O3SG

Conclusion

1. Restricted numeral classifier system in concurreny to a reduced noun class system of the Bantoid type

2. Remarkably, the numeral classifier construction lacks the concordial prefix (CPx) in the numeral (NUM) that characterizes the corresponding plain modifier construction, presenting the image of a complementary distribution of the concordial prefix (CPx) for the numeral and the numeral classifier (CLF). Indeed, it seems that the numeral classifier slips into the role of the numeral concord here, illustrating a development whereby the inherited Ngəmba noun class system is partially undermined and replaced by an incipient classifier construction for nominal modification by numerals;

3. Numeral classifier syntax of Ngəmba, i.e. **[CLF NUM] / [NUM CLF]**, conforms with two prominent typological generalisations:

   (a) adjacency of numerals and classifiers (Aikhenvald 2000, Allen 1977),

   (b) immediate constituency of classifier and numeral (Dixon 1986; Aikhenvald 2000: 105)

4. Areal perspective: contrast to other branches of Bantoid (Ejagham, Tivoid), where the classifier is always adjacent to the enumerated noun and both form an immediate constituent [CLF N] under exclusion of the numeral

Thanks for your kind attention!!!