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THE NOUN CLASS SYSTEM OF OROKO EAST

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Award of a Post-Graduate Diploma in Linguistics

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DEDICATION

To my lovely father Elias Shu and Uncle
Abednego Che Njibaha

(of blessed memory)

The fatherly love and moral support you gave me when I was still a kid are still very fresh in my mind. Your absence since you departed is still extremely regretted because you abandoned me when your fatherly obligations were most required. May God Almighty continue to take care of all of us.

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Shu, A. C.

TABLE OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

All the symbols used in this work are of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) model except the following:

- { } : brace brackets: means, pick one of the enclosed elements.
- [] : square brackets: Phonetic transcription.
- / / : Obliques: Phonemic transcription
- () : optionality
- : generates or becomes
- : Location of the changing segment or the place where the change occurs.
- ~ : Alternant form.
- # : Word boundary
- + : Morpheme boundary
- ∅ : No morpheme or zero morpheme.
- V : vowel
- C : consonant
- CL : Class
- No : Number
- Ass.M or AM : Associative Marker.
- Poss : Possessive pronoun concord morpheme.
- A (Adj) : Adjectival or qualifier concord morpheme.
- & : and
- cf : consult or confer with.
- " " : Gloss

U.R.	: Underlying representation
S.R.	: Surface representation
R.	: Rule
O.E.	: Oroko East
P.B.	: Proto-Bantu
N.S.	: Near speaker
N.L.	: Near Listener
F.S.L.	: Far away from speaker and listener.
H	: High tone.
L	: Low tone.
M	: Mid tone.
R	: Rising tone.
F	: Falling tone.

-tone symbols

ˊ	: High
ˋ	: Low
ˉ	: Mid
ˆ	: Falling
ˋ	: Rising

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 OVERVIEW

This dissertation sets out to study the noun class system of Oroko East, a coastal language of the narrow Bantu group.

In this chapter, the discussion will be based on six salient points. First, the objectives and the significance of the study will be elaborated. This will be followed by a presentation of the scope of the work and the methodology employed. The geo-historical situation of the Oroko East people will be examined next and after that, an excerpt of the phonology of Oroko East will be outlined. The Chapter ends with a linguistic classification of the language and the general outline of the work.

1.1 Objectives and Significance of the Study.

1.1.1 Objectives.

This dissertation focuses on the noun class system of the Oroko East Language, the main aim being to assign the various nouns in the language to their appropriate morphological classes according to standard criteria. As such, the first section of the study will be dedicated to a careful study of the prefixes of the nouns. Welmers, W.E. (1973:160), states in African Language Structures that

In any Bantu Language, a very large number of noun forms can readily be analysed as consisting of a prefix and a stem. It may be possible to recognise from ten to twenty different prefixes in a given language.

Oroko East being a Bantu language is by its nature therefore, expected to exhibit nouns each comprising a stem and a prefix. Such prefixes will constitute the core of the analysis in this dissertation and serve as the major criterion for assigning the nouns to their respective morphological classes.

1.1.2 Significance of Study.

Nothing has been done so far on the noun class system of Oroko East. As such, this study will highlight some aspects of the Oroko East noun morphology. Also, the study will provide some information to linguists hoping to work on this language. Finally, this study will hopefully encourage the standardisation process of the Oroko East language by providing data that may be useful to those involved in designing primers on the language.

1.2 Scope and Methodology.

1.2.1 Scope.

Thus far, Oroko East has not been subjected to any serious linguistic description. However, as earlier mentioned, this study focuses on the noun class system of the language and not the phonology as one would have expected of a language that has not received any prior linguistic attention. This is so because at the time of

this research, the phonology of Oroko East is receiving the attention of a mate (Atta Samuel).

In line with the topic, the morphology of the O.E. nouns will be analysed. Each noun class will be analysed alongside its Proto-Bantu (henceforth P.B) counterpart in order to establish the relationship between present day O.E. and P.B. noun classes.

The concord system will also be treated taking into account the occurrence of the nouns with specific sets of concordial elements when they (the nouns) are collocated with other word categories such as numerals, adjectives, possessive pronouns, demonstrative determiners etc. This will provide further evidence for assigning nouns to their respective classes.

Gender and semantic content will also be examined with a view to confirming the morphological classes established in earlier sections.

1.2.2 Methodology.

Data for this study is obtained with the use of the Ebobisse (1991) word list. The corpus is made up of over 420 words and some phrases collected with the help of informants. The data elicitation procedure consists in eliciting direct translational equivalents in Oroko East of the items on the word list. The working languages used to obtain any information are English and Pidgin English.

The inspiration for this study was got by reading some works crucial in the study of noun class systems of Bantu

languages. These include works of linguists like Hyman and Voorhoeve, (1980-1981), Welmers, W.E, (1973), Stallcup, (1977), Wieseemann et al, (1977) etc. They all accept in their works that Bantu languages have nouns that can be analysed as having a stem and a prefix. They also recognise the fact that a Bantu language may have about ten to twenty noun classes. The most vital of the above works has been that of Hyman because it provided the P.B prefixes that are instrumental in the present analysis.

1.3 Geo-historical Situation.

Oroko East is situated in Meme and Ndian Divisions in the South West Province of Cameroon. It is a fairly large area made up of four villages; Bakundu, Ekombe, Mbonge (found in Meme Division) and Balue (found in Ndian Division). The people of these villages speak the same language with very insignificant differences which do not impede mutual intelligibility among the people. This study focuses on the Bakundu variety principally because it occupies a greater land area than the other three villages.

The main occupation of the people is subsistence farming. A few cash crops are also cultivated. The main economic organ of the place is the Cameroon Development Corporation, (C.D.C).

Historically, oral tradition holds that the Oroko people originated around the great lakes lying between the Nile and the Congo around 400 B.C. The people then dispersed into various emigrant groups in areas of the

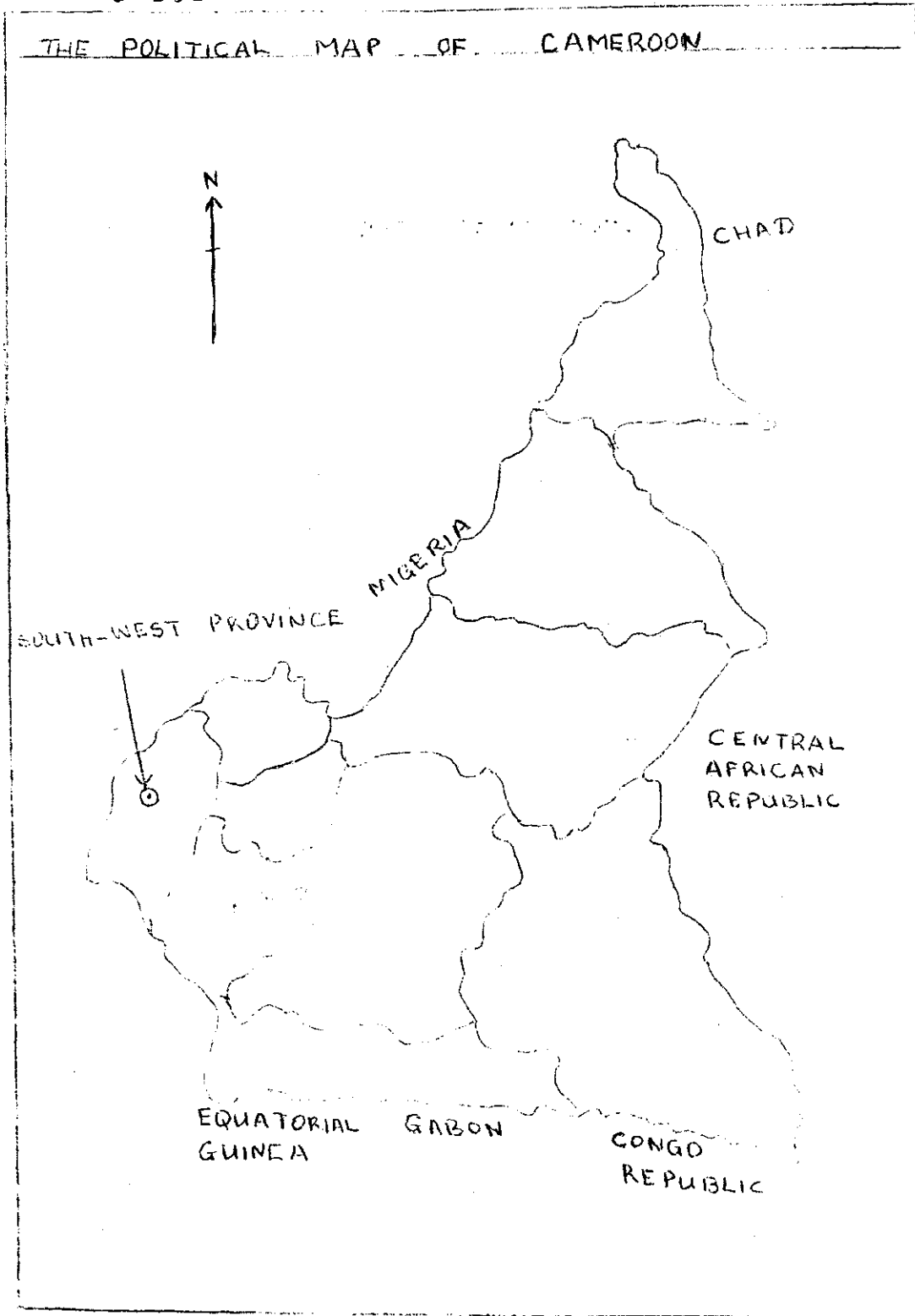
African Continent like Southern Africa, East Africa and all over Central Africa. Each group moved and settled in its own area.

The Oroko East people moved across the Buea Mountain and today occupy the Bakundu, Mbonge, Ekombe and Balue.

Today, a good portion of the people found in Oroko have come from other parts of the country and especially, outside the South West Province.

The following political map of Cameroon illustrates the location of Oroko East.

FIG 1-3-1



MODERN GEOGRAPHY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

1.4 The Sound System of Oroko East.

The Oroko East sound system comprises 22 consonants, 7 vowels and 5 tones.

1.4.1 Consonants.

O.E. consonant phonemes include:

<u>Phoneme</u>	<u>O.E. Sample Word</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
b	dìbé	"liver"
tʃ (ch)	èchó	"wood"
d	dìnóngò	"bed"
j	èjò	"broom"
k	àkáká	"to go"
l	lòndárò	"ten"
m	mòs"á	"oil"
n	àtónì	"nail"
ŋ	ŋàrì	"wife"
p	èpápè	"clothe"
r	màríbà	"water"
s	sósò	"to tremble"
t	támhá	"cap"
w	wà	"to die"
y	yókó	"one"
β	èβóngò	"chair"
ʔ	ìwóʔò	"cutlass"
kp	màkpábà	"cassava"

1.4.1.1 Consonant Modifications.

Many consonant sounds in the language are subjected to various modifications such as Labialisation and aspiration.

i) Labialisation.

The following consonants are Labialised in Oroko East:

<u>Labialised Sound</u>	<u>O.E. Example</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
ŋ ^w	ŋ ^w áráná	"woman"
m ^w	m ^w á	"fire"
mb ^w	mb ^w á	"rain"
s ^w	mòs ^w á	"oil"
d ^w	d ^w à	"to cry"
r ^w	bor ^w á	"to kill"
ng ^w	ribàng ^w á	"to sow"
k ^w	sòk ^w é	"crab"

ii) Aspiration.

The few consonants aspirated in Oroko East include:

<u>Aspirated sound</u>	<u>O.E. Example</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
p ^h	p ^h ó	"rat"
k ^h	k ^h ó	"rat mole"
t ^h	t ^h óngó	"to cry"

In this project, the above modified consonants will be considered as single sounds and not two different sounds.

1.2.4.2 Consonant Clusters.

A number of words in O.E. begin with homorganic nasal consonants. Examples of such words include:

<u>Consonant Cluster</u>	<u>O.E. Examples</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/m+b/	m̃-bóri	"goat"
/n+d/	ñ-dáb	"house"
/ŋ+g/	ŋ̃-gbî	"corn"

The nasal sounds in the above examples bear tones. As such, they will be considered in this study as constituting the nucleus of syllables. In the relevant section, these syllabic nasals will be treated as nominal prefixes.

1.4.2 Vowels.

There are 7 vowel phonemes in Oroko East. There are three front unrounded vowels, three back rounded vowels and one central vowel. The front vowels are high, half high, and half low. The only central vowel found is low and unrounded. The table below illustrates the above vowels.

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Half High	e		o
Half low	ɛ		ɔ
Low		a	

Table 1.1

These vowels can be seen in the following words:

<u>Vowels</u>	<u>O.E. Examples</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
/i/	inó	"bird"
/e/	èchó	"wood"
/ɛ/	mùkérê	"plantain"
/a/	aṅwā	"cat"
/u/	èsúnjù	"odour"
/o/	thókò	"spoon"
/ɔ/	ìwò?ó	"cutlass"

1.4.3 Tones.

The O.E. language has high, mid, low and contour tones.

- [´] High tone
- [-] mid tone
- [˘] Low tone
- [ˆ] Rising tone
- [ˆ] Falling tone.

Examples of words with these tones are:

<u>O.E. Examples</u>		<u>Gloss</u>
thámbá	(H)	"cap"
wà	(M)	"to cry"
dwà	(L)	"to die"
ṅgbî	(F)	"corn"
àṅwà	(R)	"cat"

1.4.4 Syllable Structure

The syllable structure that will be found in the nominal prefixes and the stems after a careful study includes the following combinations.

In the noun prefixes, the syllable structure is made up of either the peak with a preceding consonant or the peak alone. Some consonants carry tone. These are syllabic nasals which are considered in this work as the nucleus of syllables. Examples of noun prefixes with the CV syllable structure include:

bò-

mù-

dì-

mà-

dò-

Examples of noun prefixes with the V structure only include:

è-

ì-

Examples of noun prefixes with the -N structure include:

m̃-

ñ-

ŋ̃-

The stems of the nouns will then have just the CV or CVC. For instance:

dī-sǒngà "teeth"

ñ-dáb "house"

1.5 Linguistic Classification

Oroko East falls under the Niger-Kordofanian language family following Greenberg's classification. Greenberg identifies four major language families for the African Continent which include:

1. Niger-Kordofanian
2. Nilo-Saharan
3. Afroasiatic
4. Khoisan

According to Hyman, 1973, Oroko East is a coastal language of the Equatorial Narrow Bantu group. It is a Bantoid Bantu language under the Benue-Congo language zone which is a sub-group of the Niger-Congo sub-family of the Niger-Kordofanian major language family.

Guthrie, (1948), Welmers, (1973), Greenberg 1963, 1970, 1974), and Williamson, (1971) are those who have been so instrumental in the classification of African languages though they have often been in disagreement with the various classifications.

Guthrie, assigns O.E. under the A11 sub-group. A genealogical tree of this language is provided below:

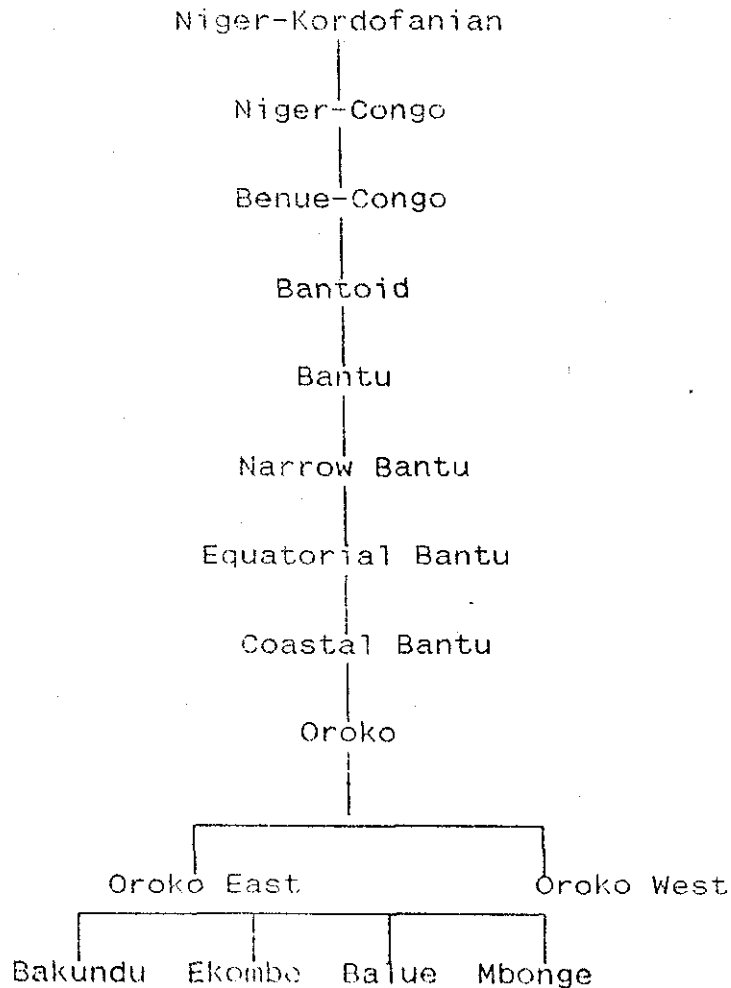


Table 1.2

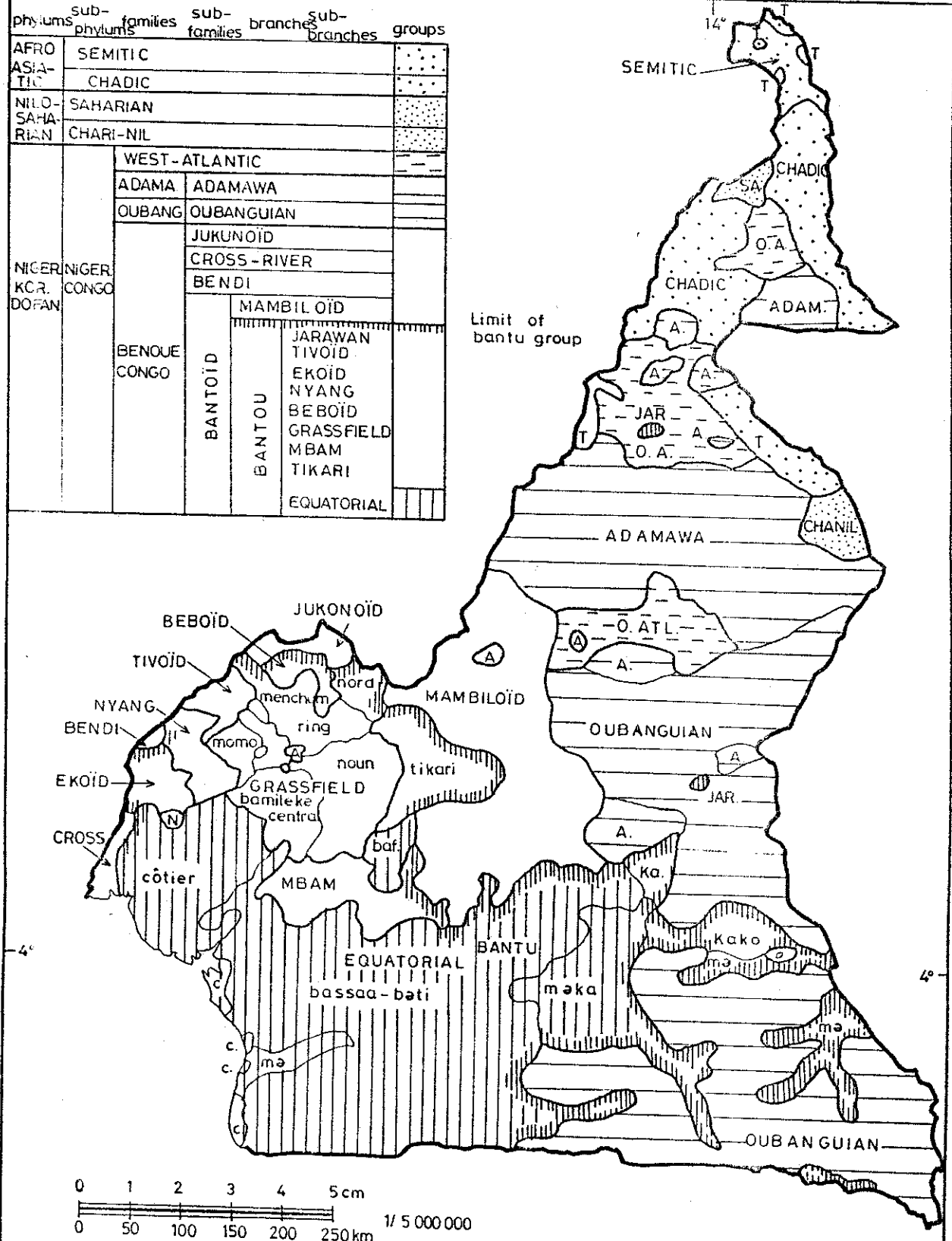
"Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun" seems to provide a plausible classification of Orokó East. According to it, O.E. falls under zone 6 of Cameroon languages. This zone embodies the languages spoken along the coast; from Limbe to Campo and in the hinterlands. These are languages classified by Guthrie into the groups A10, A20 and A30 and

they are called lundu-balong, duala and bube-benga. See maps on pages 15 and 16.)

Fig:1 LINGUISTIC FAMILIES AND GROUPS OF CAMEROON

Phyllums	sub-phyllums	families	sub-families	branches	sub-branches	groups	
AFRO ASIATIC		SEMITIC				[Pattern]	
		CHADIC					
NILO-SAHARIAN		SAHARIAN				[Pattern]	
		CHARI-NIL					
NIGER-KC.R. DOFAN	NIGER-CONGO	WEST-ATLANTIC				[Pattern]	
		ADAMA	ADAMAWA				
		OUBANG	OUBANGUIAN				
			JUKUNOID				
			CROSS-RIVER				
			BENDI				
			BANTOÏD	MAMBILOÏD			
				JARAWAN			
				TIVOÏD			
				EKOÏD			
				NYANG			
				BEBOÏD			
	GRASSFIELD						
	MBAM						
	TIKARI						
	EQUATORIAL						

Limit of bantu group



1.6 Outline of Work.

Chapter 1 which is the introductory chapter discusses the objectives and scope of the project, the methodology, geo-historical situation and the linguistic classification of O.E. The outline of the work ends this section.

In chapter 2, the analysis and establishment of the noun classes is done.

In chapter 3, attention is focused on the concord system of O.E.

Chapter 4, treats the gender and semantic content.

Chapter 5 embodies the general conclusion and proposals for further research on Oroko East.

CHAPTER TWO

NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

2.0 INTRODUCTION.

In this chapter, Oroko East noun classes will be discussed with much attention focused on the noun prefixes. The peculiar features of each class will be examined in detail and the prefix allomorphs and their distribution presented.

Talking about noun class, Welmers, W.E, (1973:160), comments that:

Many noun stems will be found commonly with two of these prefixes; such a pair is ordinarily singular and plural. Some stems may occur with only one prefix; these are usually mass nouns, abstracts and other types for which enumeration is irrelevant. In addition, some stems may be found, at least fairly frequently, with more than two prefixes, this variety is likely to reflect semantic differences in addition to number.

Defining a noun class, Malcolm Guthrie (1967/71:15) on the other hand says that it is "one of the distinct patterns of prefix agreement in the language in question." This definition focuses more on concord between the noun and its satellites.

Following the above views, a noun class in Oroko East may be defined as a group of words that distinguish themselves in the Oroko East language by a common prefix and

by the fact that they provoke an identical pattern of agreement when used with noun satellites in larger constructions.

The prefix of the noun will be used as the point of focus for the analysis in this chapter. These noun prefixes will be given a sort of synchronic and diachronic study in the analysis. A diachronic study of the prefixes will embody the historical evolution of the prefixes from Proto-Bantu to Oroko East while a synchronic study will examine how the prefixes change from one language to the other in the same language group as Oroko East.

2.1 Oroko East Noun Classes.

Oroko East has 12 distinct noun classes. Some of these classes portray morphological alternants some of which can be explained phonologically. The following singular classes are identified: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 19 while the plural classes include 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 13.

2.1.2 Criteria for Determining Oroko East Noun Classes.

The morphological criteria generally used in the study of noun morphology in Bantu languages will be used in analysing and classifying Oroko East nouns. These criteria include:

- the form of the noun prefixes
- gender
- nouns and their concordial elements (cf Ebude, 1990)

The P.B. prefixes will be juxtaposed with those of Oroko East. The P.B. prefixes may not be identical with all the Oroko East prefixes but similarities will be found when they are juxtaposed. The P.B. prefixes used here are those established by Hyman (1980a:182) for the coastal Bantu languages.

2.2 Noun Prefixes.

In this section, each noun class will be analysed in detail. The Oroko East prefixes will be juxtaposed with the corresponding P.B. prefixes and some of the phonological changes will be explained.

2.2.1 Class 1.

The P.B. prefix for class 1 is \emptyset - while in Oroko East, there are 2 prefixes which are \emptyset - and $b\grave{o}$ -. These prefixes mark the singular forms of the nouns. Examples of nouns having these prefixes are:

\emptyset - $\eta w\acute{a}r\acute{a}n\grave{a}$	"woman"
\emptyset - $\eta\acute{a}r\acute{i}$	"wife"
\emptyset - $\eta\acute{a}n\grave{a}$	"child"
\emptyset - $\grave{a}n\acute{d}\acute{o}\eta$	"jigger"
\emptyset - $\acute{a}t\acute{o}\eta\acute{i}$	"nail"
\emptyset - $\acute{a}b\acute{o}k\acute{i}\eta\acute{i}$	"hair-scaff"
\emptyset - $b\grave{o}$ - $r\acute{e}$	"tree"
$b\grave{o}$ - $r\acute{e}$	"medicine"

bò-kánò "story"
bò-kékò "chin"

From the above examples, one notices that the P.B. prefix ø-, changes to bò- when it is followed by r, s, or k. The following phonological rule captures this change:

R1: ø → bo /- {
r
k
s}

A sample derivation involving the above rule will be:

U.R ## ø + re ##

Ri: bore

S.R [bòré]

2.2.1 Class 2.

Class 2 is logically supposed to be the plural of class 1. ^BBut it is noticed that only nouns with the ø- prefix (singular) form their plural in this class. Nouns with the bò- prefix form their plural in class 6. The P.B prefix for class 2 is bà- while the Oroko East prefixes are bà- and b-. Examples of nouns with these prefixes are:

bà-tátà "fathers"
bà-nári "wives"
bà-ná "babies"

bà-ké	"strangers"
bà-ndón	"jiggers"
bà-tónì	"nails"
bà-bákírì	"hair-scaffs"
bà-rànà	"women"

As seen in the above examples, the P.B β becomes b in O.E. This change involves a consonant strengthening process. There is also a vowel deletion process. These changes may be captured by the following phonological rules:

R2: $\beta \longrightarrow b/\#-$

R3: $a \longrightarrow \emptyset/-v$

The language disallows a sequence of two vowels consequently, one of the vowels has to be deleted in order to have only one /a/ in the words beginning with /a/.

A prose statement involving rule 2 will be; a bilabial voiced fricative becomes a bilabial voiced stop at word initial position. It is possibly a context free rule. Rule 3 states that /a/ is deleted when it precedes /a/. A sample derivation involving the rules will be:

U.R ##	Ba + tata ##	Ba + atoni ##
R2	ba-tata	_____
R3	_____	ba-atonì
S.R.	[bàtátà]	[bàtónì]

2.2.3 Class 3.

The P.B prefix for class 3 is mò- while its O.E. counterparts are mò-, mù-, and mw-. Examples of nouns with these prefixes are:

mò-kérè	"plantain"
mò-tíkà	"potato"
mò-kónì	"mountain"
mò-kónì	"rope"
mù-kónì	"song"
mù-mbú	"lip"
mw-á	"fire"
mù-ná	"door"
mw-àngà	"kernel"
mù-nérè	"soil"

The P.B prefix exhibits a back half high rounded vowel while the O.E. prefixes exhibit back halfhigh and back high rounded vowels. These changes can be captured by the following phonological rules:

R4: o → u/c-+

R5: o → w/c-v

The mw- prefix is a result of desyllabification while the mù- is as a result of vowel raising.

+syll → -syll

-high → +high/- +

A sample derivation involving rules 4 and 5 will be:

U.R ## mo + kóni # # mo + va ##

R4 mu-kóni _____

R5 _____ mw-a

S.R [mùkónì] [mwá]

Words with the mw- prefix are not frequent in the language.

2.2.4 Class 4.

Class 4 is the plural of class 3. The P.B prefix for this class is mē- while the O.E prefix has morphological alternants. These are mē- and mī-. The P.B prefix mē- also found in O.E. is changing to mī-. With time, probably, mē- will disappear completely giving way to mī-. In the next chapter, some evidence will be provided to account for the fact that nouns with the mē- and mī- prefixes are the plurals of class 3.

Examples of nouns with these prefixes are:

mē-kónì	"songs"
mē-kérê	"plantains"
mē-tíkâ	"potatoes"
mē-kánì	"songs"

mì-ná "doors"
mì-nérè "soils"

The phonological change from mè- to mì- may be captured by the following rule.

R6: e → i/c+

A front half high unrounded vowel becomes a front high unrounded vowel at morpheme boundary when it precedes a consonant. A sample derivation involving the rule will be:

U.R ## me-na ##

R6: mì-na

S.R [míná]

Looking at rules 6 and 4, one notices that there is a general tendency in O.E. to raise low prefix vowels. Considering this along with evidence from other classes, the two rules can thus be collapsed into the following generalised vowel raising rule:

R7: -high → +high/c+

This rule claims that a low vowel becomes high when it precedes a morpheme boundary and follows a consonant.

2.2.5 Class 5

The P.B prefix for class 5 is lè- while the O.E. prefix is dī-. Examples of nouns with this prefix include:

dī-tôyi	"ear"
dī-kànjó	"hard"
dī-ló	"buttock"
dī-bòngò	"knee"
dī-sòngà	"tooth"
dī-rèndì	"knife"

In this class, the dental alveolar lateral sound /l/ becomes the dental alveolar voiced stop /d/. There is also a difference at the level of the vowel height. A half high unrounded vowel becomes a front high unrounded vowel. The following phonological rules capture the phonological changes noted above:

R8: l → d/#-

R7: -high → +high/c-

A sample derivation involving these changes will be:

U.R ## le + toyi ##

R8: de-toyi

R7: dī-toyi

S.R [dī tóyi]

The change from /l/ to /d/ word-initially leaves one with the impression that the language disallows +cont sounds at word-initial position. This is given more credibility by R2 in which word-initial β changes to b-. In this light, the following generalised consonant strengthening rule will take care of rules 2 and 8.

R9: +cont \longrightarrow -cont/#-

2.2.6 Class 6.

The PB prefix for this class (mà-) corresponds to the O.E. prefix. This is the plural class not only of class 5 but equally of class 1 nouns having the prefix bò- and a few class 9 nouns. Examples of nouns with the class 6 prefix mà- are:

mà-tóyì	"ears"
mà-ré	"trees"
mà-kònjó	"hands"
mà-ká	"fences"
mà-kyá	"blood"
mà-bǒngó	"knees"
mà-ló	"buttocks"
mà-sǒngá	"teeth"

Having posited a generalised vowel raising rule, (R:7), one would have expected the vowel height of /a/ to change but this is not the case. This is however considered as an

exception to the context free vowel raising rule posited earlier. With time /a/ will probably change to one other +high vowel.

2.2.7 Class 7.

The PB prefix for class 7 is kè- while the O.E. prefix is è-. Examples of nouns with this prefix include:

è-pósi	"bottle"
è-ḡòḡò	"chair"
è-támbí	"shoe"
è-kàmbó	"friend"
è-wá	"air"
è-ríngí	"mirror"
è-kári	"juju"
è-ríngà	"basket"
è-pápè	"clothe"

From the examples, it is noticed that word initial voiceless velar stop is deleted. Rule 9 below captures this deletion process:

R10: k → ø/#-

A sample derivation involving this rule will be:

U.R ## ke + posi ##

R9: è-posi

S.R [èpòsì]

From the general behaviour of prefix vowels, it is probable that with time, è- will change to i-.

2.2.8 Class 8.

The P.B prefix for class 8 is βi- while the O.E prefix is bè-. Examples of words with bè- in O.E are:

bè-pòsì	"bottles"
bè-βòngó	"chairs"
bè-támbí	"shoes"
bè-kòmbó	"friends"
bè-wá	"winds"
bè-ríngì	"mirrors"
bè-kàrí	"jujus"
bè-ríngà	"baskets"
bè-pápè	"clothes"

There is a gradual change from P.B to O.E. The β becomes b- while the /i-/ becomes /e/. R9 which is the consonant strengthening rule captures the phonological change from /β/ to /b/ while the change from /i/ to /e/ is contrary to R7. Here again, one would have expected /i/ to maintain its status as a high vowel but this is not so. May be this vowel will one day maintain its height again. A front high

unrounded vowel becomes a front half high vowel at morpheme boundary.

R10: i → e/→

A sample derivation involving this rule will be:

U.R ## βi + posi ##

R10 βeposi

R9 beposi

S.R [bèpósì]

NB. This exception does not destroy the vowel raising rule discussed earlier.

2.2.9 Class 9.

The P.B prefix for class 9 is nè- while that of O.E has morphological alternants. These alternants are ø-, n-, and N-. Mostly uncountable nouns have the ø- prefix. Examples of nouns with the class 9 prefixes are:

ø-wárá	"stupidity"
ø-tókó	"spoon"
ø-tándú	"plate"
n-ámá	"meat"
n-ó	"snake"
n-àngú	"sand"
n-èní	"tobacco"

n̄-jé	"chimpanzee"
n-júkù	"elephant"
n̄-gó	"lion"
n̄-gbâ	"dog"
m̄-bóri	"goat"
n̄-dap	"house"

Following the O.E. examples, n̄- which is the P.B. prefix is realised as ø-. The change from n̄- to ø- may be captured by the following phonological rule.

R11: ne \longrightarrow ø/-+ $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} V \\ C \end{array} \right\}$

A sample derivation involving this rule will be:

U.R ## ne + tanda # #

R11 tanda

S.R [tándá]

The derivation of O.E nouns with the n̄- prefix involves the following processes. There is first /e/ deletion and secondly a change from /n/ to /n̄/. The following phonological rules will capture the change:

R12: e \longrightarrow ø/c-

R13: n \longrightarrow n̄/#-

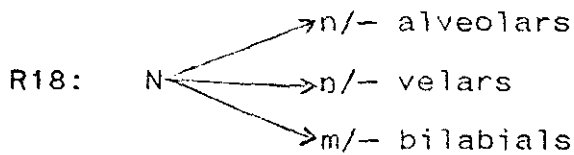
A sample derivation involving the above rules will be:

U.R ## ne + ama ##
 R12: n-ama
 R13: n̄-ama
 S.R [n̄-âmá]

There is finally, the change from nè- (PB) to the syllabic nasal N̄- (O.E). Four rules can be posited for the derivation of the O.E prefixes.

R14: ne ———> N/#-
 R15: N̄ ———> n/- {j d}
 R16: N̄ ———> n̄/- 9
 R17: N̄ ———> m/- bilabials

These rules can be conflated into one general rule, that is, the homorganic nasal assimilation process.



A sample derivation involving the four rules will be:

U.R ## ne + dab ## ne + go ## ne + bori ##
 R14: N̄-dab N̄-go N̄-bori
 R15: n-dab ——— ———

R16:	_____	n-go	_____
R17:	_____	_____	m-bori
S.R	[ndáb]	[ngó]	[mbóri]

The nouns with the homorganic nasals are mostly names of animals.

2.2.10 Class 10.

This class is logically the plural class of class 9 nouns. The plural prefixes are the same prefixes of class 9 which are ø-, n-, and Ñ-. The P.B prefixes of class 10 are li- and nè-. The li- is not attested in any plural form of the O.E. nouns. The examples of nouns with the said prefixes are:

ø-èpúpú	"dust"
ø-wará	"stupidity"
ø-tókó	"spoons"
ø-tándà	"plates"
n-àmá	"meat"
n-ó	"snakes"
n-àngó	"sand"
n-éni	"tobacco"
ñ-dáb	"houses"
ñ-go	"lions"
ñ-bóri	"goats"
ñ-júkù	"elephants"
ñ-gbâ	"dogs"

The phonological rules posited for the derivation of O.E class 9 nouns equally apply for the derivation of O.E class 10 nouns.

2.2.11 Class 13.

The P.B prefix for this class is tò- while the O.E prefix is dò-. Examples of O.E nouns with this prefix include:

dò-ně	"fingers"
dò-kí	"flies"
dò-chó	"woods"
dò-ngúngà	"wasps"
dò-kòmó	"drums"
dò-nó	"birds"
dò-wó?ó	"cutlasses"

Following the O.E examples, tò- which is the P.B prefix is realised as dò-. A dental alveolar voiceless stop becomes a dental alveolar voiced stop at word-initial position. Rule 19 below captures the above phonological change:

R19: t → d/#-

A sample derivation involving the above rule will be:

U.R ## to + ne ##

R19: do-ne

S.R [dòne]

2.2.12 Class 19.

The P.B prefix for this class is pi- while its O.E counterpart is i-. Examples of nouns with the i prefix in O.E are:

i-né	"finger"
i-kí	"fly"
ichó	"wood"
i-ngúngà	"wasp"
i-kómò	"drum"
i-no	"bird"
i-wó?ó	"cutlass"

The derivation of O.E nouns with the i- prefix involves the deletion of a voiceless bilabial stop at word-initial position. The change from pi- to i- can be captured by the following phonological rule:

R20: p → ø/#-

A sample derivation involving the above rule will be:

U.R ## pi + ne ##

R20: inc

SR [iné]

Below is a recapitulative table of the noun class prefixes:

- Column 1 is made up of the class numbers which are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 19.
- Column 2 comprises the Proto-Bantu prefixes proposed by Hyman for the different classes.
- Column 3 has the Oroko East noun prefixes corresponding to the various class numbers in column 1.
- Column 4 contains examples of nouns in each class.
- Column 5 is the gloss.

CL No.	P.B	O.E	O.E Examples	Gloss
1	ɔ-	ɔ-, bò-	bò-ré, ɔ-átónì, ɔ- tátà	"tree, rail, father"
2	βà	bà-	bà-tónì, bà-tátà	"nails, fathers"
3	mò-	mò-, mù, mw-	mò-ká, mù-na, mw-á	"fence, door fire"
4	mè-	mè, mi-	mè-ká, mi-ná, mè-yá	"fences, doors, fires"
5	le-	dì-	dì-tóyì	"ear"
6	mâ-	mâ-	mâ-tóyì, mâ-ré	"ears, trees"
6a	mâ	mâ-, mi-, mō-	mâ-rí bá, mi-séri, mō-s'á	"water, tears, oil"
7	kè-	è-	è-támbì	"shoe"
8	βì-	bè-	bè-támbì	"shoes"

9	nè-	σ, ɾ, ʌ-	σ-èpúpú, ɾ-gbâ, ɾ-àmá	"dust, dog, meat"
10	lì-,n-	σ, ɾ, ʌ-	σ-èpúpú, ɾ-gbâ, ɾ-àmá	"dust, dogs, meat"
13	tò-	dò-	dò-kí	"flies"
19	pì-	ì-	ì-kí	"fly"

Table 2.1

2.3 Conclusion.

This chapter was dedicated to an analysis of the Broko East noun classes. Many of the classes have morphological alternants which are accounted for in most cases, diachronically. The classes that have morphological alternants are: 1, 3, 4, 9, and 10.

It appears tone does not play a major role in the constitution of the noun prefixes. The tone that is very frequent on the prefixes is the low tone and its use has more of a stylistic effect than a semantic one.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCORD SYSTEM

3.0 INTRODUCTION.

In chapter 2, Oroko East noun classes were discussed. In this chapter, attention is focused on the concord system.

Concord system in Oroko East can be defined as the grammatical relationship between the noun and its satellites. This grammatical relationship is usually marked by a concord morpheme which in some cases is identical in form with the nominal prefix.

3.1 The Concord System.

The elements that will be treated in this section include: the numerals, the possessive pronoun (POSS), the demonstrative (DEM), the adjective (A) and the associative concord marker (ASS.M). The aim of this chapter is to determine the morpheme that marks concord between these elements and the nouns they modify.

3.1.1 Numerals.

The numerals that will concern us here are one, two, three and four. The roots of these numerals are:

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1. yókó | "one" |
| 2. bé | "two" |
| 3. lálò | "three" |

4. ní "four"

The table below illustrates the concord morphemes when the numeral is used with the noun.

CL	Example Gloss	yókó "one"	bé "two"	lálò "three"	ní "four"
1	ø-tátà "father"	m-ókó	---	---	---
2	bà-tátà "fathers"	---	bá-bé	bá-lálò	bá-ní
3	mù-kónì "song"	m-yókó	---	---	---
4	mè-kónì "songs"	---	mé-bé	mé-lálò	mé-ní
5	dì-tóyì "ear"	dí-yókò	---	---	---
6	mà-tóyì "ears"	---	má-bé	má-lálò	má-ní
7	è-pòsì "bottle"	é-yókó	---	---	---
8	bè-pòsì "bottles"	---	bé-bé	bé-lálò	bé-ní
9	ṁ-bóri "goat"	p-ókó	---	---	---
10	ṁ-bóri "goats"	---	mí-bé	mí-lálò	mí-ní
13	dò-kí "flies"	---	dó-bé	dó-lálò	dó-ní
19	ì-kí "fly"	í-yókó	---	---	---

Table 3.1

As table 3.1 reveals, the elements that mark concord between the numeral "one" and singular nouns are:

CL	Concord Morpheme
1	m-ó
3	mú-
5	dí-
7	é-
9	p-ó
19	í-

Table 3.II

It can be observed from these examples that the form of the concord morpheme changes with the noun class.

The examples below highlight the concord morphemes that mark agreement between the nouns and the numeral "one".

	CL	Example	Gloss
1)	1	ø-tátà m-ókó	"one father"
2)	3	mù-kónì m-yókó	"one song"
3)	5	dì-tóyì dí-yókó	"one ear"
4)	7	è-pósì é-yókó	"one bottle"
5)	9	m-bóri p-ókó	"one goat"
6)	19	ì-kí í-yókó	"one fly"

The elements that mark concord between the numerals two, three and four and plural nouns are:

CL	Concord Morpheme
2	bá-
4	mé-
6	má-
8	bé-
10	mí-
13	dó-

Table 3.III

The form of the concord morpheme still changes with the noun class prefix. The examples below highlight the concord morphemes that mark agreement between the nouns and the numerals "two", "three" and "four".

	<u>CL</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1)	2	bà-tàtá bá-bé	"two fathers"
2)	4	mè-kónì mé-lálò	"three songs"
3)	6	mà-tóyì má-ní	"four ears"
4)	8	bè-pòsì bé-bé	"two bottles"
5)	10	àm-bóri mí-lálò	"three goats"
6)	13	dò-kí dó-ní	"four flies"

The numerals that have been treated in this section are only the cardinal numbers and not ordinal numbers.

The tones on the concord morphemes even though high unlike the nominal prefix tones which are low are just for a stylistic effect and not a semantic one.

3.1.2 Possessive Pronouns (Poss)

The first, second and third person possessives (singular and plural) will be used in this section. The table below illustrates the use of the possessive with nouns representing the various classes.

CL	Example & Gloss	1st person "my"	2nd person "your"	3rd person "his/her"	1st person "our"	2nd person "your"	3rd person "their"
1	ò-tátà "father"	òwá-mbâ	òwá-yì	òwé-yì	òwá-sù	òwá-bé	òwá-bù
2	bà-tátà "fathers"	ìbá-mbâ	ìbá-bè	ìbé-yì	ìbá-sù	ìbá-bé	ìbá-bù
3	mù-kónì "song"	ìṅw-á	ìmwá-bè	ìmwé-yì	ìmwá-sù	ìmwé-yì	ìmwá-bù
4	mè-kónì "songs"	ìmé-mbâ	ìmé-bè	ìmé-yì	ìmé-sù	ìmé-nyù	ìmé-bù
5	dī-tóyì "ear"	ìlá-mbâ	ìyá-bè	ìláyì	ìlá-sù	ìláyì	ìláyì
6	mā-tóyì "ears"	ìmá-mbâ	ìmá-bè	ìmé-yì	ìmá-sù	ìmá-bù	ìmá-bù
7	è-pósi "bottle"	èyá-mbâ	èyá-bè	èyé-yì	èyá-sù	èyá-bé	èyá-bù
8	bè-pósi "bottles"	ìbá-mbâ	bèyá-bè	ìbé-yì	ìbé-sù	ìbá-nyù	bèyá-bù
9	m-bóri "goat"	èyá-mbâ	èyá-bè	òwé-yì	èyá-sù	èyá-bé	èyá-bù
10	m-bóri "goats"	ìbá-mbâ	èyá-bè	ìré-yì	ìbá-sù	ìyá-bé	ìyá-bù
13	dù-ki "flies"	ìdá-mbâ	ìdá-bè	ìré-yì	ìdá-bù	ìdá-bù	ìdá-bù

19	ì-kí "fly"	iyā	yá-bè	iyá-sù	iyá-sù	iyí-bè	yá-bù
6a	mì-rìbá "water"	imá-mbâ	imá-bè	imé-yí	imá-sù	imá-ngù	má-bù

Table 3.IV

CL	Concord Morpheme
1	òwá- òwé-
2	ìbà- ìbé-
3	imwá-, inwá-,
4	imé-
5	ìlā- iyá-
6	èyá-
7	ìbá-, ìbé-
9	èyá- òwé-
10	èyá- òré-
13	ìdā- ìré-
19	iyá- iyé-
6a	imá- imé-

Table 3.V

In Oroko East, possessive pronouns may either precede or follow the possessed noun. However, according to information gathered, many speakers prefer to position the pronouns before the possessed noun.

There are morphological variants for the concord morphemes of the possessive pronouns. Also, there are

changes from the noun prefixes to the concord morphemes. A generative phonological study will hopefully come out with phonological rules to explain these changes.

The tone on the first syllable of the pronoun is always low while the next syllable, which is often the concord morpheme bears a high tone.

3.1.3 Demonstrative Pronoun (Dem)

The Oroko East demonstrative pronouns elicited for the purpose of this study include:

- near speaker (N.S) /-ng-/ "this/these"
- near listener (N.L) /-cho/ "that/those"
- far away from the speaker (F.S) /-né/ "that/those"

For purposes of simplicity, only the "near speaker" and "far away" from speaker" demonstratives will be used.

The demonstratives in this language consist of the concord morpheme followed by /-ng-/ for "this/these" and /-né/ for "that/those". Often, the vowel in the nominal prefix is transferred to the end of the lexical morpheme. This makes the last syllable an open syllable which otherwise would have remained closed. The table below illustrates the DEM concord morphemes:

CL	Examples & Gloss	/-ng-/ "this/these"	/-né-/ "that/those"
1	ø-tátà "father"	ó-ngò	ó-nè
2	bà-tátà "fathers"	bá-nyà	bá-nè
3	mù-kónì "song"	mù-ngù	mù-nè
4	mè-kónì "songs"	mé-ngè	mé-nè
5	dì-tóyì "ear"	dí-ngì	dí-nè
6	ma-tóyì "ears"	má-ngà	má-nè
7	è-pòsì "bottle"	é-ngè	é-nè
8	bè-pòsì "bottles"	bé-ngè	bé-nè
9	ṁ-bóri "goat"	é-ngè	é-nè
10	ṁ-bóri "goats"	í-ngì	í-nè
13	dò-kí "flies"	dó-ngò	dó-nè
19	ì-kí "fly"	í-ngì	í-nè
6a	mà-ribá "water"	má-ngà	má-nè

Table 3.VI

The DEM occurs after the noun. The concord morphemes are very similar to the nominal prefixes except that class 9 has as concord morpheme é- and class 10 í- instead of the

expected \emptyset -, n-, or N- nominal prefixes. The different concord markers include:

CL	Concord Morpheme
1	ó-
2	bá
3	mú-
4	mé-
5	dí-
6	má-

CL	Concord Morpheme
7	é-
8	bé-
9	é-
10	í-
13	dó-
19	í-
6a	má-

Table 3.VII

Examples

CL	Examples	Gloss	
1	\emptyset - <i>ṅwáráná</i> woman	ó- <i>ngò</i> this	"this woman"
	\emptyset - <i>ṅwátánà</i> woman	ó- <i>nè</i> that	"that woman"
2	bá- <i>ránà</i> women	bá- <i>ngyá</i> these	"these women"
	bá- <i>ránà</i> women	bá- <i>nè</i> those	"those woman"
9	é- <i>gbâ</i> dog	é- <i>ngè</i> this	"this dog"
	é- <i>gbâ</i> dog	é- <i>nè</i> that	"that dog"
10	í- <i>gbâ</i> dogs	í- <i>ngì</i> these	"these dogs"
	í- <i>gbâ</i> dogs	í- <i>nè</i> those	"those dogs"

Table 3.VIII

The tone of the first syllable (concord morpheme) is always high while that of the syllable coming after is always low. This is because when the nominal prefix is taken over to the noun satellite possibly, the tone changes.

3.1.4 Adjectives (A).

The adjectives small, black and white will be used to examine the various manifestations of the concord morpheme when the noun is used with an adjective. The adjective may either precede or follow the noun it modifies. The table below illustrates the various concord morphemes.

CL	Examples & Gloss	títì "small"	ndákè "black"	púpàké "white"
1	ǝ-tátà "father"	wà-títì	wà-yíndì	wà-mòkàrà
2	bà-tátà "fathers"	bà-títì	bàbí-ndákè	baba-kàrà
3	mù-kónì "song"	mù-títì	ɲwáwi-ndákè	mu-pàké
4	mè-kónì "songs"	mè-títì	mi-ndákè	mè-púpàké
5	dì-tóyì "ear"	dì-títì	dì-ndákè	dì-rómàké
6	mà-tóyì "ears"	mà-títì	màmí-ndákè	màmà-púpàké
7	è-pòsì "bottle"	chè-títì	chàchí-ndákè	chè-púpàké
8	bè-pòsì "bottles"	bàbè-títì	bàbí-ndákè	bàbè-púpàké
9	m-bòrì "goat"	chè-títì	chàchí-ndákè	chè-púpàké

10	m̄-bóri "goats"	î-títî	yâyî-ndâké	yî-púpâké
13	dô-kî "flies"	dô-títî	dô-rîndôké	dôrí-púpâké
19	î-kî "fly"	î-títî	yâyî-ndâké	yî-púpâké
6a	mâ-ribî "water"	mâ-títî	mâmî-ndâké	mâmâ-púpâké

Table 3.IX

The concord morphemes are:

CL	Concord Morpheme
1	wâ-
2	bâ-, bâbí-, bàbâ
3	mû-, ŋwâwî
4	mè-, mî-
5	dî-
6	mâ-, mamî-, mamâ-

Table 3.X

CL	Concord Morpheme
7	chè-, chàchî-
8	bâbé-, bâbí-
9	chè-, chàchî-
10	î-, yâyî-, yî-
13	dô-, dôrí-
19	î-, yâyî-, yî-
6a	mâ-, mamî-, mamâ-

When the noun is used with an adjective, especially when the adjective is a colour, it is not very easy to sort out the various concord morphemes. However, any other adjective which is not a colour is easy to identify the concord morpheme in it. There are concord morphemes comprising two syllables instead of the expected one syllable of the nominal prefix. The second syllable of the

concord morpheme of the adjective is at times the concord morpheme.

In addition to this, at times, the concord morpheme comes after the first syllable of the adjective rather than coming in between the adjective and the noun.

3.1.5 Associative Marker (Ass.M.)

The nominal prefixes of the nouns determine the form of the associative marker. The concord morpheme here has a CV structure and bears a high tone. The examples in the table below illustrate the various concord elements of association in Oroko East.

CL	Examples			Gloss
1	o-tátà father	wá AM	mōtò man	"The father of the man"
2	bà-tátà fathers	bá AM	mātò man	"The fathers of the man"
3	mù-ná door	mwá AM	mōtò man	"The door of the man"
4	mì-ná doors	má AM	mōtò man	"The doors of the man"
5	dì-tóyì ear	dá AM	mōtò man	"The ear of the man"
6	mā-tóyì ears	má AM	mōtò man	"The ears of the man"
7	è-pòsì bottle	chá AM	mōtò man	"The bottle of the man"
8	bè-pòsì bottles	bá AM	mōtò man	"The bottles of the man"
9	ṁ-bòrì goat	yá AM	mōtò man	"The goat of the man"

10	m̃-bóri goats	yá AM	mōtò man	"The goats of the man"
13	dò-kí flies	dá AM	mōtò man	"The flies of the man"
19	ì-kí fly	yá AM	mōtò man	"The fly of the man"
6a	mà-ríbá water	má AM	mōtò man	"The water of the man"

Table 3.XI

NB. AM is associate marker.

From the table above, Oroko East, Ass.M. concord markers are:

CL	Concord Morpheme
1	wá-
2	bá-
3	mwá-
4	má-
5	dá-
6	má-
7	chá-

CL	Concord Morpheme
8	bá-
9	chá-
10	yá-
13	dá-
19	yá-
6a	má-

Table 3.XII

Most of the associative concord markers are similar to the nominal prefixes especially, in terms of the consonants. All the vowels in the concord morphemes are /a/.

The table below summarises all the Oroko East concord morphemes.

CL	Noun Prefix	Numerals	Poss	DEM	A	Ass.M
1	ø-, bō-	m-ó-	òwá-, òwé-	ò-	wá-	wá-
2	bá-	bà-	ìbá-, ìbé-	bà-	bá-, bàbí-	bà-
3	mō-, mu-, mw-	m̄-	ìmwá-, ìmwá-	mù-	mù-, mwáwí	mw-
4	mē-, mì-	mè-	ìmé-	mè-	mè-, mì-	má-
5	dī-	dì-	ìlá-, ìyá-	dì-	dì-	dá-
6	mā-	mà-	ìmá-, ìmé-	mà-	mà-, māmí-	má-
7	è-	è-	èyá-	è-	chè-, chàchí-	chà-
8	bē-	bè-	ìbá-, ìbé-	bè-	bàbé-, bàbí-	bà-
9	ø-, n-, Ñ-	p-ó-	èyá-, òwé-	è-	chè-, chàchí-	chà-
10	ø-, n-, Ñ-	mì-	èyá-, ìré	ì-	ì-, yáyí-, yí-	yá-
13	dò-	dò-	ìdá-, ìré-	dò-	dò-, dòrí	dá-
19	ì-	ì-	ìyá-, ìyé-	ì-	ì-yáyì-, yí-	yá-
6a	mā-	mà-	ìmá-, ìmé-	mà-	mà, māmí-	má-

Table 3.XIII

4.0 Conclusion.

In chapter 2, it was discovered that class 4 had morphological alternants which were mè- and mì-. After treating the concord system, it is noticed that mè- and mì- are still manifested interchangeably.

The concord markers never come at the final position of the nominal satellites. The concord morphemes always occur at word initial position. The forms of most of the concord

morphemes are very similar to those of the noun prefixes (cf. 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.1.4 etc.).

The adjectives and possessive pronouns can either precede or follow the nouns they modify. The Ass.M, DEM and the numerals always maintain their positions, that is, they are always positioned after the noun.

The significance of the concord system to this study can not be minimised. From the analyses done, the noun prefixes manifest themselves on noun related elements like the adjectives, numerals, possessives, demonstratives and associatives. This confirms the existence of the noun class system in Oroko East.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENDER AND SEMANTIC CONTENT

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The notion of gender in Bantu languages differs very significantly from the same notion of gender in Indo-European languages. In Indo-European languages, gender refers to masculine/feminine opposition or the neuter. In Bantu languages, gender is the pairing of the noun prefixes into singular/plural pairs.

The singular/plural pairing usually serves as semantic criteria for attributing nouns to specific noun classes. Guthrie, (1948:11-12) outlines the following criteria for assigning nouns to their respective classes in Bantu languages:

- a) The sign of gender is a prefix, by means of which words may be assorted into a number of classes varying roughly from ten to twenty.
- b) There is a regular association of pairs of genders. In addition to these two-class genders, there are also one-class genders, where the prefix is sometimes similar to one of the plural prefixes.

- c) There is no correlation of the genders with sex references or with any other clearly defined idea.

Gender in this study therefore, will be analysed using not only morphological pairing but also the meaning attached to the pairs of the prefixes.

4.1 Gender and Semantic Content.

In Oroko East, there are some specific, but not totally consistent aspects of the noun classes which correlate semantically with the classes of P.B. The following genders and the accompanying semantic contents, established by Welmers, (1973:166) will be used as a guide for analysing the data on Oroko East.

1/2 Include most personal nouns and a few other nouns.

3/2 A few personal nouns

3/4 Nouns related to a few body parts, inanimates and miscellaneous.

5/6 Nouns which are mostly body parts and miscellaneous.

6a Liquid class.

7/8 Some body parts, nouns related to plants and miscellaneous.

9/10 Mostly animal names, a variety of inanimates etc.

19/13 Embodies names of insects and other nouns.

As a consequence of earlier discussions related to nominal prefixes and concord, the following Oroko East double class genders have been identified: 1/2, 3/2, 3/4, 5/6, 1/6, 7/8, 9/10, 9/6, and 19/13. Single class genders on the other hand include: 3, 4, 6a, 7, 9 and 19.

4.2 Double Class Genders.

This study reveals 9 double-class genders and 5 of them correspond to P.B genders. The table below illustrates the pairing of the O.E genders. The singular classes are on the left side of the table while the plural classes are on the right. Bold lines connect the regular pairings while dotted lines connect the irregular pairings. They are irregular in the sense that they are not the major pairs, hence, they are not similar to the double-genders outlined by Welmers (1973:166) for the Bantu languages.

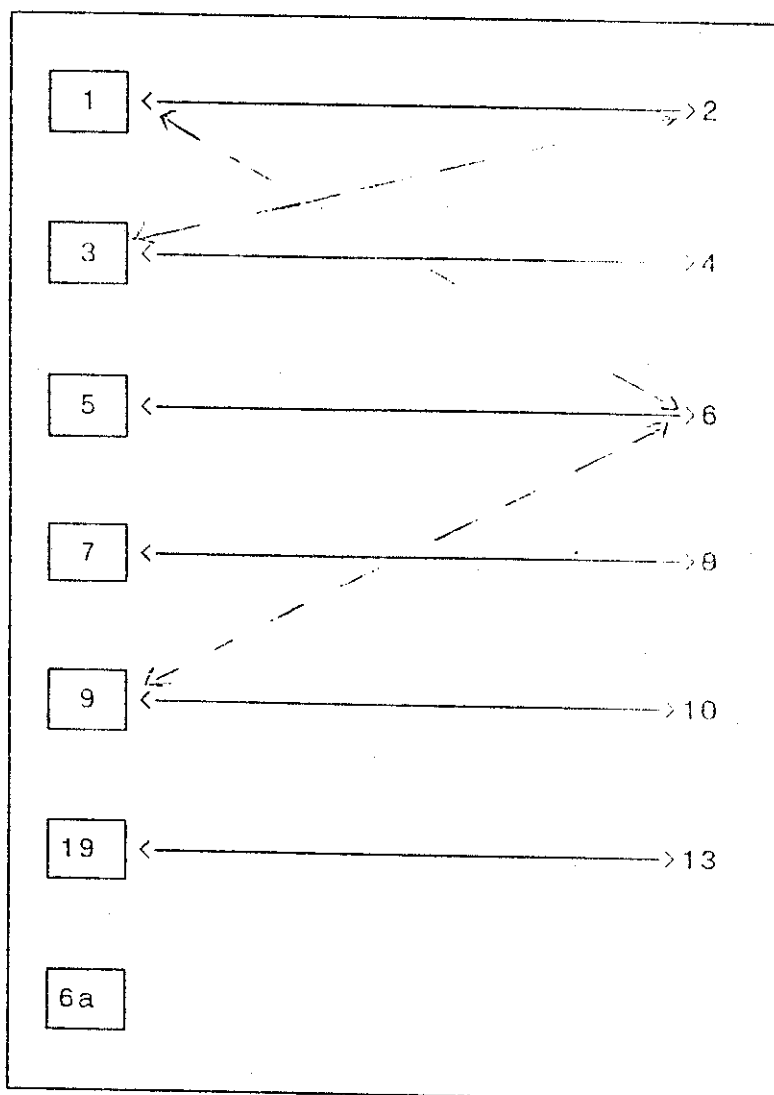


Table 4.I

Single class genders.

4.2.1 Gender 1/2 [ø-, /bà-].

This gender embodies:

a) Personal nouns (names)

- | | | |
|-----------|---------|-------------|
| 1) ø-nàná | bà-nà | "body(ies)" |
| 2) ø-íyà | bà-íyà | "mother(s)" |
| 3) ø-tátà | bà-tátà | "father(s)" |

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 4) | o-nánàngó | bà-nánngó | "sister(s)" |
| 5) | o-nári | bà-rì | "wife(ves)" |
| 6) | o-nàránà | bà-rànà | "woman(en)" |

b) Miscellaneous (animates and inanimates)

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|------------|-----------------|
| 1) | o-àtónì | bà-tónì | "nail(s)" |
| 2) | o-àbókírì | bà-bókírì | "hair-scaff(s)" |
| 3) | o-ànwā | bà-ṅwā | "cat(s)" |
| 4) | o-ṅásárim | bà-ṅásárim | "orange(s)" |
| 5) | o-àndón | bà-ndón | "jigger(s)" |

4.2.2 Gender 3/2 [mò-/bà-].

This is made up of more personal nouns.

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----------|----------------|
| 1) | mò-pá | bà-pá | "slave(s)" |
| 2) | mò-tò | bà-tò | "person(s)" |
| 3) | mò-rimbà | bà-rimbà | "devil(s)" |
| 4) | mò-kàrà | bà-kàrà | "whiteman(en)" |
| 5) | mò-ké | bà-ké | "stranger(s)" |

4.2.3 Gender 3/4 [mò-, mù-, mw- /mè-, mì-].

This gender contains nouns referring to:

a) Body parts.

- | | | | |
|----|---------|---------|---------------|
| 1) | mò-rò | mè-rò | "head(s)" |
| 2) | mò-kótì | mè-kótì | "shoulder(s)" |
| 3) | mù-mbú | mè-mbú | "lip(s)" |

4)	mù-nákò	mè-nákò	"anus(es)"
5)	mò-rémà	mè-rémà	"heart(s)"

b) Plants.

1)	mò-réndì	mè-réndì	"palm tree(s)"
2)	mw-àngá	mè-wàngà	"coco nut(s)"
3)	mò-kàngà	mè-kàngà	"root(s)"
4)	mò-kérè	mè-kérè	"plantain(s)"
5)	mò-tíkà	mè-tíkà	"potato(es)"

c) Miscellaneous (mostly inanimates).

1)	mù-kóri	mè-kónì	"song(s)"
2)	mù-ná	mì-ná	"door(s)"
3)	mw-á	mè-yá	"fire(s)"
4)	mò-kóri	mè-kóri	"mountain(s)"
5)	mò-kúmbà	mè-kúmbà	"gun(s)"

4.2.4 Gender 1/6 [bò-/mà-].

This gender comprises a few body parts and other nouns.

1)	bò-ká	mà-ká	"fence(s)"
2)	bò-kánò	mò-kánò	"story(ies)"
3)	bò-kékò	mà-kékò	"chin(s)"
4)	bò-re	mà-ré	"medicine(s)"
5)	bò-só?ò	mà-só?ò	"face(s)"
6)	bò-ribà	mà-ribà	"wall(s)"
7)	bò-ré	mà-ré	"tree(s)"

4.2.5 Gender 5/6 [dì-/mà-].

This gender comprises nouns referring to:

a) Body Parts.

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----------|---------------|
| 1) | dì-tóyè | mà-tóyì | "ear(s)" |
| 2) | dì-kónjò | mà-kónjò | "hand(s)" |
| 3) | dì-bóngò | mà-bóngò | "knee(s)" |
| 4) | dì-sóngà | mà-sóngà | "tooth/teeth" |

b) Miscellaneous.

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----------|--------------|
| 1) | dì-nóngò | mà-nóngò | "bed(s)" |
| 2) | dì-bóbè | mà-bóbè | "cob-web(s)" |
| 3) | dì-bóndò | mà-bóndò | "hut(s)" |
| 4) | dì-búnè | mà-búnè | "okro" |
| 5) | dì-kongò | mà-kongò | "spear(s)" |

4.2.6 Gender 7/8 [è-/bè-].

This gender comprises:

a) Body Parts.

- | | | | |
|----|---------|----------|-------------|
| 1) | è-chúwù | bè-chúwè | "waist(s)" |
| 2) | è-péngù | bè-péngù | "thigh(s)" |
| 3) | è-yòkó | bè-yòkó | "penis(es)" |
| 4) | è-sósò | bè-sósò | "finger(s)" |
| 5) | è-yòmbó | bè-yòmbó | "vagina(s)" |
| 6) | è-túri | bè-túri | "ampit(s)" |

b) Nouns related to Plants.

1)	è-rábè	bè-rábè	"branch(es)"
2)	è-kúkù	bè-kúkù	"bark(s)"
3)	è-sòngò	bè-sòngò	"sugar cane(s)"
4)	è-kókò	bè-kókò	"Indian bamboo(s)"
5)	è-kúwè	bè-kúwè	"yam(s)"
6)	è-sàkà	bè-sàkà	"egusi"

c) A few nouns related to animals.

1)	è-rámbì	bè-rámbì	"trap(s)"
2)	è-támbà	bè-támbà	"worm(s)"
3)	è-rérà	bè-rérà	"duck(s)"
4)	è-yètè	bè-yètè	"lizard(s)"

d) Miscellaneous.

1)	è-ríngì	bè-ríngì	"shadow(s)"
2)	è-pòsì	bè-pòsì	"bottle(s)"
3)	è-púmà	bè-púmà	"fruit(s)"
4)	è-sé	bè-sé	"bone(s)"

4.2.7 9/10 [ø-, n-, N- / ø-, n-, N-].

This gender comprises.

a) Many animal names.

1)	nó	nó	"snake(s)"
2)	ñ-gbâ	ñ-gbâ	"dog(s)"
3)	ñ-bóri	ñ-bóri	"goat(s)"
4)	ñ-gówà	ñ-gówà	"pig(s)"
5)	ñ-gó	ñ-gó	"tiger(s)"

- | | | | |
|----|---------|---------|-----------------|
| 6) | ñ-jém | ñ-jém | "chimpanzee(s)" |
| 7) | ñ-júkù | ñ-júkù | "elephant(s)" |
| 8) | ñ-bóngè | ñ-bóngè | "frog(s)" |

b) A variety of inanimates.

- | | | | |
|----|---------|---------|-----------------|
| 1) | ñ-bíyà | ñ-bíyà | "palm nut(s)" |
| 2) | ø-búlù | ø-búlù | "night(s)" |
| 3) | ø-tándà | ø-tándà | "plate(s)" |
| 4) | ø-tókó | ø-tókò | "spoon(s)" |
| 5) | ø-béyà | ø-béyà | "pot(s)" |
| 6) | ø-kásò | ø-kásò | "cashew nut(s)" |

4.2.8 Gender 9/6 [N-/mà-].

This is a miscellaneous gender.

- | | | | |
|----|--------|----------|-------------|
| 1) | ñ-gô | mà-ngô | "throat(s)" |
| 2) | ñ-démà | mà-ndémà | "cross(es)" |
| 3) | ñ-béyà | mà-mbéyà | "pit(s)" |
| 4) | ñ-gówè | mà-ngówè | "box(es)" |

4.2.9 Gender 19/13 [i-/dò-].

This gender comprises:

a) A few names of insects.

- | | | | |
|----|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1) | i-ngúngà | dò-ngúngà | "wasp(s)" |
| 2) | i-tó?ò | dò-tó?ò | "cockroach(es)" |
| 3) | i-nó | dò-nó | "bird(s)" |

b) Other nouns.

- | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| 1) ì-chó | dò-chó | " wood(s) " |
| 2) ì-kómò | dò-kómò | " drum(s) " |
| 3) ì-wó?ò | dò-wó?ò | " cutlass(es) " |

4.3 Single Class Genders.

There are six single class genders in O.E. These include: 3, 5, 6a, 7, 9 and 19.

4.3.1 Gender 3 [mò-].

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1) mò-tútù | " smoke " |
| 2) mò-réri | " food " |

4.3.2 Gender 5 [dì-].

This gender is made up of a few abstract nouns which are:

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 1) dì-byé | " sense " |
| 2) dì-ché | " tiredness " |
| 3) dì-rémà | " stupidity " |

4.3.3 Gender 6a [mà-, mò-, mì-].

This is fundamentally a liquid gender and it contains nouns like:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------|
| 1) mà-rìbá | "water" |
| 2) mà-kyá | "blood" |
| 3) mì-séri | "tears" |
| 4) mò-s ^w a | "oil" |
| 5) mì-yári | "urine" |

4.3.4 Gender 7 [è-].

This gender is made up of some more abstract nouns.
For instance.

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 1) è-súnjù | "odour" |
| 2) è-méri | "belief" |
| 3) è-bánjà | "wickedness" |
| 4) è-wá | "air" |
| 5) ø-wárá | "laziness" |
| 6) ø-bòngó | "fear" |
| 7) ø-búwè | "poverty" |

4.3.5 Gender 9. [ø-, n-, N-].

This gender has the following nouns:

a) Nouns related to grainy substances.

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1) ñ-gódó | "groundnut" |
| 2) ñ-gbī | "corn" |
| 3) ñ-dóngà | "pepper" |
| 4) ñ-dóndà | "seeds" |

b) Nouns related to natural phenomena.

- 1) ñ-gúngà "wind"
- 2) ø-tètèrì "stars"
- 3) ñ-góndē "moon"
- 4) ø-lóbà "sun"

4.3.7 Gender 19 [i-].

This gender comprises a few uncountable concrete nouns such as:

- 1) i-kwá "salt"
- 2) i-tókò "soup"
- 3) i-kó "money"

4.4 General Discussion.

It can be noted from the above analysis that the semantic aspects which determine noun classification are not quite consistent. For instance, there are some nouns that one would expect to find within a particular gender because of their semantic content but this is not usually the case. The genders therefore, are not as envisaged by Welmers. This can be seen in the deviations from Welmers' proposals below:

- 1) The appearance of body parts in many noun classes makes their gender very unstable as far as the semantic content is concerned.

2) Some personal nouns which are singular/plural are still found in gender 3/4 instead of 1/2 as expected (following Welmers' proposals).

3) Abstract nouns are found in genders 5 and 7 instead of the expected gender 3.

Gender and semantic content in Oroko East is an arbitrary system because of the morphological restructuring that has also taken place in the language.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 GENERAL SUMMARY.

The objective of this dissertation was to describe the noun class system of Oroko East.

Chapter One was the general introduction. In this introductory chapter, it was revealed that O.E. is spoken in the South West Province of Cameroon. Oroko is the major language appellation covering the Oroko East and Oroko West languages. Oroko East falls under the Niger Kordofanian major language family. Bantu, specifically, the narrow Bantu of the coastal region is a sub-family to which Oroko East belongs. An inventory of the phonetic system as well as a brief history of the O.E. people was also presented in this chapter. Chapter Two was dedicated to a study of the noun class system of the language. The analysis revealed that O.E. has twelve distinct noun classes. The singular classes include: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 19 while the plural classes are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 13.

Chapter Three dealt with the concord system of O.E. The major aim of this chapter was to confirm the analysis of the noun class system by examining the form of the concord morpheme that nouns of a particular class take.

Chapter Four comprised the gender and semantic content of the noun classes. The double class genders identified include: 1/2, 3/2, 3/4, 5/6, 1/6, 7/8, 9/10, 9/6, and 19/13.

The single class genders on the other hand are: 3, 5, 6a, 7, 9 and 19. The gender and semantic content of the noun classes was discovered to be inconsistent with those of P.B.

5.1 LIMITATIONS.

This section examines some major problems encountered during the realisation of the project; problems that could eventually serve as areas for future research. The only major problem concerned what appeared to be a generalised vowel raising rule. It was observed that at word initial position vowels were consistently raised. With respect to /e/ however, its behaviour at word initial position was not quite as that of other vowels as it was noticed that /e/ remained /e/. In other situations, /i/ was rather lowered to /e/. A study of the phonology of Oroko East will probably resolve this problem as such a study will confirm or destroy the postulations of a generalised vowel raising rule in the language.

5.2 Significance of Work.

Despite the few problems encountered, this work is however of some substance as it

- 1) lays the foundations for other linguistic works on Oroko East such as a description of the syntax of the NP, IP etc.

2) contributes its own quota to the on-going project which envisages the description of all Cameroonian languages with a view to enhancing the teaching of these languages in schools, and

3) adds something new to existing knowledge on African languages.

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