Number in Bamileke Medumba

Rose-Marie Déchaine & Hermann Keupdjio
Department of Linguistics, University of British Columbia
dechaine@mail.ubc.ca; keupsmann2011@gmail.com

1. NUMBER-MARKING ON COUNT NOUNS
• Number-marking partitions count Ns into five noun-classes (cf. Voorhoeve 1968).

CL	SG			CL	PL		
1	*m*-*ɛ́n* CL1-child	∅-*àm* CL1-1POSS	'my child'	6	*b*-*ún* CL6-child	*tʃ*-*ám* CL6-1POSS	'my children'
	∅-*shùm* CL1-son	∅-*àm* CL1-1POSS	'my son'		*shùm*-*shùm* CL6ₐ-son	*tʃ*-*ám* CL6-1POSS	'my sons'
	∅-*Bʉ́* CL1-dog	∅-*àm* CL1-1POSS	'my dog'		∅-*Bʉ́* CL6-dog	*tʃ*-*ám* CL6-1POSS	'my dogs'
3	∅-*bʰú* CL3-hand	∅-*ám* CL3-1POSS	'my hand'	4	*m*-*bʰú* CL4-hand	*m*-*ám* CL4-1POSS	'my hands'
5	∅-*sò* CL5-tooth	*s*-*ám* CL5-1POSS	'my tooth'		*n*-*sò* CL4-tooth	*m*-*ám* CL4-1POSS	'my teeth'

TABLE 1: NUMBER ON COUNT NOUNS

2. NUMBER-MARKING ON MASS NOUNS
• Non-count Ns are inherently singular (C3, C5), or inherently plural (C6, C4).

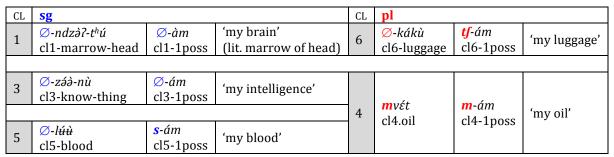| CL	sg			CL	pl		
1	∅-*ndzɔ̀ʔ-tʰú* cl1-marrow-head	∅-*àm* cl1-1poss	'my brain' (lit. marrow of head)	6	∅-*kákù* cl6-luggage	*tʃ*-*ám* cl6-1poss	'my luggage'
3	∅-*záə̀-nù* cl3-know-thing	∅-*ám* cl3-1poss	'my intelligence'	4	*m*vɛ́t cl4.oil	*m*-*ám* cl4-1poss	'my oil'
5	∅-*lúù* cl5-blood	*s*-*ám* cl5-1poss	'my blood'				

TABLE 2: NUMBER ON NON-COUNT (ABSTRACT & MASS) NOUNS

2.1 Pluralizing inherently plural mass nouns

• Inherently plural mass Ns are pluralized with associative plural **bà** (cf. Keupdjio 2015).

CL	SG			CL	A.PL+ PL		
1	—	—	—	6	**bà** ∅-*kákù* A.PL CL6-luggage	**tʃ**-*ám* CL6-1POSS	'my pieces of luggage'
3	—	—	—	4	**bà** **m**ɛ́t A.PL CL4.oil	**m**-*ám* CL4-1POSS	'my kinds of oil'
5	—	—	—				

TABLE 3: PLURALIZATION OF INHERENTLY PLURAL MASS NOUNS

2.2 Pluralizing inherently singular mass nouns

• Inherently singular mass Ns are pluralized with regular plural-marking (C6, C4).

CL	SG			CL	PL		
1	∅-*ndzə̀ʔ-tʰú* CL1-<u>marrow</u>-head	∅-*àm* CL1-1POSS	'my brain' (lit. marrow of head)	6	#∅-*ndzə̀ə́ʔ-tʰú* CL6-<u>marrow</u>-head	**tʃ**-*ám* CL6-1POSS	[my brains]
3	∅-*zə́ə̀-nù* CL3-know-<u>thing</u>	∅-*ám* CL3-1POSS	'my intelligence'	4	#**n**-*zə́ə̀-nù* CL4-know-<u>thing</u>	**m**-*ám* CL4-1POSS	[my types of intell.]
5	∅-*lúù* CL5-blood	**s**-*ám* CL5-1POSS	'my blood'		‰**n**-*dúù* CL4-blood	**m**-*ám* CL4-1POSS	'my types of blood'

TABLE 4: PLURALIZATION OF INHERENTLY SINGULAR NON-COUNT NOUNS

3. APPLYING THE TESTS

	TEST	(i) COUNT N	(ii) MASS N: PL	(iii) MASS N: SG
	• INDEFINITE QUANTIFIER			
1	*tà↗*INDEF N = 'a N'	✓*tà↗ m- èn-tsìn* IND C1-person-real 'a person'	✗*tà↗ m*vét IND C4.oil	✗*tà↗ ∅-lú* IND C5-blood
	• SPLIT QUANTIFIERS: 'each' and 'all'			
2	(a) FOC WH NSG QU = 'each N'	✓*mbà j-ít m-èn-tsìn lō* even SG-WH C1-person-real QU 'each person'	✗*mbà j-ít m*vét *ló* even SG-WH C4.oil QU	✓*mbà j-ít ∅-lú ló* even SG-WH C5-blood QU 'each type of blood'
	(b) **every** NPL **all** = 'all N'	✓*ndʒɔ̀ɔ́ŋ b-ùn-tsìn fɛ́* every C6-person-real all 'all (the) people'	✓*ndʒɔ̀ɔ́ŋ m*vét *fɛ́* every C4.oil all 'all (the) oil'	
			✓*ndʒɔ̀ɔ́ŋ n-dú fɛ́* every C4-blood all 'all (the) blood'	✓*ndʒɔ̀ɔ́ŋ ∅-lú fɛ́* every C5-blood all 'all (the) blood'
	• PRE-NOMINAL QUANTIFIERS: 'few, litle, a lot of' (left-adjoined to DP?)			
3	(a.i) **few ind'l** pl-N = 'few N'	✓*bú ndòó b-ùn-tsìn* few individual C6-person-real '(the) few people'	✗*bú ndòó m*vét few individual C4.oil	✗*bú ndòó ∅-lú* few individual C5-blood
	(a.ii) DEG-**little** N = 'little N'	✗*tsìít-tsìt b-ùn-tsìn* DEG-little C6-person-real	✓*mú-tsìít m*vét DEG-little C4.oil '(the) little oil'	✓*mú-tsìít ∅-lú* DEG-little C5-blood '(the) little blood'
	(b) **a.lot.of** N = 'a lot of N'	✓*bʰwɔ̀ɔ́ŋ b-ùn* a.lot.of C6-person 'a lot of people'	✓*bʰwɔ̀ɔ́ŋ m*vét a.lot.of C4.oil 'a lot of oil'	✓*bʰwɔ̀ɔ́ŋ ∅-lú* a.lot.of C5-blood 'a lot of blood'
	• POST-NOMINAL QUANTIFIERS: numerals and 'many' (LK = link; right-adjoined to NP?)			
4	(a) N LK **NUM**	✓ *b-ùn-tsìn tʃừ↗ báà* C6-person-real LK two '(the) two people'	✗ *m*vét *tʃừ↗ báà* c4.oil LK two	✗ *∅-lú tʃừ↗ báà* C5-blood LK two
	(b) **CLASS** N LK **NUM**	✓*tsɔ́ b-ùn-tsìn tʃừ↗ báà* group C6-person-real LK two '(the) two groups of people'	✓*bén m*vét *tʃừ↗ báà* tin C4.oil LK two '(the) two tins of oil'	✓*bʰú↗ ∅-lú tʃừ↗ báà* pack C5-blood LK two '(the) two packs of blood'
	(c) N LK **many** = 'many/much N'	✓ *b-ùn-tsìn tʃừ↗ má-yámɔ́* C6-person-real LK DEG-many 'so many people'	✓ *m*vét *tʃừ↗ má-yámɔ́* C4.oil LK DEG-many = 'so much oil' = 'so many types of oil'	✓ *∅-lú tʃừ↗ má-yámɔ́* C5-blood LK DEG-many = 'so much blood' = 'so many types of blood'

4. FINDINGS
Tests for count/mass contrasts (adapted from Kulkarni et al. 2013) indicate that:

1. Singular indefinite *tàʔ* selects for count Ns.

2. Universal quantifiers select for number
   (a) **'each' compatible with** (count &mass**) singular Ns**
   (b) **'all' compatible with** (count & mass) **plural Ns**
3. Prenominal quantifiers
   (a) **count/mass contrast** with 'few/little'
   (i) **'few'** combines with plural count Ns
   (ii) **'little'** combines with inherently plural and singular mass Ns
   (b) **no count/mass contrast with 'a lot of'**

4. Post-nominal quantifiers
   (a) **bare numeral** compatible only with count N
   (b) **numeral with classifier** compatible with count or mass Ns
   (c) **'many'** insensitive to count/mass contrast

Conclusion 1
Tests 1, 3a & 4a-b confirm that there is a count/mass contrast in Medumba.

Conclusion 2
Medumba mass Ns partition into two classes according to whether they are inherently plural or inherently singular. Test 2 (with the universal quantifiers 'each' and 'all') confirms that this is an authentic number contrast: 'each' selects for morphological singular (count and mass) Ns; 'all' selects for morphologically plural (count and mass Ns). (Residue: some speakers also allow 'all' to combine with a singular mass N.)

Open questions:
1. What is the significance of number-marking on mass Ns relative to **semantic** theories concerning the denotation of mass Ns?
2. What is the significance of number-marking on mass Ns relative to **syntactic** theories of number marking (cf. Borer 2005)?
3. Why is the associative plural ***bà*** recruited to pluralize inherently plural mass Ns?
4. What is the syntax (and compositional semantics) of complex quantificational expressions in Medumba?

5. SELECTED REFERENCES
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