

MALLAM DENDO

THE BENUE-CONGO LANGUAGES:

A

PROPOSED INTERNAL CLASSIFICATION

WORKING DOCUMENT: NOT A DRAFT PAPER

NOT TO BE QUOTED WITHOUT PERMISSION

Roger Blench
Mallam Dendo
8, Guest Road
Cambridge CB1 2AL
United Kingdom
Voice/Answerphone/Fax. 0044-(0)1223-560687
E-mail R.Blench@odi.org.uk
http://homepage.ntlworld.com/roger_blench/RBOP.htm

This printout: Cambridge, 24 June, 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
TABLES.....	2
Abbreviations, conventions and sources	2
1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Evolution of Niger-Congo	4
2.1 Early views.....	4
2.2 Westermann.....	4
2.3 Greenberg.....	4
2.4 Post-Greenberg.....	5
3. The development of Benue-Congo	5
4. Developments in Methodology	8
5. Morphology: Benue-Congo within NC.....	10
6. Benue-Congo Phonology.....	10
7. The branches of 'New' Benue-Congo	11
7.1 A Proposed Genetic Tree	11
7.2 Discussion of individual branches.....	13
7.2.1 West Benue-Congo	13
7.2.2 East Benue-Congo.....	13
7.2.2.2 Ukaan.....	14
7.2.2.3 Bantoid-Cross	14
7.3 Arrangement of Data.....	15
8. Conclusions	16
APPENDIX 1. The Phonemes of Proto-Benue-Congo.....	1
Nasalization.....	5
Vowels	6
APPENDIX 2. Reconstructions.....	1
A1. Niger-Congo glosses used for evidence of consonant correspondences	1
A2. Kwa-Benue within Niger-Congo	3
2. Kwa/Benue-Congo Dichotomy	12
3. Eastern/Western BC Dichotomy	65
3.1 Western Benue-Congo	65
3.1.1 Membership of Western Benue-Congo.....	65
3.1.2 Isoglosses Characterizing Western Benue-Congo	65
3.1.3 South-West Benue-Congo (Yoruboid-Edoid-Igoid)	73
3.1.3 Edoid-Akpes.....	76
Group	76
3.1.4 Nupe-Oko-Idomoid	77
3.2 Eastern Benue-Congo.....	77
3.2.1 Isoglosses Characterising Eastern Benue-Congo as a whole	77
3.2.2 Glosses defining EBC without Kainji	89
3.2.3 Glosses defining Kainji + Plateau+ Tarokoid+Jukunoid subgroups but not extending outside... 106	106
3.2.3.1 Kainji + Plateau+ Tarokoid but not extending outside.....	106

3.2.3 Glosses defining Plateau + Tarokoid + Jukunoid without Kainji	109
3.2.3.1 Glosses defining Plateau + Tarokoid	109
3.2.4 Bantoid-Cross.....	123
3.2.5 Bantoid.....	125

TABLES

FIGURES

Figure 1. The Subdivisions of Niger-Congo according to Greenberg (1963).....	1
Figure 2. Niger-Congo according to Williamson (1989a)	2
Figure 3. Internal structure of Niger-Congo (Williamson & Blench 2000).....	3
Figure 4. Benue-Congo according to Williamson (1989b).....	7
Figure 5. Revised subclassification of Benue-Congo languages	12
Figure 7. Classification of West Kainji.....	14
Figure 8. Classification of Cross River	15

Abbreviations, conventions and sources

Reconstructed languages:

Acronym	Source or expansion	Language(s)
Ab40	Abrahams (1940)	Tiv
Ab51	Abrahams (1951)	Idoma
Ab58	Abrahams (1958)	Yoruba
Ab62	Abrahams (1962)	Hausa
Ag	Agheyisi (1986)	Edo
Ar63	Armstrong (1963)	Idoma
Ba	Banfield (1914)	Nupe
Bm	Bamgboṣe, Ayo (ined)	Mbe
BF	Boyd & Fardon (ined)	Daka
Bo	Bouquiaux (1964)	Aten
Boyd	Boyd (1994)	Daka
C	Christaller (1933)	Twi
Co	Connell (ined)	Mambiloid
Co91	Connell (1991)	Lower Cross
Cr	Crabb (1969)	Ekoid
CB	Common Bantu	Guthrie 1967-71
E	Elugbe (1989)	Edoid
En	Endresen (1992)	Nizaa
Et	Etamé (1995)	Mkaa
ELV	Elias, Leroy, Voorhoeve (1984)	Proto-Eastern Grassfields
G	Guthrie (1967-71)	Common Bantu
Ga	Gardiner (ined.)	Izere
Ge83	Gerhardt (1983)	Plateau 2 & 4
H	Hepburn (n.d.)	Eggon
He	Hedinger (1987)	Manenguba
Ho65	Hoffmann (1965)	Salka Kambari
Hoe	Hoerner (19xx)	Ninzo
Hy7	Hyman	

Acronym	Source or expansion	Language(s)
Hy9	Hyman	
J	Jackson (1988)	Tikar
Ka	Kaufmann (1985)	Ibibio
Ko	Koops (ined)	Various
Ku	Kuhn (ined)	Berom
LQ	Linguistic Questionnaire, ALCAM, Cameroun	Various
M	Meussen (1980)	Proto-Bantu
Mo	Moser (ined.)	Kulu
N	Nettle (1998)	Fyem
P	Piron (1996)	Bantoid
PAC	Proto-Atlantic-Congo	No source
PBC	Proto-Benue-Congo (His reconstructions refer to Old Benue-Congo, equivalent to East Benue-Congo in the present classification.)	De Wolf 1971
PCJ	Proto-Central Jukunoid	Shimizu 1980
PD	Mundani	Parker & Durrant (1990)
PE	Proto-Edoid	Elugbe 1989
PI	Proto-Ijò	Williamson in prep
PJ	Proto-Jukunoid	Shimizu 1980
PK	Proto-Kegboid (Ogoni)	Ikorò 1989
PLC	Proto-Lower Cross	Connell 1991 & p.c.
PM	Perrin & Mouh (1992)	Mambila
PN	Proto-Nupoid	Blench ms.
PP2	Proto-Plateau 2	Gerhardt 1983
PP4	Proto-Plateau 4	Gerhardt 1983
PUC	Proto-Upper Cross	Dimmendaal 1978
PWN	Proto-Western Nigritic (PWN is approximately equivalent to PAC)	Mukarovsky 1976/77
PWS	Proto-West Sudanic	Westermann 1927
PY	Proto-Yoruboid	Akinkugbe 1978
PZA		
R	Rongier (1995)	Ewe
Rg	Regnier (ined.)	West Kainji
Ring	Word List of Comparative Ring (1979?)	Ring
Ro	Rosendall (ined)	Gbari of Kwali
Sc	Schaefer (19xx)	Emai
Sh	Shimizu (1980)	Jukunoid
Sn	Snider (1990)	North Guang
SN	Schaub & Nchio-Minke (1982)	Babungo
St	Storch (ined.)	Jukunoid wordlists
TT	Tyhurst and Tyhurst (1983)	Nyang
W	Williamson (ined.)	Ijoid
Wa	Watters (ined)	Ejagham
WO	Williamson & Ohiri-Aniche (ined.)	Igboid
WW	Weber & Weber (n.d.)	Kwanja

Specific languages and groups: classification and source(s)

Language	Group	Acronym	Reference
Abini	Upper Cross		
Abuan	Central Delta		Gardner 1980
Akpes	Ukaan-Akpes		Ibrahim 1989
Arigidi	Akokoid		Ibrahim wordlist
Ate	Edoid		
Ayere	Akokoid		
Ban	Kegboid (Ogoni)		Ikoro 1989
Bete	Bendi		
Cen.Delta	Delta-Cross		
Defaka	Ijoid		Jenewari 1983
Degema	Edoid		Thomas and Williamson 1967
Ebira	Nupoid		
Edo	Edoid		Agheyisi 1986
Efik	Lower Cross		
Egene	Edoid		Thomas and Williamson 1967
Ekit	Lower Cross		
Ekoid	S. Bantoid		Crabb 1965
Eleme	Kegboid (Ogoni)		Ikoro 1989
Emai	Edoid		Schaefer 1987
Epie	Edoid		Thomas and Williamson 1967
Ganagana	Nupoid		Sterk 1977
Gokana	Kegboid (Ogoni)		Ikoro 1989
Gwari	Nupoid		Hyman 1970
Ibani	Ijoid		
Ibibio	Lower Cross		Kaufman 1972, 1985
Idoma	Idomoid		Questionnaire: E.O.O. Amali
Igbo	Igboid:		Williamson & Ohiri-Aniche in prep
Isekiri	Yoruboid		
Izon	Ijoid		
Kakanda	Nupoid		Sterk 1977
Kalabari	Ijoid		
Kambari	Kainji		Hoffmann 1965
Kana	Kegboid (Ogoni)		Ikoro 1989
Kenyang	S.Bantoid		Mbuagbaw [1991]
Koto	Nupoid		Sterk 1977
Legbo	Upper Cross		
Lekono	S.Bantoid		Hedinger 1987
Lokaa	Upper Cross		
Londo	S.Bantoid		Kuperus 1985
Lungu	Plateau		
Magongo	Oko		
Mambila	N.Bantoid		Perrin 1992
Mbo	S.Bantoid		Hedinger 1987
N. Ibie	Edoid		
Nembe	Ijoid		
Nkoro	Ijoid		
Nupe	Nupoid	B	
Obolo	Lower Cross		
Ogbia	Central Delta		Wolff 1969
Okrika	Ijoid		

Language	Group	Acronym	Reference
Ọkọ	Ọkọ		
Pyem	Plateau		
Reshe	Kainji		
Tarok	Central Nigerian	LB	Longtau & Blench (ined.)
Tiv	S. Bantoid		Abraham 1940
TuNen	S. Bantoid		
Ubeteng	Upper Cross		
Udo	Akokoid		Ibrahim wordlist
Ufia	Upper Cross		
Ukaan	Ukaan-Akpes		Ibrahim wordlist
Ukue	Edoid		Ibrahim wordlist
Ukwuani	Igboid		
Urhobo	Edoid		
Vute	North Bantoid		
Yeskwa	Plateau		
Yoruba	Yoruboid		Abraham 1958
Zarek	Plateau		
	Akokoid		manuscript wordlists
	Akpes		manuscript wordlists
	Dakoid		short published lists (Meek, 1931)
	Ọkọ (Ogori)		short wordlists (Jungraithmayr, 1973b)
	Ukaan		short wordlist (Jungraithmayr, 1973a)

I have adopted the convention for reconstructions used in the Niger-Congo volume edited by Bendor-Samuel (1989), distinguishing those established by regular sound-correspondences from those derived by quick inspection of cognates. By this criterion, most major reconstructed forms are quasi- or pseudo-reconstructions (inevitably). The effect of this is to translate the starred forms of various writers to hache '#'.

Tones are shown as follows;

High	´
Mid	Unmarked
Low	`
Rising	˘
Falling	ˆ

Since the data are drawn from a variety of sources, some words are not tone-marked. Using the present conventions these are not distinct from words with only mid-tone. To clarify such words, a + is added to words with mid-tone.

Vertical alignment of cognate consonants is used in some glosses to illustrate proposed sound correspondences.

1. Introduction

The first attempts to place the languages of West-central Africa into related groups took place in the early nineteenth century. Of these, the most important was Koelle (1854), whose extensive comparative wordlists permitted him to recognise the unity of the language groups today called Nupoid, Jukunoid and Edoid among others. Westermann (1911) argued for a Sudanic group, *Sudansprachen*, linking a wide swathe of African languages from Senegambia to Ethiopia, conjoining the phyla today called Niger-Congo and Nilo-Saharan. Westermann's (1927) later work set up a language phylum, 'Western Sudanic', which included most of what is currently accepted as Niger-Congo. Westermann excluded Ijò, Dogon, Adamawa-Ubangi and the Bantu languages, although he later accepted the relation of Bantu to West African Niger-Congo languages. Johnston (1919-22) published a slightly eccentric analysis of 'Bantu and Semi-Bantu', which, however, had the virtue of clearly establishing the links between the class-prefixes in Bantu and those in other parts of West Africa.

When Greenberg (1963) set out to revise African language classification in the 1950's he accepted most of Westermann's arguments. Apart from characterising Adamawa-Eastern, he focussed on two specific points of controversy: the position of Fulfulde and the relation of Bantu to West African languages. Greenberg's (1963) analysis of Niger-Congo set up six co-ordinate branches (Figure 1);

Figure 1. The Subdivisions of Niger-Congo according to Greenberg (1963)

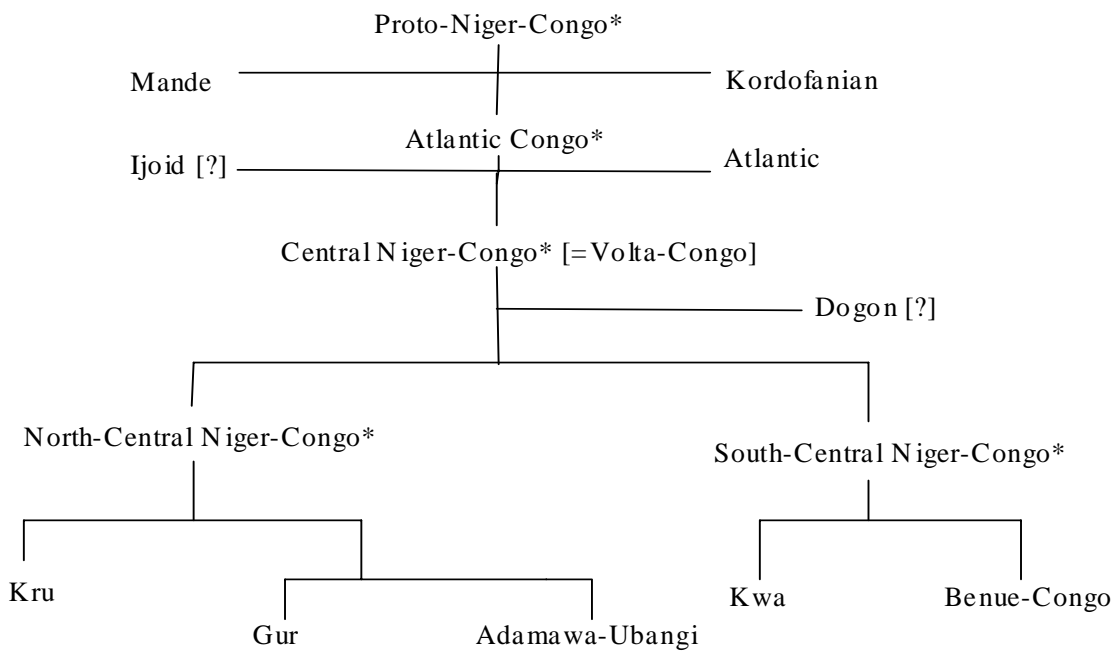
- | -West Atlantic (Fulfulde, Wolof, Temne, etc.)
- | -Mande (Bambara, Vai, Kpelle, Busa etc.)
- | -Gur (Dogon, Mossi, Dagari, Bariba etc.)
- | -Adamawa-Eastern (Mumuye, Chamba, Gbaya, Zande, Banda etc.)
- | -Kwa (Kru, Ewe, Akan, Yoruba, Igbo, Ijò etc.)
- | -Benue-Congo (Kamberi, Birom, Jukun, Efik, Bantu etc.)

Greenberg also argued the case for inclusion of the Kordofanian languages, renaming the phylum Niger-Kordofanian. This name has not been retained and the whole phylum, including Kordofanian is now called Niger-Congo.

Almost simultaneously, Mukarovsky (1976-7) published his analysis of 'Western Nigritic'. Mukarovsky's basic theme was the relationship between the reconstructions of Bantu of Guthrie and other writers and the languages of West Africa. Mukarovsky excluded Kordofanian, Mande, Ijò, Dogon, Adamawa-Ubangian and most Bantoid languages for unknown reasons, thus reconstructing an idiosyncratic grouping. Nonetheless, he buttressed his argument with an extremely valuable compilation of data, establishing the case for Bantu/Niger-Congo genetic link beyond reasonable doubt.

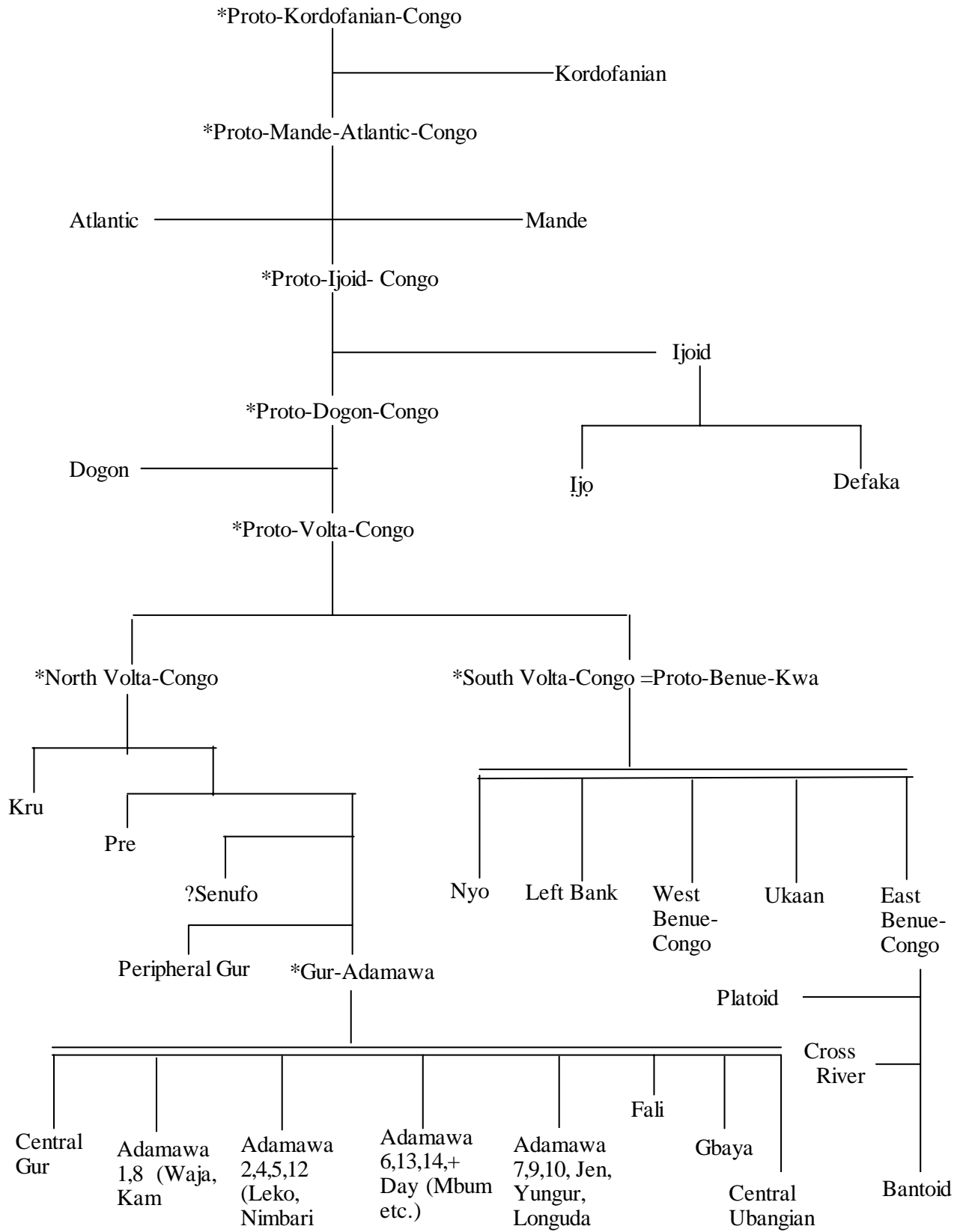
These classifications failed to provide a historical schema for the development phylum as a whole. Given the broad geographical scattering of Niger-Congo languages, a dendritic model with nodes and intermediate proto-languages would have been more appropriate. In the light of this unsatisfactory situation, Bennett & Sterk (1977) undertook a complete revision of the internal structure of Niger-Congo, to suggest the sequence of language-splits. Although not all their suggestions have been accepted, current models reflect their innovatory approach. During the 1980s, discussions around a synthesis volume of Niger-Congo studies produced an adapted version of their tree (Bendor-Samuel, 1989), shown in Figure 2. Analysis of Bennett & Sterk's suggestions and the logic of the adaptations is given in Williamson (1989a).

Figure 2. Niger-Congo according to Williamson (1989a)



This chart has a number of unsatisfactory features, the most important of which is the initial three-way split. Discussion of these, and a proposed revision is given in Blench (1993b) and unpublished. The following figure is intended to represent a more recent version of Niger-Congo (Figure 3);

Figure 3. Internal structure of Niger-Congo (Williamson & Blench 2000)



However, the place of Benue-Kwa (=South-Central Niger-Congo) is accepted as well as its approximate membership and this is used as a basis for the characterisation of Benue-Congo.

2. The Evolution of Niger-Congo

2.1 Early views

One of the largest and best-known groups of Niger-Congo is the Bantu languages. They occupy an enormous area and are closely related; their well-preserved noun class systems attracted the attention of European scholars in the nineteenth century. Their relationship was recognised early, and Carl Meinhof carried out a reconstruction of Proto-Bantu. Sigismund Koelle and Wilhelm Bleek noted that many languages of West Africa also showed noun classes marked by prefixes, and Bleek went so far as to include a West African division in the family he named Bantu. A different tradition culminated in Meinhof's work; he saw languages without noun classes (typically Ewe, but including many Nilo-Saharan languages) as a type he named 'Sudanic'. He regarded languages which were obviously lexically related but had noun classes as being influenced by Bantu and therefore 'Semi-Bantu'. The result of such views was a typological rather than a truly genetic classification.

2.2 Westermann

Diedrich Westermann was a student of Meinhof who undertook to do a reconstruction of 'Sudanic' corresponding to Meinhof's work on Bantu. His first book (1911) established a basic division between 'East' and 'West' Sudanic; his second (1927) was devoted to West Sudanic, which he divided into six families: Kwa, Benue-Cross, Togo *Restsprachen* (now the Central Togo languages), Gur, West Atlantic, and Mandingo. He proposed a large number of Proto-West Sudanic (PWS) reconstructions, often of CV structure, and compared them with Meinhof's Proto-Bantu reconstructions, which were generally of CVCV shape. Perhaps out of respect for his teacher Meinhof, he did not explicitly state the obvious conclusion, that West Sudanic and Bantu belonged to the same phylum until much later in his career.

2.3 Greenberg

Joseph Greenberg, unencumbered by such considerations, took a fresh look at the classification of African languages in a series of articles published between 1949 and 1954 which were later collected in book form in 1963. He combined West Sudanic and Bantu into a phylum he named Niger-Congo, while he treated East Sudanic as a different phylum, renamed Nilo-Saharan. Within Niger-Congo he largely retained Westermann's subgrouping, with the following differences:

- a) Mandingo was renamed Mande
- b) Central Togo was incorporated into Kwa
- c) Benue-Cross was renamed Benue-Congo
- d) Bantu was placed as a subgroup of a subgroup of Benue-Congo
- e) Fulfulde was added to the group of West Atlantic which contained Serer and Wolof
- f) a new family, Adamawa-Eastern, was added to the phylum
- g) finally, in 1963, Kordofanian, previously treated as a small separate phylum, was combined as a subphylum co-ordinate with Niger-Congo as a whole, and consequently the phylum was renamed Niger-Kordofanian (or Congo-Kordofanian).

Greenberg criticised the use of typological and non-linguistic criteria for language classification. He compared not general features such as the presence of a noun class system, but sound-meaning correspondences in particular noun class affixes: for example, he noted that Kordofanian **ŋ**- corresponds to Niger-Congo **m**- in noun class prefixes, and that this correspondence recurs in pronouns and basic vocabulary items such as 'tongue'.

2.4 Post-Greenberg

Greenberg's work was initially controversial but was gradually accepted by most scholars. The only researcher since Greenberg to present an overview of the phylum and to support his conclusions with extensive lexical evidence was Hans Mukarovsky, a student of Westermann. Mukarovsky (1976-77) accepted the position of Bantu within Niger-Congo but did not use evidence from Kordofanian, Mande, the Wolof-Serer-Fulfulde group, Ijoid, and Adamawa-Eastern for unstated reasons¹. He compiled data to illustrate the relationship of the remaining parts, which he named Western Nigritic; and his work remains a very useful compendium despite the missing families and the exclusion of roots for which he could not cite a Bantu cognate.

Bennett and Sterk (1977) proposed a major reclassification of Niger-Congo, mainly based on lexicostatistics and lexical innovations. First, they argued that Kordofanian, with relatively few lexical cognates, and Mande, with its complete loss of the noun class system, should be treated as the first families to break off from the rest; this yielded a three-way initial split. The remaining families were sampled lexicostatistically. The results led to a family tree in which the next family to separate was West Atlantic; the remaining families were treated as Central Niger-Congo, splitting into North and South. North Central Niger-Congo comprised Gur and Adamawa-Eastern, possibly with Kru; South Central Niger-Congo comprised Western and Eastern, possibly with Ijò. Alternatively, both Kru and Ijò were placed as co-ordinate branches of Central Niger-Congo. Their article concentrated on South Central Niger-Congo, where they split Greenberg's Kwa, not only by removing and promoting Kru and Ijò, but by renaming his group b (often known as Western Kwa) as 'Western South Central Niger-Congo', while combining the remaining groups with his Benue-Congo as 'Eastern South Central Niger-Congo'.

This branching structure suggesting historical hypotheses that could not be envisaged under Westermann's or Greenberg's flat arrays, gave rise to intense discussion over the next decade, and culminated in the publication of *The Niger-Congo languages* (Bendor-Samuel 1989), in which a modification of Bennett and Sterk's proposal was presented as a working hypothesis. 'Niger-Congo' replaced 'Niger-Kordofanian' as the overall name for the phylum. The initial three-way branching was retained, as was the next branching between Atlantic (a simplification of 'West Atlantic') and Volta-Congo ('Central Niger-Congo'), with Ijoid tentatively forming a third branch. Volta-Congo was presented with a more conservative flat array comprising Kru, New Kwa ('Western South Central Niger-Congo'), New Benue-Congo ('Eastern South Central Niger-Congo'), North Volta-Congo ('North Central Niger-Congo') and, tentatively, Dogon, which had been removed from Gur. A system of nomenclature proposed by John Stewart was adopted, in which the direct ancestors of Bantu, from Niger-Congo to Benue-Congo, all had compound names ending in '-Congo', while lower nodes naming relatively closely-related groups ended in '-oid'. More detailed revisions of classification are treated under the separate families.

3. The development of Benue-Congo

The Benue-Congo language family is the largest and most complex branch of the Niger-Congo language phylum. Greenberg's once controversial inclusion of the Bantu languages within Benue-Congo has now been generally accepted, although the exact nature of the relationship is still in doubt. The Benue-Congo languages are centred in present-day Nigeria, although considered together with Bantu they cover most of Eastern and Southern Africa.

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

¹ Other publications by Mukarovsky show that he considered Mande and Fulfulde not to be Niger-Congo.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Since Greenberg's classificatory exercise, essentially dating from the 1950s, a major revision and re-alignment of these languages has taken place. This dates from a seminal paper by Bennett & Sterk (1977) that took a fresh look at the structure of Niger-Congo. This revised view became the basis for a new overview of Niger-Congo published in 1989 (Bendor-Samuel, 1989). One major revision was the set of languages included in the 'Kwa' and 'Benue-Congo' families. Although these new families have been used as basis for much discussion in print, their coherence has never been clearly established, nor has their internal structure been clarified.

Present-day 'Benue-Congo' is composed of two elements from former classifications, the Kwa and Benue-Congo languages of Greenberg. The name Kwa goes back to Krause in 1895 who used it for the languages between Western Ivory Coast and Yorubaland. Greenberg's (1966) 'Kwa' originally compounded Kru, Ijò, with Kwa as used by Krause. He used the term 'Western Kwa' to group together the Togo Remnant Languages and the Akan languages of southern Ghana. The term 'Eastern Kwa' was apparently introduced independently by Mukarovsky and Armstrong (Williamson, p.c.) to cover the 'Kwa' languages in Nigeria, such as Yoruba, Nupe and Igbo.

The original proposal to group together modern Plateau, Jukunoid, Cross River and [part of] Bantoid was by Westermann (1927), who called these languages 'Benue-Cross'. Westermann & Bryan (1952) appear to retract this, both by using class/non-class as the principle of categorisation and by the introduction of 'isolated units' i.e. expressing agnosticism about the wider affiliations of these languages. The name 'Benue-Congo' is due to Greenberg (1966) who introduced it to circumvent the 'Semi-Bantu' terminology of Johnston (1919-22). Although 'Semi-Bantu' was more a typological label than a genetic classification it gained considerable currency. Greenberg's terminology was intended to apply to a genetic group, but also to emphasise the inclusion of Bantu. Williamson (1971, 1989b) provides a comprehensive overview of the contribution of these earlier sources.

Although Greenberg's Kwa was soon tacitly split into the three disparate elements he had linked, his version of Benue-Congo was widely adopted. Three interrelated major sources were responsible for giving wide currency to this new concept of Benue-Congo. These are Williamson (1971), Voorhoeve & de Wolf (1969), followed by de Wolf (1971) and the Benue-Congo Comparative wordlist (henceforth BCCW) (Williamson & Shimizu, 1968 & Williamson, 1973). Williamson's list of BC languages was the basis for the BCCW compilation. A standard text, the Index of Nigerian Languages (Hansford et al., 1976), rather dramatically delineated this boundary between Kwa languages in red and Benue-Congo languages in blue dividing Southern Nigeria between them.

Paradoxically, Williamson (1971:252) observes that despite the BCCW study, no convincing lexical innovations were found for BC, despite its acceptance as a grouping. In de Wolf's work, no attempt was made to search 'outside' languages for examples of the BC items quoted, and many of the items reconstructed are part of larger West African linguistic entities.

Within the framework of Benue-Congo, the other major innovation presented in Greenberg's work was the positioning of Bantu. Greenberg (1966:9), in a famous passage, treated Bantu as a co-ordinate branch of his group D. of Benue-Congo, along with Tiv, Batu, Ndoro, Mambila and Vute. This dramatic (and controversial) step was resisted by many Bantuists of that epoch. The fruitless debates that followed Guthrie's (1967-71) wayward interpretations of his data and consequent disagreement with Greenberg were poor linguistics, but acted to throw the area of methodology into sharp relief. Williamson (1971) proposed a 2-way split within Bantoid, into Bantu and non-Bantu languages, a division which Greenberg (1974) later accepted. In this article, he linked the newly christened Mambiloid and Tivoid and showed a two-way split within Bantoid with Bane and Bantu as the other co-ordinate branch. Meeussen (1974), replying to Greenberg, wished to treat Bane and Bantu as co-ordinate subdivisions of Bantu but did not question the Tivoid/Mambiloid grouping.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

During this period the Benue-Congo working Group produced considerable quantities of raw data on language previously unrecorded and one product was a project to reconstruct the noun-class prefixes. This was published in two stages, first by Voorhoeve and De Wolf (1969) and then by De Wolf (1971). These are difficult works to use; De Wolf in particular is reported to have had a meticulous working pattern, but in the event was only able to give the slightest empirical justification for his proposals. Notably in De Wolf (1971:51 ff.) the phonemic system of Proto-Benue-Congo (East Benue-Congo in modern terminology) and a list of reconstructions is given without justification. Many of these roots given are much wider, indeed common Niger-Congo. However, those which appear to be specific to East Benue-Congo are often hard to imagine what data De Wolf used to arrive at them. For this reason, the present text does not spend much time disputing with De Wolf but as far as possible allows the data tables to permit the reader to judge.

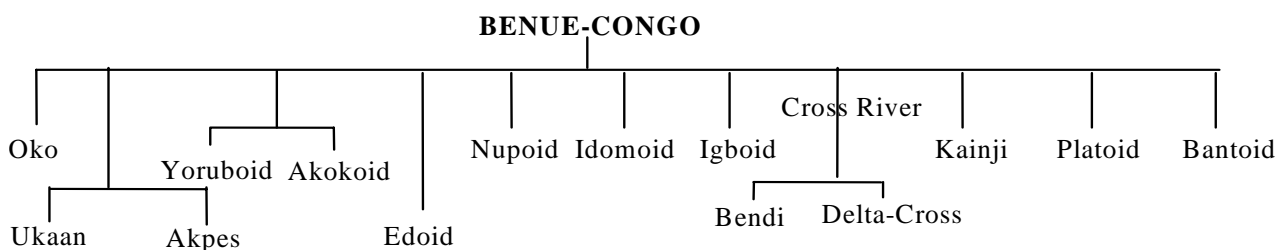
Another aspect of De Wolf is his publication of nominal prefix systems of many languages for which there is otherwise almost no published data. These diagrams of prefix alignments were based on the wordlists submitted for the BCCW, and they were much used by Mieke (1991) in her review of nasal prefixes.

Bennett & Sterk's proposal in 1977 for a South-Central Niger-Congo (SCNC) was thus a major departure from orthodoxy. SCNC was composed of 'Western Kwa', Ijo and East South-Central Niger-Congo (ESCNC), now called New Benue-Congo (with the boundaries redrawn). New Benue-Congo proposed to unite Greenberg's Benue-Congo with Eastern Kwa. This would unite such languages as Yoruba, Nupe, Igbo with Plateau, Jukunoid, Cross River and Bantoid languages. Although this idea had been prefigured in occasional comments (see, for example, Hoffmann in Hansford et al., 1976:169) there had been no published argument to this effect. A contributory factor in changing perceptions of this division was the discovery, during the 1970s, of so-called 'Kwa' languages with operative noun-prefix and concord systems (e.g. Gade (Sterk 1977) or Oloma (Elugbe & Schubert, 1976)). This tends to suggest that the boundary of Benue-Congo was drawn for crypto-typological reasons.

Ijo is now generally considered to be a distinct branch of Niger-Congo, whose similarities to Benue-Congo most probably derive from geographical proximity and the spread of areal features (Williamson, 1989a). However, most of Bennett & Sterk's paper was concerned with the subclassification of New Benue-Congo. Although their completely new approach to Bantu origins was refreshing, Williamson (1989b) has demonstrated convincingly that most of the nodes they propose, based on isoglosses, must be rejected.

The result, however, must be regarded as transitional, since the new model, shown in Figure 4, shares with Bennett & Sterk's proposal the alignment of a large number of co-ordinate branches. Where they proposed nine, there are now eleven.

Figure 4. Benue-Congo according to Williamson (1989b)



The most important developments represented in this figure are;

- a) The recognition that the 'remnant' languages of south-western Nigeria, the Akpes cluster, Ukaan and Oko must be treated as separate branches of Benue-Congo.
- b) The introduction of the term 'Yoruboid' to cover Yoruboid and the Akokoid languages

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

c) The splitting of 'Plateau' into narrow Plateau and Kainji and the adoption of the term Tarokoid for Greenberg's Group 7 (see also Gerhardt, 1989 for further details). These correspond to Greenberg's numeration as follows;

New Name	Greenberg Plateau Groupings
Kainji	1a,b
Narrow Plateau	2-6
Tarokoid	7

The core of this paper is an attempt to return some structure to Benue-Congo through the use of lexical isoglosses. An early version of this was published as Blench (1989), with proposed reconstructions, but omitting any tabulations of evidence. Much data has come to light since the publication of that paper and the present document is held to supersede it completely.

In view of the importance and significance of this group, it seems to be a priority to provide an initial outline to help clothe these skeletons in new flesh. This book² therefore presents an outline history of the classification of the group as well as a discussion of the place of Benue-Congo within Niger-Congo. It then proposes a new internal classification of Benue-Congo based on lexical isoglosses. Discussion of phonology and morphology is reserved for another paper, as is the complex issue of the genesis of Bantu.

This is not a completed study; the defects in the available data are in many cases too egregious. In some cases I have been reduced, particularly in the case of subclassification, to following authors who offer no evidence.

Another useful discussion of Benue-Congo where the sources are laid out carefully in is Mieke (1985). This is a discussion of the alternations between /l/ and /n/ found in many branches of East Benue-Congo and draws on the same dataset eventually set out in much greater detail in Mieke (1991). Mieke was partially a victim of the changing view of the membership of Benue-Congo

4. Developments in Methodology

Just as the substantive groupings of languages have changed, methods have not remained static. Indeed, evolving classification techniques may be as much responsible for these rapid transformations as the expansion of actual data. Broadly speaking, developments during this century can be characterised as a gradual realisation that typological criteria, no matter how persuasive their similarities, are not relevant to genetic classification. Williamson (1985) provides an elegant demonstration of how closely related languages can rapidly develop extremely diverse noun morphologies.

Neither Koelle nor Westermann were explicit about their methods; Koelle's groupings seem to have been based on aggregations of sound-meaning correspondences. Westermann was more influenced by the typological aspects of West African languages, following his teacher, Meinhof. The map appended to his 1927 study shows the languages of West Africa coloured differently according to the presence of operative noun-classes, traces only, or none at all, a distinction reprised in Westermann & Bryan (1952). Nonetheless,

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

²This paper has assumed a number of forms before reaching the present stage. Its most notable reader and critic has been Kay Williamson, who has read various versions and made available to me much unpublished data. If I have occasionally disagreed on points of detail, this should be treated as an affirmation of her contribution. Chinyere Ohiri-Aniche has made a significant contribution to West Benue-Congo studies and I am grateful for the chance to make use of her Ph.D. prior to publication.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

as Greenberg (1963) points out, Westermann had in fact moved away from the morphological criteria which led Meinhof into a curious series of errors. Westermann's exclusion of Songhai and Ijo from West Sudanic were presumably based on their lexical isolation, although the omission of Fulfulde was probably an act of pietas to Westermann's teacher.

Greenberg first developed the method of 'mass comparison', the piling up of sound-meaning correspondences, in the 1950s although he was only to make explicit its methodology in a later publication on the languages of the Americas (Greenberg 1987). Despite numerous criticisms, this has proven its merit over time. Nonetheless, there are problems with the method, as Schadeberg (1981) has pointed out. In a thoughtful discussion of the classification of Kadugli, he underlines the importance of a more established standard of what constitutes sufficient evidence. Where the pool of lexical items is very large (and Niger-Congo contains 1000+ languages) it would be surprising if some correspondences could not be unearthed. 'Mass-comparison' does not clearly indicate how many and of what type these should be.

Although lexicostatistics had been used on a number of specific groups within Niger-Congo (e.g. Sapir (1971) for West Atlantic) it was not applied to the group as a whole until Bennett & Sterk (1977). Lexicostatistical exercises tend to give ambiguous results (e.g. Armstrong, 1981) and they are no longer generally regarded as a reliable tool for establishing the genetic unity of a language group. As it was, the Niger-Congo subgroupings Bennett & Sterk proposed contain some illegal moves by the established rules of lexicostatistics; very low cognacy figures were used and nodal points were supplemented throughout by the use of isoglosses or shared innovations.

More recently, isoglosses have become a dominant, although not uncontested, methodology. The broad theory is that any significant linguistic change that has occurred, whether lexical, phonological or grammatical, in the hypothetical form of the proto-language will be reflected in the daughter languages, unless these have innovated in turn. Therefore at any nodal point, it should be possible to list a number of shared innovations that occur only on one side of the divide. In addition, the proposed feature or item should be a true innovation and not merely a shared retention.

To demonstrate the unity of Benue-Congo it is thus necessary to find lexical items (including grammatical units) that occur in all its major branches and not outside the family. Phonological processes may constitute contributory evidence, but are unlikely to be conclusive, since the possibility of independent innovation is much greater.

However, finding such shared innovations has not proved simple for various reasons;

- a) Searching 'external' languages to ensure the proposed isogloss does not occur outside them is a potentially infinite task; simple inspection of major wordlists may prove inadequate.
- b) Many terms on the principal wordlists in use in West Africa are lexical items for which PNC reconstructions exist. Thus, to find that two languages share /mi/ for the 1st person singular pronoun, or /bi/ for 'black' only establishes that they are both NC. The more recondite lexical items that can be expected to show regional innovations are often absent from brief sources.
- c) Dendritic models, with all the synchronic lects descending from a unitary source, may not correspond to historical reality. In many cases, an innovation occurs in a number of branches of the proposed grouping, while more ancient roots are retained elsewhere. This suggests that many lexical items are preserved as doublets; in other words two terms may co-exist over a long period (e.g. English 'dog' and 'hound') with one or the other gradually predominating in the lexicon.
- d) The long-term proximity of these languages and their similar phonological systems makes it both likely that there are many ancient loan-words.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

The consequence of a) and b) is that all results remain provisional, until our knowledge of the lexicon and grammar of African languages can be substantially improved. From c) it follows that it will be fortunate indeed if an isogloss attested in all major branches of Benue-Congo and not outside it can be found. Point d) suggests that even apparently 'good' isoglosses may be rejected in the light of more sophisticated lexical analysis. This paper will proceed on the assumption that any form found in three or more branches that are geographically separated is *a priori* evidence for a reconstructible root.

However, the problem is that there do not appear to be distinctive isoglosses, that is, found in all branches and nowhere else. As individual families innovate, isoglosses appear to support a wide variety of possible groupings. As a result, the only convincing evidence for a genetic grouping is thus a *cluster* of features. This may seem to be a reversion to 'mass-comparison' -however, the significant difference is that for a proposed innovation to define a subgrouping, it should not occur outside that subgrouping.

5. Morphology: Benue-Congo within NC³

No comprehensive reconstruction has yet been done for the phylum as a whole, and it is sometimes suggested (e.g. by Dixon 1997) that Niger-Congo is merely a typological and not a genetic unity. This view is not held by any specialists in the phylum, and reasons for thinking Niger-Congo is a true genetic unity will be given in this chapter. It is, however, true that the subclassification of the phylum has been continuously modified in recent years and cannot be presented as an agreed scheme. The factors which have delayed reconstruction are the large number of languages, the inaccessibility of much of the data, and the paucity of able researchers committed to this field. Emphasis will be placed on three characteristics of Niger-Congo; noun-class systems, verbal extensions, and basic lexicon.

Niger-Congo is remarkable for an elaborate system of noun classification which marks singular/plural alternations with affixes (most commonly prefixes, sometimes suffixes, and occasionally infixes), and often requires concord of other elements in the sentence with their governing noun. In some families or branches the system has been remodelled, or indeed lost with virtually no trace; but in others, of which the best known case is Bantu, it is retained in considerable detail. Unlike a typical sex-gender system, where male/female oppositions are extended to inanimates, Niger-Congo semantic classification involves multilateral oppositions: humans, animals, plants, paired body parts, mass nouns and liquids, abstracts, and others which are less transparent. The affixes which mark these oppositions appear throughout Niger-Congo; apart from those for singular and plural person classes, which often resemble the third person pronouns, they have no discernible etymology. The system was clearly grammaticalized, blurring its original semantic basis, as far back as it can be traced. Approximately twenty noun classes occur in conservative languages, with singular-plural pairing of classes for count nouns contrasting with single, unpaired classes for mass nouns and abstracts. Other elements in the sentence, typically modifiers of the noun and sometimes the verb of which the noun is the subject, show concordial affixes in full systems.

6. Benue-Congo Phonology

Whether it is meaningful to reconstruct the proto-phonology of an entity that represents the 'freezing' of some of the branches of a dialect chain may be open to question. However, across the languages represented here, some phonemes are so common in some correspondences that it seems reasonable to suppose they were present in the early languages. So perhaps they should be attributed the 'common' Benue-Congo and rather compared with neighbouring languages.

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

³ This section is adapted from some of the introductory material in Williamson & Blench (2000)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Defective data in certain branches suggests that strict historical reconstruction of the phonological system of Proto-Benue-Congo cannot yet be undertaken. Nonetheless, evidence for the principal consonant phonemes can be adduced giving a convincing inventory in most cases. Vowels are much more problematic and although a possible system is given below, it is advanced much more tentatively than for the consonants.

The proposed consonant system is as follows;

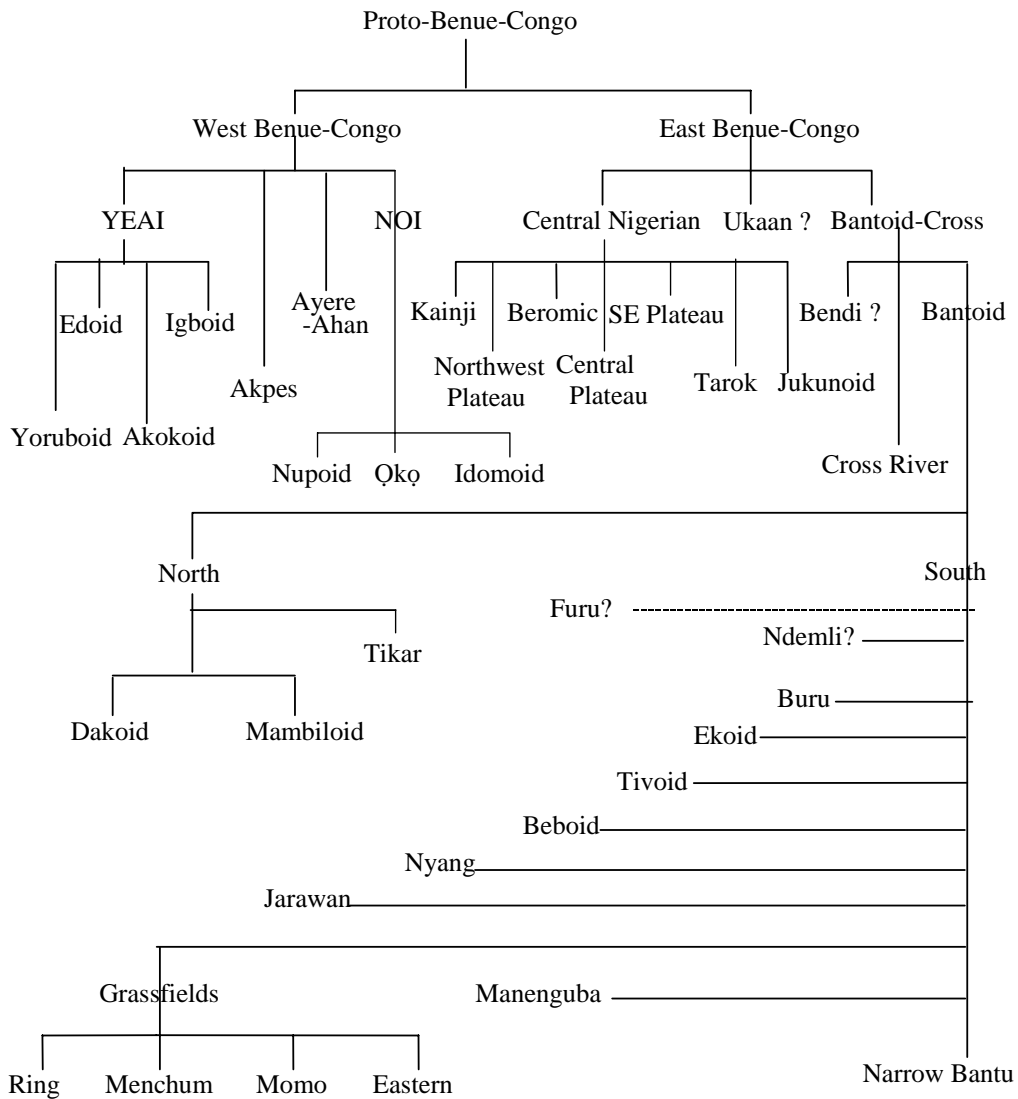
	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
PLAIN								
Plosive	p b		t d		c j	k g	kp gb	
Nasal	m		n			[ŋ]		
Trill			[r]					
Fricative		f (v)	s z	ʃ ʒ				h
Approximant					y		w	
Lateral Approximant			l					
Implosive	ɓ		ɗ					

7. The branches of 'New' Benue-Congo

7.1 A Proposed Genetic Tree

The same objection that was raised to Greenberg's Niger-Congo, the large number of co-ordinate branches, obviously applies to the Benue-Congo model in Figure 4. Williamson (1989b) proposes a number of innovations to establish the unity of the whole family, although not all have been successfully validated. Some further proposals are made both to distinguish Benue-Congo from Kwa and to justify Benue-Congo. To give the family an internal structure, a search was made for isoglosses defining particular branches. The genetic tree of Benue-Congo arrived at by this study is shown in Figure 4. Appendix 1 gives a list of comparative datasets and proposes very tentative reconstructed forms, minus class-prefixes. Figure 5 shows a classification of Bantoid which is included purely for reference, discussed in Blench (1993) but not justified in Appendix 1.

Figure 5. Revised subclassification of Benue-Congo languages



Based on Williamson & Blench (2000)

The main features of this new classification are as follows;

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

1. The grouping of West Benue-Congo into major branches, uniting Yoruboid, Edoid, Akokoid and Igboid (DEAI) and Nupoid, Ọkọ and Idomoid (NOI).
2. A partial reversion to Greenberg's original schema through the distinction between East and West Benue-Congo. East Benue-Congo corresponds to his original Benue-Congo and West Benue-Congo to his Eastern Kwa (excluding Ijọ).
3. The promotion of Ayere-Ahan and Akpes to independent branches of Benue-Congo.
4. The placing of Ukaan between Cross River and Bantoid. This is admittedly problematic and represents no more than a speculation.
5. The restricted definition of 'Bantu' and its suggested relationship to the large number of Bantu-like languages, here called Bantoid.
6. The inclusion of Dakoid in Bantoid. This language cluster was originally classified as Adamawa by Greenberg, but since Bennett (1983) most scholars agree that it is more appropriately linked with Benue-Congo⁴.

There are many problematic aspects of this, most notably whether WBC is really distinct from Kwa languages such as Ewe. I now rather suspect not.

7.2 Discussion of individual branches

7.2.1 West Benue-Congo

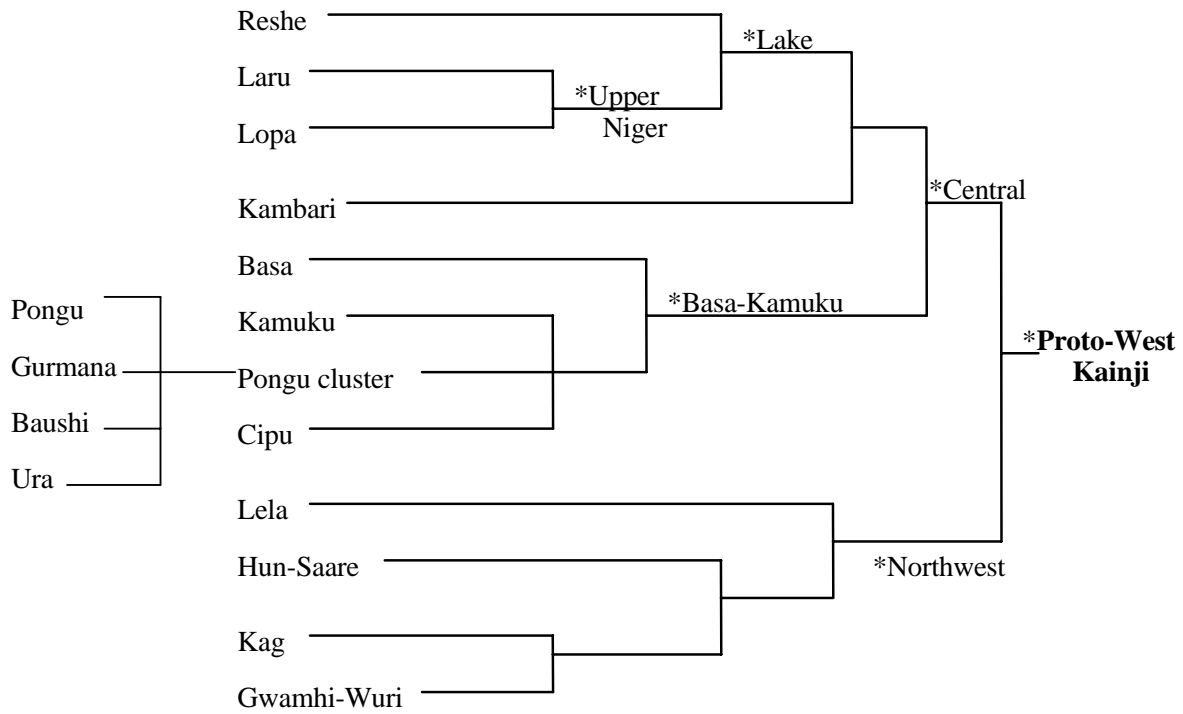
7.2.2 East Benue-Congo

7.2.2.1.1 Kainji

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁴Raymond Boyd constitutes an important exception (see below).

Figure 6. Classification of West Kainji



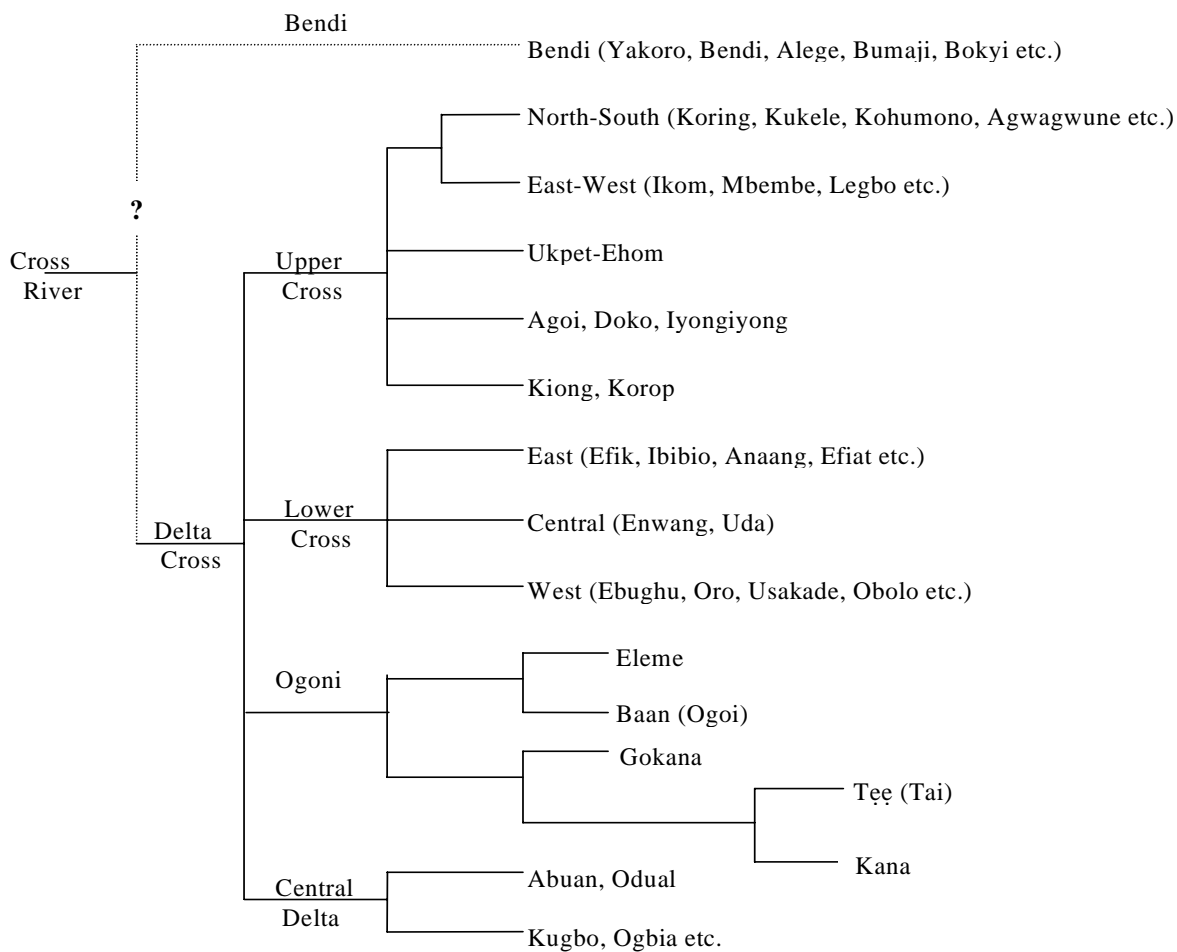
7.2.2.2 Ukaan

7.2.2.3 Bantoid-Cross

7.2.2.3.1 Bendi

7.2.2.3.2 Cross River

Figure 7. Classification of Cross River



7.2.2.3.3 Bantoid

7.3 Arrangement of Data

The arrangement of data is intended to provide evidence for both the unity of particular branches or groupings and to justify their separation from the nearest related groups.

The most important omission from these headings is the subclassification of Kainji and Plateau and of the Cross River group. For the present, the outline in Gerhardt (1989) is followed for Plateau, although it is recognised that this has not been justified in print. Williamson (1989b) discusses the subgrouping of Cross River, and again, this is retained pending more detailed investigations.

A major, but still unpublished, piece of work on the subclassification of the DEI subgroup is Ohiri-Aniche (1991). Although this is not explicitly intended to establish this group, its comparative datasets are invaluable as a source of suggestions for isoglosses. It should be emphasised that in most cases, this paper does not follow either the analyses or reconstructions given there.

The proposal to create a grouping 'North Bantoid' consisting of Dakoid and Mambiloid was first launched in 1987 (Blench and Williamson, 1987) and taken up in Hedinger (1989). This has been challenged by Boyd (ined.) in a book submitted to press.

This paper refers to a number of Benue-Congo languages for which there is no published data, and in some cases, no published references to the language name. A list of the principal published sources used for this

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

paper is given in the bibliography. The table preceding the paper lists both acronyms and the major manuscript sources. No extensive lexical data exists for some of the smaller branches of Benue-Congo. Moreover, even important sets of reconstructions such as Yoruboid (Akinkugbe, 1978) and Proto-Akpes (Ibrahim-Arirabiyi, 1989) are not easily available.

8. Conclusions

The availability of new data, especially on minority languages, has made it clear that Benue-Congo is an extremely complex entity, both genetically and historically. Despite a new diversity of internal groupings, the model returns to the distinction erected by Greenberg between (Old) Kwa (now Eastern Benue-Congo) and (Old) Benue-Congo, now Western Benue-Congo. Bennett & Sterk (1977:251) rightly suggest that the original distinction was essentially typological -however, they then assert that there is no other evidence to support the proposed dichotomy. It should be emphasised that this is an unlooked-for result; this study did not begin as an attempt to revalidate Greenberg.

Nonetheless, there are some reasons why the typological distinction between languages that largely preserve noun-class prefixes might be reflected in the lexicon. Gade, as far as is known, preserves the most complete noun-class system with concord in WBC. The other systems, in Edoid, Idomoid and Akokoid, are more or less fragmentary. However, Sterk (1978) observes that it is difficult to draw more than occasional comparisons between Gade and the better-established pairings in Plateau or Bantu. It is possible that PWBC began with a fragmentary noun-class system with only partial concord, and the Gade system is a re-interpretation of such a system giving it greater consistency. In this case, the reason for the WBC/EBC typological dichotomy is that the two proto-languages had already a substantially divergent morphology.

The interpretation of these findings in the light of other types of data, particularly historical and archaeological, is a task that remains for the future. However, it is worth remarking the most striking historical implication of this tree; the importance of Central Nigeria (probably the Niger-Benue Confluence) as a centre of radiation for the branches of Benue-Congo. The various branches of Benue-Congo can be seen to radiate out from it 'like the spokes of a wheel' in Robert Armstrong's felicitous phrase. This in turn suggests the possibility of a riverine arrival in the region and waterways as a channel for further dispersal. This has already been discussed in relation to the peopling of the Niger Delta (Williamson, 1988) and further research may extend this concept to the broader span of Benue-Congo-speaking peoples.

APPENDIX 1. The Phonemes of Proto-Benue-Congo

Guide to the reconstructions:

Number	Quasi-reconstruction	Gloss
1.	#pob-	roast, cook, burn
2.	#du	to fall (as rain)
3.	#eje	food, porridge, to eat
4.	#eje	egg
5.	#yo	to dance, jump
6.	#bu	to roar, groan
7.	-#-daN-	fruit-bat
8.	#-dul-	large river
9.	#ZiN	red
10.	#-fu[pu]	handle (of tool etc.)
11.	#-ka-	to break, cut
12.	ekāta	head-pad
13.	-#-ka	ring
14.	-kala	bush, forest
15.	keNkere	scorpion
16.	kí	to salute
17.	-ko	fist
18.	ko(no)	sing
19.	-kwo	soap
20.	#-koo	belly
21.	kpolo	toad
22.	i-[k]ye[re]	cereal grain
23.	#-kuu	seed
25.	#-tiN	story, riddle
26.	#voN	rot
27.	#a-kpaNVa	bridge
28.	#-ba-	to scold, to ridicule
32.	#bi#b	to slice
36.	#bip-	ask
52.	#[] -fEN	rat sp.
57.	#-gba	weaver bird
68.	#gbogom-	baboon
70.	#kaNa	roast, fry
78.	#kpa	to think
92.	#-lo	antelope
135.	#wa	to want, desire
145.	#(n)-(g)yati	buffalo
196.	#rV	to rot
204.	#-del	beard
218.	#-mbal-	water
226.	#ta	to think
230.	#-bV	to rot
245.	#-fur-	vagina
293.	#dí	to see, look
87.	#kuS-	to wash
307.	#mana	salt

*p

No unambiguous examples occur among the innovations cited in the Appendix. The following examples are taken from glosses that occur in Benue-Congo but are not exclusive to it.

C₁ in Example 67. 'to hear'

*b

C₁ in Example 28. 'to scold, to ridicule'

C₁ in Example 29. 'count, read'

C₁ in Example 30. 'patas monkey'

C₁ in Example 32. 'to slice'

C₁ in Example 33. 'porcupine/cutting-grass'

C₁ in Example 34. 'dust, mould, smut, pus'

C₁ in Example 35. 'dance, sing'

C₁ in Example 36. 'ask'

C₁ in Example 37. 'bush'

C₁ in Example 38. 'doctor (traditional)'

C₁ in Example 46. 'cola nut'

*t

C₁ in Example 25. 'story, riddle'

C₁ in Example 49. 'sore, wound'

C₁ in Example 124. 'to sting'

C₁ in Example 133. 'diarrhoea'

*ts

C₁ in Example 125. 'laugh'

C₁ in Example 127. 'to die'

C₁ in Example 129. 'star'

*d

C₁ in Example 2. 'to fall (rain)'

C₁ in Example 7. 'bat'.

C₁ in Example 8. 'large river'

C₁ in Example 42. 'mud'

C₁ in Example 43. 'heart'

C₁ in Example 45. 'aerial yam'

*tʃ (=c)

C₁ in Example 39. 'housefly'

C₁ in Example

*j

There are no good examples of *j correspondences in the lexical innovation data but there are several good sets outside. These are given in examples 3.

*k

C₁ in Example 11. 'to break, cut'

C₁ in Example 12. 'head-pad'.

This *k can be reconstructed back at least as far as Proto-Benue-Kwa (Mukarovsky, 1977, II:148).

C₁ in Example 13. 'ring'

C₁ in Example 14. 'bush'

The retention of initial k- in Twi shows that this must be reconstructed to PBC. Nonetheless the weakening to h- in WBC might be diagnostic

C₁ in Example 17. 'fist'

C₁ in Example 18. 'sing'

C₁ in Example 19. 'soap'

*kp

C₁ in Example 27. 'bridge'

C₁ in Example 104. 'male goat'

A pattern that is attested in a number of cases is the retention of *kp in WBC and its attrition to kw-, k- or even p- in EBC. Examples;

C₁ in Example 21. 'toad'

C₁ in Example 76. 'to gather'

*g

C₁ in Example 55. 'go'

C₁ in Example 56. 'guest'

C₁ in Example 57. 'weaver-bird'

C₁ in Example 58. 'lion'

C₁ in Example 59. 'to surpass'

*gb

C₁ in Example 47. 'thigh'

C₁ in Example 60. 'dig'

C₁ in Example 62. 'carve(wood)'

C₁ in Example 63. 'agama lizard'

C₁ in Example 66. 'kite'

*m

C₁ and C₂ in Example 24. 'palm-wine'

C₁ in Example 97. 'to test'

C₁ in Example 94. 'to suit'

*n

C₁ in Example 101. 'to dream'

C₁ in Example 102. 'to wash hands'

*ɲ

C₁ in Example 48. 'liver'

*l

C₂ in Example 14. 'bush'

C₁ in Example 90. 'rain'

C₁ in Example 91. 'to go'

*r

C₁ in Example 111. 'to sell, buy'

C₁ in Example 112. 'to be sick'

*f

C₁ in Example 10. 'handle'

C₁ in Example 50. 'roast'

C₁ in Example 52. 'rat sp.'

C₁ in Example 297. 'to climb'

*v

C₁ in Example 26. 'rot'

*s

C₁ in Example 117. 'to run'

C₁ in Example 120. 'hips'

C₁ in Example 122. 'to sing'

*z

C₁ in Example 109. 'potters' clay'

C₁ in Example

*h

C₁ in Example

C₁ in Example

*y

C₁ in Example 22. 'cereal grain'

C₁ in Example 141. 'friend'

C₁ in Example 142. 'to give'

C₁ in Example 144. 'to yawn'

*w

C₁ in Example 135. 'to want'

C₁ in Example 137. 'to drink'

C₁ in Example 140. 'to jump'

Nasalization

Vowels

There are some examples of languages showing a complete set of \pm ATR vowels.

Appendix Table 1. Vowel Inventory of proto-Benue-Congo

	Front		Central		Back
	Unrounded		Unrounded	Rounded	Rounded
Close	i				u
Close-Mid	e		(ə)		o
Open-Mid	ɛ				ɔ
Open			a		

APPENDIX 2. Reconstructions

A1. Niger-Congo glosses used for evidence of consonant correspondences

The following roots are given to support the reconstructed consonants, but cannot be treated as evidence for Benue-Congo subgrouping because of their wider distribution.

1. #pob- Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
PWS	roast, cook, burn	#-'pob-		
Nupoid	Nupe	po		Ba
Kainji	Gure	pobo		BCCW
Cross River	PUC	*póBì		
Bantu				

Commentary: Williamson (1989:259) considers this to form a set with **fa-** roots such as Proto-Idomoid *fá and Proto-Jukunoid *fwaP, but it is here treated as distinct.

Ref: Williamson (1989:259)

2. #du Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
	to fall (as rain)			
	Proto-Gurunsi	*du	rain	
Kwa	Ega	edú	rain	
Yoruboid	Yoruba	rò		
Edoid	Uneme	rho		
Igboid	Owere	dò		
Nupoid	Nupe	du		Ba
Tarokoid	Tarok	ru	fall in general	
Jukunoid	PJC	*tù	rain (n)	
Cross River	Ibibio	dùs		Co91
Dakoid	Daka	dùrí	rain (n.)	
Dakoid	Mapeo	dśś	fall in general	
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	*-dùmbí	'continuous rain'	G

Commentary:

Ref: Greenberg (1963:117)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

3. #eje	food, porridge, to eat			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Adamawa	Waja	je-	to eat	K190
Kwa	Krobu	je		
Yoruboid	Arigidi	eje		
Edoid				
Akpes	Daja	ijjé		
Ukaan	Ukaan	ù-jág /à-		
Nupoid	Nupe	ejè		Ba
Ọkọ	Magongo	ijē		
Plateau	Jijili	rije		
Jukunoid	Kpan	ji	to eat	Sh
Cross River	Ikun	dosi	(?C)	
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	yên		Co
Dakoid	Tiba	yíi-	to eat	B
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: This usually refers to cereal porridges in the savanna regions; however, it is possible that there is some connection with the root for 'yam' reconstructed by Williamson (forthcoming, a). The only example of nasalisation comes from an orthographic list of Magongo so this feature is not reconstructed at present. The /g/ in C₂ slot in Ukaan is intriguing. Not elsewhere attested it may be a lost C₂ or merely a version of the reduplicated form. #je(n) in Yoruboid and Okoid has the meaning 'to eat'.

4. #eje	egg			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe	àzi		JR
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Akpes				
Ukaan				
Nupoid	Nupe	ezi		Ba
Ọkọ				
Idomoid	Yala	lè-ji /à-		Bu
Jukunoid	Ukum	àtsi		SIL
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Ba	gi		Co
	Len	dziē		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	# -gí		CB

Commentary:

Ref: Westermann (1927:214), Mukarovsky (1976: 89-90)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
5. #yo	to dance, jump			
Atlantic	Kissi	yo		
Kwa	Ewe	dzò	jump	JR
	Avatime	yò		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	jó	dance	Ab58
Cross River				
Bantoid				
Bantu	PB	-yud-	leap	Me

Commentary:

Ref: Westermann (1927:216); Mukarovsky (1976: 181)

A2. Kwa-Benue within Niger-Congo

The data tables in A1 present lexical items common to both Kwa and Benue-Congo. Citations from Kwa are summary only, suggesting that a given item is reconstructible to PKB.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
6. #bu	to roar, groan			
Kwa	Ewe	blù	groan	Ro
	Twi	a-búbú-w	wailing, crying	
Yoruboid	Yoruba	bú	roar	Ab58
Bantu				

Commentary: Not very certain this, especially since Westermann's Igbo and Guang citations do not seem to stand up.

Ref: Westermann (1927:211)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
7. -#-daN-	fruit-bat			
Kwa	Ebrie	ada	bat	
Yoruboid	Ife	àdã		
Akokoid	Arigidi	ada		
Edoid	Iyayu	adan	A loan from Yoruba?	
	PSWE	*-dzĩã		
Akpes	Ikaramu	adá		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	àdã		OI
Nupoid	Nupe	èdã		B
Idomoid	Idoma	ùdó		Ar65
Igboid	Ika	úsú	?C	
Plateau	Berom	dám	'small bat'	K
	Kulu	èleeme		Mo
Cross River	*PLC	*émìàŋ	?C	
Mambiloid	Mambila	ndzãŋ		Co
Bantoid	Esimbi	o-zímí /o-		
Bantu	CB	#-dema		

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: The forms in Kwa and West Benue-Congo are strikingly similar, suggesting loaning in some cases. Those in EBC are much more problematic, and may not form a regular set, although the CB form is almost certainly cognate.

Ref:

8. #-dul- Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ega	udúgbí		Her
	Mbatto	ódu-ḡe		Her
	Ewe	ètṵ		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	odò		
Edoid	Emai	édà		Sc
Nupoid	Nupe	èdù		
Igboid	Ekpeye	èdè	lake	
Kainji	Kambari	ùùdḡlù		Ho65
Plateau				
Cross River	Ikun	edu		
Mambiloid	Mambila	dual		
Tivoid	Esimbi	ɔ-tu /a-		St
Tikar	Tikar	ḡú'		J

Commentary: The labial and labio-velars in the C₂ slot in Kwa languages seem to be a local innovation perhaps due to compounding. The /l/ in C₂ appears to be confined to East Benue-Congo languages. This term is the common name for the Niger River both in Nupe and other languages bordering the river. The implosive /d/ in Tikar is rather surprising, but is presumably a local development. Possibly compare Proto-Ijò **tṵrú**.

Ref:

9. #ziN red Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe	dzḡ		JR
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid	Igbo			
Akpes				
Ukaan				
Nupoid	Nupe		dzúró	Ban
Ọkọ				
Idomoid				
Plateau	Berom		jwá	Ku
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Ibibio		dàná	Ka
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Some of Westermann's examples do not seem to be confirmed by modern lexical data. There is a clear link with the Hausa *ja* for 'red'.

Ref: Westermann (1927:215),

10. #-fu[pu], handle (of tool etc.)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	è r ú	(?C)	
Edoid	Èdo	ù z é	(?C)	
Nupoid	Nupe	e f ú		Ba
Plateau	Eggon	o f u v u		H
	Bu	ε h u		RMB
	Ce	u h u p		RMB
	Cara	p o p	pl. a-pop	RMB
	Izere	ku f ó p	pl. afóp	Ga
	Jijili	o f ɔ f ʒ		RMB
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Mambila	f ù		PM
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	#- p é n i	(3/4) (?C)	G

Commentary: The bilabial plosive in C₂ position seems to be only found in Plateau and may be diagnostic for the group. The Common Bantu form is only doubtfully cognate with the unlikely V₁ and the otherwise unattested nasal.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
11. #-ka-	to break, cut			
Kwa	Ewe	ká	to cut	Ro
Igboid	Ọ̀nị́cá	-cà	to cut	
Nupoid	Nupe	ká	to cut	Ba
Idomoid	Idoma	cà	to shatter	
	Idoma	ce ⁺	to break	
Plateau	Fyem	ca	to cut	
	Horom	can	to cut	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	ca ⁺	to break, to cut	
Jukunoid	Hone	káp	to break (stick)	St

Commentary: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:129) who reconstructs this as ‘slash’ for Yoruboid and Edoid. See also 113. Also in Plateau Chadic, e.g. Ngas, Mwaghavul **can**

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:129); Westermann (1927b:193).

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

12. #ekãta		head-pad		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Awutu	é-kã		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	òshùkà		
Edoid	Emai	èkì		
Igboïd				
Nupoid	Nupe	èka		B
Idomoid	Idoma	èkà		
Kainji				
Plateau	Hasha	i-kar	pl. ki-kar	RMB
	Kulu	ìkal	pl. ikal	Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	akár		
Cross River	Ibibio	ékára		
Dakoid	Mapeo	'ári	?C	
Mambiloid	Nizaa	kaŋ kēè		Co
Bantoid	Tiv	ìkār		
Bantu	CB	-kátà		

Commentary: Mukarovsky (1977, II:148) reconstructs this to PWN (=PAC in modern terminology). However, he offers no evidence outside the Benue-Kwa group and I have therefore assumed that it is a good isogloss for this grouping. The Dakoid citation is only valid if an initial velar has been lost.

13. #-ka		ring		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe			Ro
	Krachi	kà-káŋ		
	Twi	ε-kaá		C
Yoruboid	Yoruba	òrùka		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo			
Igboïd	Igbo	ólà áká	also bracelet	W
Nupoid	Nupe	ekagi ⁺	ring around neck of dove	B
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-kwáŋ	ring, bangle	ELV

Commentary: Nupe also has èká 'ringworm' and èka 'head-pad' (12.) all of which may be ultimately linked semantically.

Ref: Westermann (1926b: 55)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
14. #-kala	bush, forest			
Akan	Twi	kwai		
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Èdo	ohá		
Igboid	Owere	ó-hyá		
Akpes	Daja	àhàlà		
Ukaan	Ukaan	àhàín		
Nupoid				
Ọkọ				
Ídomoid				
Kainji	Basa-Gurmana	u-kèwè		RMB
Plateau	Eggon	a-kala		H
	Cara	i-kai		RMB
Jukunoid	Kente	è-kpā		Sh
Cross River	*PLC	*á-kài	forest	Co91
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: 'bush'. In Nupe, it relates to words farm, or the verb 'to farm' (for which, see separate reconstruction). There is also another less well attested reconstruction possible (see #bo, below). There is a second root for 'forest' (77.) which appears to reconstruct to the Benue-Congo level, which looks similar and may be interrelated. However, apparent cognate sets are spread widely across both branches of Benue-Congo retaining the opposition between central vowels and back vowels.

15. #keNkere, scorpion

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	'Hwida'	'kekire'		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	ikēke		OI
Igboid	PI	*á-`-kpì		
Nupoid	Nupe	kínkèrè		Ba

Commentary: There is a much older root for scorpion, #ena, which survives throughout BC, and occasionally is compounded with kekere, for example in Kupa 'anakekere'. Although attested back to the Benue-Kwa level, this root appears to be confined to WBC.

16. #kí to salute

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kí		Ab58
Edoid	Èdọ			
Igboid	Igbo			
Nupoid	Nupe			

Commentary:

Ref: Westerman (1925: 55)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

17. #-ko	fist			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe	kó		Ro
Yoruboid	Yoruba			
Edoid	Èdọ			
Igboïd	Igbo			
Nupoid	Nupe	èkò		B
Plateau	Eggon	okuum		H
Mambiloid	Mambila	kòr		Co
	Mbamnga			
Bantu	PB	-konda		

Commentary:

Ref: Westermann (1925: 55)

18. #ko(no)	sing			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ebrie	ko		
Yoruboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	ko		OI
Igboïd	Ekpeye	gwu		
Nupoid	Nupe	kó		Ba
Idomoid	Yala	kono		
	Idoma	gwó		
Kainji	Kambari	càànã		Ho65
Plateau				
Cross River	Anaang/*PLC	kwó		
Bantoid				
Nyang	Kenyang	kwáy		M
Bantu	PM	*kó		

Commentary: In BC there appear to be connections with meanings such as 'to praise' and 'to swell' (in Nupoid, at least, perhaps from the swelling of singers' chests). Westermann (1927:242) treats this as PWS, but his evidence is confined to Benue-Kwa languages.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

19. #-k ^w o	soap				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Gbe	Ewe	koe			
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Oloma	o-kwe			
Nupoid	Nupe	ekò		B	
Idomoid	Idoma	u-kwo			
Igboid	Ekpeye	í-cà			
	*PI	*í-kià			
Kainji	Bassa	u-kwo			
Plateau					
Cross River					
Bantoid	Tiv	icahûl			
Momo	Mundani	è-sû /mè-			
Bantu	Ndop	-kon			

Commentary: This gloss refers to the traditional type of soap made from ashes. Many languages have tended to replace this word with variations of *sabulu* to refer to European soap. Sabulu is the common Hausa form, although it is presumably traceable to a Portuguese original. The Tiv and Igbo forms closely resemble one another although presumably the weakening process occurred independently. It is just possible that **icahûl** in Tiv is a version of Hausa 'sabulu'. Westermann (1927:245) treats this as PWS, but his evidence is confined to Benue-Kwa languages apart from a single Gur citation.

20. #-koo	belly				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kwa	Ewe				Ro
Yoruboid	Yoruba				Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	êkóò			Ag
Igboid	Igbo				W
Nupoid	Nupe				B

Commentary:

Ref: Westermann (1926b: 55)

21. #kpolo	toad						
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source			
Yoruboid	Akunnu	o kp o l o					
Edoid	Èdo	ò kp ò t ó					
Nupoid	Nupe	tàn kp ó l ó					Ba
Ọkọ							
Idomoid							
Igboid							
Kainji	Kambari	śś p ś đ ś					
Plateau	Mada	mgb g l ò					Pr
		ù					
Cross River	*PLC	*ì kù ò t					
Mambiloid							
Dakoid	Mapeo	k ò			ye	?C	

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Bantoid

Bantu

Commentary: Mukarovsky (1977,I:279) appears to conflate two roots, #kpolo and #kere, which although perhaps ultimately connected but which coexist synchronically in many languages. The element mgbu in the Mada witness is likely to be a compounded form and the g- to correspond to C₁ as V₁ is usually deleted in Mada. Note that Izon has **àkpálù** for frog which may be connected. This root is problematic as there are similar forms in all four of Africa's language phyla (Blench, 1997).

22. # i-[k]ye[re] cereal grain

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Abron	ayio		
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Akpes	Ikaramu	icwe	sorghum	
Nupoid	Nupe	eyì	grain	
Ọkọ				
Idomoid	Idoma	èye	bulrush millet	
Igboid				
Kainji	Pongu	i-xyu	sorghum	
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Kpan	ayi		
Cross River	Ufia	i-ye	(pl.)	
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	yiri	sorghum	
Mambiloid	Mambila	yel	sorghum	
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: This root can apply to either sorghum or millet in Nupe, and possibly in other less-well-researched languages, it also applies to cereal grains gathered wild. The disappearance of the term in the direction of Bantu probably reflects the environment of CR and PB speakers. Westermann (1927:224) treats this as PWS, but his examples outside Benue-Kwa are doubtful. There are some cases of a palatalised stop in C₁ position, as in Pongu. Whether the Akpes citation is cognate is unclear. However, the presence of y- in C₁ even outside Benue-Congo does suggest the y- correspondences are ancient. The second syllable –re appears only in North Bantoid and may therefore be an innovation for this group.

23. #-kuu seed

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe	kú	'graine'	Ro
Yoruboid	Yoruba			Ab58
Edoid	Èdọ	èkúù	semen	Ag
Igboid	Igbo			W
Nupoid	Nupe			B

Commentary:

Ref: Westerman (1926b: 55)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

24. #mimi palm-wine

Group	Language	Attestation				Comment	Source
Kwa	Abure	m	m	e			
Yoruboid							
Edoid							
Akokoid	Arigidi		i	m	u		
Igboid	Igbo	m̀		m	á	nyá	
Nupoid	Nupe			m	u	ge ⁺	
Idomoid							
Plateau	Mada		m	è		beer	
Cross River	Odual	è	m	ii	m	bottles of p.w.	
	Kana		m	ǰ		ǰ	
	*PLC		m̃		m	í n	
Bantoid							
Ekoid	Nkim	a-	m	i	m	i	
Nyang	Kenyang	m-	m	ε	m		
Manenguba	PM					beer	
Bantu		*	-í	m			

Commentary: A widespread root, the source of the common West African English term 'mimbo'.

25. #-tiN story, riddle

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kwa	Ewe	ɲtínyá		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ìtàn or ìtẹ̀		
Edoid				
Ukaan	Ishe	itẹ̀	Unless Yoruba loan	
Nupoid	Nupe	ècìn	riddle	Ba
Plateau	Izere	atín fe ʃò̀n		RMB
Jukunoid	Takum	swàn-à		Sh
Cross River	Uzekwe	lɔ-ttsá		lí-
Mambiloid	Kara	leden		Co
Tivoid	Abong	etthin		
Bantu				

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

26. #voN	rot				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kwa	Ewe	vó			JR
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Uvwie	vǒ			E
Igboïd					
Nupoid	Nupe	vò			B
Plateau	Ake	va			RMB
Jukunoid	Oohum	vǎ			Sh
Cross River					
Mambiloid	Ba	fɔ			Co
Bantu					

Commentary: To be distinguished from the #-bV (230.) reconstruction for PEBC.

Ref: Westermann (1927:213)

2. Kwa/Benue-Congo Dichotomy

Williamson (1989b) has shown that the isoglosses proposed by Bennett & Sterk to support their ESNC/WSNC (1977:253) division do not stand up. However, Williamson has independently proposed new isoglosses, some of which have also been called into question.

27. #a-kpaNVa	bridge							
Group	Language	Attestation			Comment	Source		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	a	f	á	r	á		?C
Edoid	Èdo	a	gb	a	d	i		
	N. Ivbie	i	kp	a	l	ada		
	Ojirami	o	-p	ah				
Igboïd	Igbo	à	kw	à				
Nupoid	Nupe		kp	a	n	d	ara	B
							+	
Ọkọ								
Idomoid	Idoma	a	kp	a				
Kainji								
Plateau	Mada		kp	ū	ŋ			Pr
	Eggon	a	p	a				H
Jukunoid	Takum	t	a	b	a			
Cross River	Abuan	à	b	á	g	á		
Bantoid								
Bantu	PM		*-b	ó	ŋ	g	V	

Commentary: The most surprising feature of this root is the extremely widespread loss of the nasal consonant preceding C₂.

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

28. #-ba- to scold, to ridicule

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Igbo	Igbo	-bá	to chide, scold	
Tarokoid	Tarok	bà	to ridicule, shout down	LB

Commentary:

Ref:

29. #-bara- count, read

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	ba		Ba
Igbo	Igbo	ba		
Plateau	Bu	bəla		RMB
	Ninzo	bré		RMB
	Ningye	ban		RMB
	Kadara	pula		
	Lungu	vàré		Ge83
	Hyam	fààré		Ge83
	Gyong	fàlá		Ge83
	Mada	blā		Pr
	Kulu	pàlá		Mo
	Toro	bere		RMB
Jukunoid	Jiru	bár	to read	Sh
Cross River	PLC	*bàd		Co91
Ekoid	Mbe	pàl		
Jarawan Bantu	Kulung	ɓala		
Bantu	PB	#-bàd-		

Commentary: Westermann (1927:204) cites this, but in fact his citations are only from BC languages. Gerhardt (1983:103, 124) reconstructs *pal+V for his PP2 and *ban/bar for PP4.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:103, 124); Westermann (1927:204)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

30. #-be	patas monkey ¹			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	ebe ⁺		Ba
Plateau	Mada	bē		Pr
	Bu	ebe		RMB
	Rukul	ì-bàŋ	pl. i-baŋ	RMB
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Tep	mbey		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref: Williamson

31.	pumpkin	I #-be[k]e	II #-gboŋgo		
Group	Language	Attestation		Comment	Source
Yoruboid					
Edoid	S. Uneme		ógwò		
Nupoid	Nupe	èbě			
	Gbgyi-Kuta	knuba			
Oko					
Idomoid	Idoma	abafú		'melon seeds'	
Igboid	Igbo		úgbògúlú		
Kainji	Basa-Kwomu		bu-gboŋgo		
Kainji	cLela		c-obo		
Kainji	tHun	tuper			
Plateau	Aten	phe			
	Berom	ebe			
	Eggon	ive			
	Gusu	abi			H
	Mada	uvwe			
	Ninzo		igbwa		
Tarokoid	Tarok	ìḍk			LB
CrossRiver	Abuan	ee-phe			
	Ibibio		ùbóŋ	fluted pumpkin	
Mambila	Cambap	fi			Co
Tivoid	Tiv	agbadu			
Momo	Mundani		èbɔ'	pumpkin	
	Ngemba		ne-bo		
Bantu	PM		*-bog	(5/6)	

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

² (*Cyperus esculentus*)

Commentary: This root is confused by inconsistent or non-specific definitions in wordlists. Glosses give either melon or pumpkin and sometimes the seeds, which may be the edible part of the fruit. This raises a historical problem since the large edible pumpkins such as *Cucurbita pepo* are generally said to be of South American origin and thus post-Colombian. Either, therefore, this is an old root which has been generally transferred from an indigenous cucurbit such as the egusi melon, *Citrullus lanatus*, or else the conventional historical schema is wrong. A pre-Columbian introduction similar to the bottle-gourd, *Lagenaria siceraria*, seems the most likely answer although this is immaterial to the reconstruction.

There is evidence that Root I should have a C₂ (e.g. Mambila) but not much evidence of what consonant that should be. The Tarok -k- is adopted tentatively, awaiting more conclusive attestations.

32.	to slice	I #bi	II #bē		
Group	Language	Attestation		Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba		bē		
Edoid	Edo		beé		
Igbooid	PI	*-bî			
Igbooid	Owere		bâ		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere		pē	cut	OI
Nupoid	Nupe	ba+	fǎ		
Idomoid	Idoma		bē		
Plateau	Izere		bés	peel	
Tarokoid	Tarok		pà	cut	
Cross River	Kugbo		-ba		
	Usaghade	bì		cut	
	Mbembe		peke		
Mambiloid	Nizaa		bég		Co
Bantoid					
Tivoid	Tiv		pāv	'to cut lengthwise'	
Bantu	CB		#-pàcè	(7/8) 'splinter, slice'	

Commentary: This term seems to refer to slicing yams or plantains for cooking. The PI reconstructions show clearly that there are two roots with closely related meanings. In some lects, the sense is 'to peel', whereas elsewhere the root has become a general term for 'to cut'. Williamson (p.c.) writes 'There seem to be two roots -bè 'cut' (always oral) and -bhé 'slice' (where aspiration indicates an original nasality).' I have assigned these I and II and have assumed that nasalised forms and those with a central vowel go with the second set. To add to the complexity, there is another similar root, -bā, also meaning 'to peel' which must be reconstructed separately (q.v.). The Edoid examples may suggest a second CV syllable but this is omitted from the reconstructed form pending further evidence.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (ined. 57)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

33. #-beb-					
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Igboid	PI	*ébi	Porcupine	WO	
		ébi ñci	Cutting-grass	WO	
Nupoid	Nupe	kpábi	Porcupine	Ba	
Idomoid	Idoma	ébijé	Porcupine		
Kainji	Reshe	hi-janbi	Porcupine		
Plateau	Horom	bèbè pl. ì-bèp	Cutting-grass	RMB	
	Təsu	bibiya	Cutting-grass	RMB	
Tarokoid	Yangkam	gbə ^(k)	Cutting-grass	RMB	
Jukunoid	Kpan	i-byú	Cutting-grass		
Cross River	Ibibio	ébiôŋ	Porcupine		
Mambiloid	Tep	bep	Cutting-grass	Co	
	Kara	ndəbe	Porcupine	Co	
Ekoid	Ekparabong	é-bêb (bé-)	Cutting-grass		
Tivoid	Esimbi	è-bi /e-	Cutting-grass (9/10)	St	
Grassfields					
Momo	Mundani	ndzebè	Cutting-grass	PD	

Commentary: The porcupine referred to here is the larger savannah porcupine, *Hystrix cristata* not the brush-tailed porcupine, *Atherurus* sp. J-M. Hombert's (1988) detailed reconstructions of names for forest animals in Gabon suggest that Guthrie's CB forms appear refer to *Atherurus*. The cutting-grass, grass-cutter or cane-rat, *Thryonomys swinderianus*, is a similar size and a similar pest on cultivated fields which may explain the interweaving of the terminology, neatly indicated by the two Igbo forms. Kay Williamson suggested incorporating forms for grass-cutter in the analysis. Kolokuma Ijò has **lébélé** for *Atherurus*, which may be connected. Further west, forms with initial **gb-** are found in Kwa and Kru for grass-cutter. *If* these are the same root then Benue-Congo is distinguished principally by gb-->b.

Ref:

34. dust, mould, smut, pus					
Group	Language	Attestations		Comment	Source
		#bibu	buNu		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	bíbu			
Edoid	Ghotuo	ì-bùbù			E
	Epie		è-ḡùmù		E
Igboid	Ogba		ébũ		
Nupoid	Nupe		ebi ⁺		
Jukunoid	Takum	búibui		'mildew'	
	Kutep		i-bù		Sh
Cross River	Oduai		èbòl		
	*PLC		ó-búmò	dust, mould	
Mambiloid	Camba		mbuŋ	dust	Co
Dakoid	Mapeo		buna⁺		BF
Buru	Buru	gibú	ebrú	dust	K
Bantu					

Commentary: Dust, mould, fluff, rust, smut on cereals. This formation probably derives from the Niger-Congo root #-**bodu**, meaning 'to be rotten'. WO compares this to CB -**pínà** and PWN -**pil-**, but these are here considered to be a separate root. There are probably two interrelated forms that exist concurrently in many languages, one of which is a nominalised reduplication, the other a root with a nasal in C₂ position. I have tentatively separated these into two distinct columns.

Ref:

35. #-bin- Group	dance, sing Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Degema	ḡeṅe		E
Igbooid	PI	é-bù	song	
Plateau	Izere	bóm	to sing	Ga
Jukunoid	Jiru	bwom		Sh
Cross River	Usakade	dòk ùbín		
Dakoid	Kiri	'doben'		E
Bantoid	Tiv	vine		
Mambiloid	Wawa	bínə	song	Co
Ekoid	Ekparabong	bən		
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-bín-		ELV
Bantu	PB	*-bin-		

Commentary: #bin was originally proposed by Bennett & Sterk (1977) to distinguish the non-Mambiloid Bantu languages. Williamson (1989b:258) notes a series of forms suggesting that it is certainly EBC and probably BC. Related forms are present in Adamawa languages adjacent to the northern BC languages and these are probably loans from BC. If Kru **ḡlɪ** is cognate then the root may go back to PVC.

Ref: ELV (87)

36. #bip- Group	ask Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Ukaan				
Igbooid				
Nupoid	Gbari	byibe		
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Oohum	bɪp		Sh
Cross River	PLC	*bíp		Co91
Dakoid	Gaa	ḡɪp		Boyd (ined)
	Dõ	bip		RMB
Mambiloid	Tep	bē		Co
Ekoid				

Commentary:

Ref: BCCW, I:6,2

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

37. #boN-	bush			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	igbó		
Edoid				
Nupoid	Kakanda	ebu		
Okó				
Idomoid				
Igboid				
Kainji				
Plateau	Ikulu	ge-lubu		
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Mambila	hobul		
Bantoid				
Bantu				
Jarawan	Kulung	mi-bono		

Commentary: 'bush'. See also 14. above.

38. #-boki	doctor (traditional)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Igala	oboci		
Edoid	Èdo	ò-bô		E
Ukaan	Ishe	òbùgùl		
Nupoid	Nupe	bôci		Ba
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma	oboci		
Igboid				
Kainji	Ura	m-buwa		
Plateau	Jju	à-bvók		Ge83
	Aten	abo		
Cross River	Ikun	obok		
Tivoid	Esimbi	wèèki	pl. bèèki	
Bantu	PM	*-ból`		

Commentary: The probable source of Hausa **boka**.

Ref: De Wolf

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

39. #-ciN	housefly			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Ife	ecici		
Edoid	Ukue	ìcǎ		E
Igboid	Ọ̀nı̀ca	í'jǐjǐ		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	infi		OI
Akpes	Akunnu	íncí		
Nupoid	Ebira-Koto	ìsì		
Idomoid	Idoma	ìjù		
Plateau	Gwantu	cicin		BCCW
	Berom	cíŋ		HK
	Horom	cìŋ	ì-cìŋ	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	icəŋcəŋ		LB
Jukunoid	Kpan	ì-cin		Sh
Cross River	Anaang	ńsùŋ		
Dakoid	Dǎ	zi		RMB
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	ndzǐ'		Co
Tivoid	Batu Kamino	fi		K
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-jì		ELV
Momo	Mundani	kè-dzǐ		PD

Commentary: The widespread reduplication of C_1V_1 may indicate this was the original form, which has been eroded in many places. The final vowel in Idoma is exceptional. Also found in some Chadic languages; cf. Ngas **nfi**, Mwaghavul **ndifù**, Tangale **tûn**

Ref:

40. #dwo(ga)	sharpen			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Èdo	lɔ	'grind'	Ag
	Auchi	dɔ		E
Nupoid	Nupe	lè		Ba
Plateau	Jijili	da		RMB
	Cara	loga		RMB
	Berom	lɔ		Ku
	Ce	lɔ		RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	lwà		LB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Somyev	tar		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

41. #dim- extinguish, quench (light, fire)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Egɛɛ	ɗimese		E
Plateau	Berom	rīmō	pl. rīmī	Ku
	Izere	rimɪŋ		Ga
Jukunoid	PJ	* dim		Sh
Tarokoid				
Mambiloid				Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

42. #-(n)doN-

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Akpes	Ikaramu	ido		
Nupoid	Nupe	edò		Ba
Ọkọ	Magongo	atɔ		
Idomoid	Idoma			
Igboid	Ọnɪca	ú'ɪs		
Kainji				
Plateau	Shall	dur		
	Hyam of Kwoi	ndòbò		Ge83
	Gyong	kí-ndòp		Ge83
	Izere	ríróp		Ga
Jukunoid	Jibə	azór	?	St
Cross River	Ibibio	ádúáŋ		
	Ubeteng	edɔ		
Mambiloid	Nizaa	ɗògrī		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	Yamba	ndü(g)		

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983: 71, 101) reconstructs ***ɗwap** and *-**Ndop** for his PP2. The prenasalisation of the C₁ alveolar in some East Benue-Congo languages may be distinctive for this branch. Despite the /r/ in C₂ position in Shall, the sound correspondences in Igboid make clear that /l/ corresponds to /d/ in the C₁ slot.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:101)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
43. #-duN-	heart			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	edo	(?)	
Edoid	Edo	ùdù		Ag
Igboid	Ọhụhụ	dhụdhụdhụ	ideophonic ?	
Nupoid				
Ọkọ	Magongo	uloko		
Idomoid	Idoma	òdò òtū	anatomical heart heart (seat of emotions)	
	Eloyi	ì-dù		
Kainji	Rogo	idu		Rg
Kainji	Rogo	idu		Rg
Plateau	Kwanka	a-dǎ		
	Horom	tùt	pl. ì-tùt	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	itun		
Cross River	Ibibio	dùd	'heartbeat'	
	Ogbia	ólógì	?C	
	Abini	adɔn		
Mambiloid	Nizaa	dōr		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Unless Ijọ forms such as Olodiana **ɔdudú** is a true cognate, in which case the gloss must be promoted to to a higher node of Niger-Congo. The Magongo and Ogbia forms appear to fit together but it is unclear whether they represent another cognate set or simply independent weakenings of the /d/. The doublet in Idoma demonstrates clearly how cognate forms of quite different morphological shapes can co-exist in a language as the meanings gradually shift. A similar form occurs in some Chadic languages, e.g. Ngas **dūr**.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
44. #n-dumu	tail			
Edoid	Egɛɛ	ù-tùmù		E
Kainji				
Plateau	Hasha	i-jum	pl. ju-jum	RMB
	Arum	ìjimù		RMB
	Ningye	ndum	pl. dundum	RMB
	Fyem	dum		N
	Izere	kúrùm	pl. árùm	Ga
	Ce	u-ndú	ì-ndú	RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	ù-tùm	pl. à- horse-tail	Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Vute	dūúm		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

45. #-duN-	aerial yam			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Bini	udin		
Nupoid	Nupe	adũ		
Idomoid				
Igboid	PI	#re-dũ		
Kainji	tHun	rodingtom		
Plateau	Aten	tom		RMB
	Horom	dũn		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	atom		RMB
Cross River	Efik	édòmò		Co91
	Abuan	ediom		
Mambiloid	Gembu	tũār		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Discussed by Williamson (1993). However, compare Proto-Ijò **ótómú** which if a genuine historical cognate means that root is older still.

Ref: Williamson (1993)

46. #e(N?)bi	cola nut			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	obi		Ab58
Edoid	Bini	evbe		
Igboid				
Akpes	Ikaramu	mbu		
Nupoid	Nupe	ebi		
Okò				
Idomoid	Yala Ikom	léŋmgbé		
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Wapa	b̀̀k		St
Cross River	Abuan	egbe		
Mambiloid	Len	b̄		Co
Ring	Aghem	é-biá		
Bantu	PM	*-bèé	(5/6)	

Commentary: The cola is indigenous to West Africa, and there is no reason to suppose this is an ancient loan word. There are possible Kwa reflexes, for example, Abure 'bese'.

Ref: Williamson (1993)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
47. #egbaN	thigh			
Yoruboid	Isekiri	gbùdùgbúdú		
	Igala	ḍ-pá		
Edoid	Degema	ḍ-gbó	pl. i-	
	Erusu	í-kpa		
Igboid	Ekpeye	ḍgbḍ		
	Ọ̀nị́ca	àpàtàpà	idiomatic usage	
Nupoid	Nupe	ègbà	leg, support	Ba
Idomoid	Idoma	úgbéta		
Kainji				
Plateau	Eggon	egbã		H
	Bu	egba		RMB
Jukunoid	Icen	kpáfù		Sh
Cross River	Umon	ègbádà		
Dakoid	Mapeo	gaa⁺		
Bantoid				
Bantu	PM	*-pèŋ	(7/8)(?C)	He
	PB	*-yiga		

Commentary: The problem is to explain the route whereby the proto-Manenguba form is derived from the common BC forms. The Erusu form shows that the /gb/ can occasionally devoice to /kp/ which in turn weakens to /p/, hence the Igala and Ọ̀nị́ca forms. This process probably occurred independently in EBC. Dakoid is cognate if /gb/ weakens to /g/ and C₂ is deleted. There is more widespread, co-occurring root in Benue-Congo and Kwa, #-ta, with the same meaning. Either the two roots are found together in compounds in Igbo, Idoma and Cross River or the original root was triconsonantal.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:751-512)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
48. #enyeCi	liver			
Nupoid	Gbari	eyé		Ro
	Kwali			
Okoid	Magongo	eye		
Idomoid	Idoma	anyi		
Plateau	Cara	anye		RMB
	Berom	yēi	pl. nèyèi	Ku
	Izere	riyé	pl. ayé 'heart'	Ga
	Kulu	èyèè		Mo
Jukunoid	Wannu	ánéné	?C	St

Commentary: The alternation of e/i in V₂ and the Berom form argue either for a diphthong or for a lost consonant in C₂ position. The Berom form also suggests that the nasal appearing in Idoma and Cara was originally a prefix rather than C₁ being /ɲ/. The nasal became fused the stem and was then re prefixed.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

49. #eteN sore, wound

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Igala	íkétì	a compound with second element cognate	
Edoid	Emai	ètè		
Nupoid	Nupe	etìn		
Igboid	Ohuhu	àtù		
Kainji	Kambari	wù-ntsù	(pl. a-)	
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: However, compare Nembe (Ijò) èkété found in and Iẓon as 'ulcer'. This is surprisingly similar to Igala.

50. #fwa roast

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Idomoid	PId	*fá		
Plateau	Horom	fwas		
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	PJ	*fwaP		Sh
Cross River				
Bantu				

Commentary: Given in BCCW as #-pap-. Also in Chadic: e.g. Daffo fâf, probably a loan from BC languages. See also 1., 70., 269.

Ref: Williamson (1989:259)

51. #-fa tiger-nut²

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	efa		Ba
Idomoid				
Kainji	Lopa	fo-pwã	a-pwã	RMB
Plateau				
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

52. #ɔ-fɛN	rat sp.				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ɔ-fɔ̄			
Edoid	Edo	ò-fé			
Igboïd	Igbo Etiti	ɔ-pà			
Tarokoid	Tarok	ìpi	unless reduced from		LB
			#ikpi		
Jukunoid	Kente	i-pyi			Sh
Mambiloid	Len	vīl			Co
Tivoid	Batu Afi	fyɔɔ /fyɔ̀			K
	Esimbi	è-fimbi /bè-	giant rat		St
Buru	Buru	è-fyìn /e-fyín			K

Commentary: The exact type of rat is not specified in most sources, but the Esimbi gloss mentions the giant rat, *Cricetomys*. Under ‘mouse’, Greenberg (1963:156) gives what could be a related root for PNC with probably unrelated citations in both Kordofanian and Kadu. The fewness of citations outside Benue-Congo suggest these are only coincidences.

Ref: Greenberg (1963:156); Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:24-6).

53. #-foN	dwarf cow				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid					
Edoid					
Igboïd	???				
Nupoid					
Idomoid					
Kainji					
Plateau					
Cross River					
Ekoid					
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-pòŋ`			ELV

Commentary:

Ref:

54. #fùN	wash				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Ehufen	fū			E
Ukaan					
Igboïd					
Nupoid	Nupe	fu			Ba
Idomoid					
Kainji					
Plateau					
Cross River					
Ekoid	Ejagham	sù			W

Commentary:

Ref:

55. #-ga	go			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Ukaan				
Igboid	Onica	-gá		
Nupoid				
Idomoid	Idoma	gà	go to	
Kainji				
Plateau				
Cross River	*PLC	*kàɥá		Co91
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	gè		Co
Ekoid				

Commentary: Probably related to Plateau k(y)a (see BCCW, I)

Ref:

56. #-ga	guest			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	ega⁺		
Okó	Magongo	ɔga		
Idomoid	Idoma			
Mambiloid	Tep	ɲgàà		Co
	PEG	*-gèn`		ELV
Bantu	PB	-geni		

Commentary:

57. #-gba	weaver bird			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	
Yoruboid	Yoruba		ègà	
Edoid	Èdo		àxà	
Igboid	Igbo		àfá	?C
Nupoid	Nupe		ègwa	
Idomoid	Idoma		àga	
Kainji				
Plateau	Sur		gwal	RMB
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Langa		mègari	Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	PM		*-gàgè	(9/10)

Commentary: The sporadic labialisation and sometimes odd reflexes suggest an original labial-velar in C₁ position.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

58. #gaba	lion			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	gaba		Ba
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Ekoid				
Tivoid	Esimbi	ɔ-gáíbí /ba-		St
Grassfields				
Momo				

Commentary:

Ref:

59. #gaNV	surpass			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Edo			
Igboid	Igbo	ka		
Nupoid	Nupe	gāmá		
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma			
Kainji				
Plateau	Jaba	gánà		
Tarokoid	Tarok	ngaŋ		
Jukunoid	PJMW	*kaP		Sh
Cross River	Ibibio	kàn		
Bantoid				
Tivoid	Tiv	gàndè		
Bantu	Nkongho	ṅ-gáké		

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

60. #gba	dig			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Igala	gwà		
Edoid	Edo	gua		Ag
Igboid	Ọ̀ṅɪca	gú		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	gbo		Ol
Nupoid	Nupe	gbà		Ba
Ọ̀kọ				
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau	Mada	gyà		Pr
Jukunoid	Wapa	kàb		St
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Vute	gùm		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	#gúṅgù		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:664-424)

61. #-gba	horn			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Isoko	ḡ-gbà		E
Ayere	Ayere	ongba		O61
Oko				
Idomoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: ? PEG, Mada?

62. #gba	carve(wood)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	egbá	woodcarver	
Idomoid	Idoma	ògbocí	woodcarver	
Kainji				
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	gu	‘carve calabash’	RMB
Jukunoid	Takum	hwa		Sh
Cross River	Mbembe	gwá		KB
Mambiloid	Wawa	bu		Co
Ekoid				
Tivoid	Tiv	gbà		Abr
Jarawan	Mama	gbagba		BCCW

Commentary:

Ref:

63. #-gbara	agama lizard	Attestation						Comment	Source
Group	Language								
Yoruboid	Yoruba	alá	ŋ	gb	á				
Edoid	Èdọ	u		gb	e	d	íe	(i-)	
Akpes									
Igboid	Ọnịca				è	l	è		
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	a		p	â	r	à	(?C) Ol	
Nupoid	Nupe			gb	à	r	à	or gbára	
Ọkọ									
Idomoid									
Plateau	Mada			gb		r	ε	Pr	

Commentary: This is the common household lizard in Nigeria. There is a root #bɔŋga found in Dakoid, Mambiloid and Mumuye which is presently treated as separate.

64. #-gbeN	knife	Attestation		Comment	Source
Group	Language				
Yoruboid	Igala		obe		
Edoid	Bini		ábéè		
Igboid	Ekpeye		ògè	? loan from Ogoni. Cf. Kana gǣ	
Akpes	Daja		oyùṅgbà		
Nupoid	Nupe		ebì		
Oko	Magongo		igbegbē		
Idomoid	Idoma		àgbàgá		
Plateau	Tyap		abai		
	Shall		nbaa		RMB
	Jijili		obã		RMB
Cross River	E. Ogbia		ð-gyè	pl. è-	
Dakoid	Dõ		gbaa		RMB
Mambiloid	Camba		bu		Co
	Somyev		bi		Co
	Len		mbèté		Co
Bantu	PEG		*-bé`		ELV

Commentary: A word much compounded, hence the diversity of forms. There is another widespread root of the form #VwV (*-pi) attested in Nupe, Idoma, Plateau and Bantu. Synchronically, it appears to be separate, although it may have arisen through weakening of the /b/ in some forms of the *-pi root. Discussed in Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:773-535) with a different analysis to that given here.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:773-535)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

65. #-gbó to bark (dog)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gbó		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	gbḡḡ		Ag
Igboid	Izii	gbó		
Nupoid	Nupe	gbó		B
Okó				
Idomoid				
Plateau	Jijili	boro		
	Ake, Bu	bḡ		
	Ningye	bus		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:755-516)

66. #-gbe black kite³

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Aviele	ódègbé		
Nupoid	Nupe	lǔgbè	elu = 'bird'	Ba
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma	ògò		
Igboid	Igbo	égbé		
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Kpan	ì-kpò		
	Abinsi	ekpe		
Cross River	KoHumono	a-gba ⁺		
Mambiloid	Vute	gbó		
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: There may be two distinct roots here. Edoid also has Uzairue àkpá cf. Abinsi etc.

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

³ (*Milvus migrans*)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	
67. #gbó	to hear			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gbó	(?C)	
Edoid				
Igboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	gbɔ	(?C)	
Nupoid	Nupe	wó		Ba
Ọkọ	Ọkọ	wó		
Idomoid	Idoma	pó		
Kainji	Kambari	ùwwâ		
Plateau	PP2	*pok		
	Ningye	wo		RMB
	Sur	gwɔl		RMB
	Horom	wo		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	pok		RMB
Jukunoid	Jiru	wog		Sh
	Hone	fúk		St
Cross River	Ogbia	ôghòn	(?C)	
Dakoid	Daka (Gurum)	wúk		
Mambiloid	Tep	ʔók		Co
	Somyev	wuɔ	to listen	Co
Tivoid	Tiv	uɲwà		
Bantu	PM	*-wóg		

Commentary: Discussed in Bennett & Sterk (1977) and Williamson (1989b) although this is the first systematic compilation of evidence. The proposal for an initial **gb-** is based on the widespread p- reflexes, which presumably reflex a shift to initial kp- and then weakening. Thus gb→kp→p→w; a process which may have occurred several times. Kay Williamson (p.c.) suggests that there may be two separate roots, with forms like Kambari and Tiv forming a second set. This is possible, though the geographical dispersal of these forms would need to be explained. The presence of a velar in C₂ position is apparently distinctive for EBC.

Refs: Bennett & Sterk (1977), Williamson (1989b, 1993:398)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
68. #gbogom-	baboon			
Nupoid	Nupe	gbogi		Ba
Kainji	Lopa	gbədəgi		RMB
Plateau	Berom	bōgòm	pl. bebogom	Ku
	Izere	àgbóòm	pl. àgbóòm	Ga
	Mada	kəgbù	pl. kəgbú	Pr
Mambiloid	Somyev	mbəgərə		Co

Commentary: Probably the source of the Hausa *gogo*.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
69. #-guN	to climb			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gù		Ab58
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	gũ⁺		B
Okoid				
Idomoid				
Plateau	Mada	gũŋ		Pr

Commentary: cf. Nembe (Ijọ) **gòlò**.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
70. #kaNa	roast, fry	burn,	bake in ashes	
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	hɔn	roast	
Nupoid	Nupe	kã⁺	fry	
Okoid	Magongo	kene	burn	
Idomoid				
Kainji	Ror	kar		Rg
Kainji	Kag	'mkar'		
	Kambari	kàngàlâ		
Plateau	PP4	*kar	'bake in ashes'	Ge83
	Mada	klā		Pr
	Ningye	kar		RMB
	Berom	halaŋ		Ku
	Jili	kanɔ⁺	fry	St76
	Kulu	káánà		Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	kál	cook	LB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	kan	fry	Sh
	Kpan	kó	fry	
Cross River	PUC	*kaŋa		
	PLC	*káŋ	fry in sand	Co91
Mambiloid	Nizaa	kāŋ	fry	Co
Bantoid				
Tivoid	Tiv	kaà		
Ekoid	Ekparabong	kani		
Bantu	CB	#-káŋ		

Commentary: This gloss is proposed by Williamson (1989b:259) in a somewhat different form, compiling roots that appear to reconstruct to #fa or a similar form. The Jukunoid forms, such as Icen **fkwa** may be some form of compounding with V₁ epenthesis. Nupe, incidentally, preserves three roots, corresponding to an older ?PAC form, and to both the #ka and #fa reconstructions. See also Vagla **halli** 'to fry'. There is a much older root for charcoal that may well be related -see Mukarovsky for PWN #-ka.

Refs: BCCW, II:294-297, Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:751-512), Williamson (1989b:259)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

71. #-kaN	farm								
Group	Language	Attestation					Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	Igala	ó	k	o					
Edoid	Okpe	o	gw	a					
Igboid	Aniocha	ò	g	ò			See below		
		é	kw	ú					
Nupoid	Nupe		k	á				Ba	
Okoid									
Idomoid									
Kainji	tHun	ñ	k	à	to				
Plateau	Gwantu	a	kw	a	n				
	PP2		*k	a	p			to farm	
Tarokoid	Tarok		w	a	p			? weakened form of PP2	
Jukunoid	PJ		*k	ù	ŋ			Sh	
Cross River	Ikom	kè	-k	á	n	á			pl. bò-
Mambiloid	Mambila		k	o	r			'to farm'	
Bantoid									
Tivoid	Tiv	ì	g	à				'garden'	
Bantu	PB		g	u	n	da			
	Aghem	e-	k	a	ŋ				

Commentary: This may not be a truly separate set from #-kòrò 'forest' (77.). It is conceivable that there are two sets conflated here, those with /o/ in V₁ position. This is only an innovation if Malinke (**kena** -cultivated field) and other Mande terms are not cognate. The two synchronic Igbo forms are puzzling, since either could be cognate.

72. #ekiri	frog							
Group	Language	Attestation			Comment	Source		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kere				Ab58		
Edoid	Edo	ékìré				Ag		
Igboid	Igbo	akèle			riverine amphibian			
Nupoid	Nupe	kèrègi			small water-frog	B		
Okoid								
Idomoid	Idoma	aklle						
Mambiloid	Mbamnga	k ^w òlà				Co		
Bantu	PB	-kédé						

Commentary: This form may be ultimately connected with words for 'toad' (see above) which go substantially further back. However, in its present form it appears to be confined to WBC, unless forms like Twi **a-twere** are cognate. Note also Kinyarwanda /igikeri/.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
73. #-keNe	monkey			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe			Ba
Plateau	Horom	cèm	i-cem	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	ìsìm		LB
	Pe	ikee		RMB
	Yaŋkam	kim		RMB
Jukunoid	Ashuku	kǎ		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kéém		BF
Mambiloid	Ba	car		Co
	Ndoro	címò	? colobus	RMB
Bantu	PB	-kíma		

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
74. #-kombi-	navel			
Edoid	Èdo	ù-xǔ		Ag
	Ghotuɔ	ò-hðyì	pl. è	E
Kainji	Gwamhi	r-ubu		Rg
	Kuki	ɔbu		Rg
Plateau	Rukul	ru-kɔp	a-kɔp	RMB
	Nindem	ìkom		Ge83
	Hyam of Kwoi	kpóp		Ge83
	Koro	ì-kóp		Ge83
	Kulu	ðíkúp	pl. èkúp	Mo
Tarokoid	Pe, Tarok	ìgum		RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	u-kóm		Sh
Cross River	PLC	*é-kóp	pl. a-	Co91
Mambiloid	Nizaa	kómni		Co
	Cambap	kúmbūn		Co
Bantu	PB	#-kóbu		

Commentary: Only Ghotuɔ retains a trace of C₂ in West Benue-Congo, and it is a velar of a sort.. The process of erosion of initial k- is well attested in W. Kainji (see). Gerhardt (1983: 100) reconstructs ***-kwop** for PP2. Also in Chadic: Mwaghavul **kúm**, Tangale **kúmbi**

Refs: Gerhardt (1983: 100, 307)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

75.#-komo(N) corpse

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	òkú		
Edoid	Ibilo	ó-khùù		
Ayere		oku		
Nupoid	Ebira	ókù		
Plateau	Təsu	kómɔ		RMB
	Gyong	kóm		
	Nindem	ì-kóm		Ge83
	Hasha	i-kum		RMB
	Eggon	okomo		(H)
	Ake	əkwo		RMB
	Jijili	ukɔ		RMB
	Kulu	ukúm	pl. ikùm	Mo
	Izere	kukóm		
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Kuteb	rù-kom		Sh
Cross River	Efik	ó-kpó		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Tep	kómɪ		Co
Jarawan				
Bantu				

Commentary: Derived from the more widespread Niger-Congo root #**ku** for ‘to die’. Gerhardt (1983:99, 130) reconstructs this root for his PP2 and PP4. The final nasal in Mambila is presently isolated. Also in Chadic Goemai **kum**, Ngas **kuum**.

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:99, 130),

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

76. gather, #koN- #kpV assemble (people)
collect

Group	Language	I	II	Comment	Source
		Attestation			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kó			
			kpé	assemble (people)	
Edoid	Edo	kòkó			Ag
	Epie		kpe		E
Akpes	Daja		kyo-shukwu		
Ayere	Ayere		kwúsho		O61
Igbo	Igbo	kó			
	Izii		kpó		
Nupoid	Nupe	kú			
Ọkọ			kpa⁺	assemble (people)	
Idomoid	Idoma		kpó		
Kainji					
Plateau	Kulu	cúŋ			Mo
	Mada		kyo⁺		Pr
Tarokoid	Tarok		kwáp		
Jukunoid	Takum	kon⁺			Sh
Cross River	Anaang	kòno			Co91
Dakoid	Daka	kongì		assemble (people)	
Mambiloid	Kwanja		kár		WW
	Len	k^wáné b̀̀̀r			Co
Bantoid					
Tivoid	Tiv	kùmbà			
Bantu	CB	*-kóŋ-			

Commentary: This is discussed by Ohiri-Aniche under the two references given below as two roots reconstructing to *ko and *kũã respectively. The above table gives my alternative proposal for the analysis of these roots. This proposes two distinct sets, one for #koN- and one for #kpV, the latter having the meaning of 'assemble people'. The variation in the vowels in root II is surprising. Owere Igbo has both **k^whó** and **ḡó**, both nasalised, perhaps suggesting the two roots have been re-interpreted as one.

Possibly compare Dogon Toro **k̀̀̀̀**.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:582-341 & 673-372)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

77. #-k̀̀r̀̀		forest			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	Yoruba	oko ⁺	farm, grass	A	
Edoid					
Igbooid					
Nupoid	Nupe	k̀̀s̀̀		B	
Okp	Magongo	uku		KW	
Idomoid					
Kainji					
Plateau	Horom	k̀̀r̀̀	pl. á-k̀̀r̀̀	RMB	
	Jijili	uk̀̀l̀̀		RMB	
Jukunoid					
Cross River	Gokana	k̀̀l̀̀		BCCW	
Mambiloid	Nizaa	k̀̀r̀̀		Co	
Bantoid					
Bantu					

Commentary: Skinner (1996:155) identifies the immediate source of Hausa *kurmi* as Kanuri **kulimi**, which almost certainly correct. However, he goes on to link this with a long semantic chain of items right back to PAA with words for ‘spirit’, ‘ghost’, ‘shrine’, ‘tamarind’ etc. which is less certain. The North Bauchi languages have ***kwal-** for ‘forest’ but this is most likely borrowed from Benue-Congo languages. As the data table shows, this root is widespread in Benue-Congo including languages remote from the Chadic borderland, suggesting that it is originally of Niger-Congo origin. The suggestion here is that this was a loan into Kanuri, either directly from Benue-Congo but more likely via other Chadic languages. The –mi suffix remains unexplained at present.

Refs: Skinner (1996:155)

78. #kpa		to think			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Uhami	kpe(re)		E	
Igbooid	Izii	gbà			
Nupoid	Nupe	kpa		Ba	
Idomoid					
Jukunoid	Kuteb	kap		Sh	

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:753-514)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
79. #-kpa	cough			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	ekpa⁺		Ba
Plateau	Eggon	okpala		H

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
80. #-kpa	snail-shell			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Edoid				
Akpes				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	ekpa		Ba
Plateau	Mada	kp̃r		Pr
	Ayu	kwikwári		RMB
Tivoid				
Momo				

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
81. #-kpà	scar, ulcer			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	à-kpá		
Edoid	Urhobo	ú-pe	(í-)	
Edoid	Auchi	u-kpakpa		
Akpes				
Igboid	Ọ̀nị́ca	à-pà		
Nupoid				
Idomoid				
Tivoid	Esimbi	kε-kpi /bε-		St
Momo	Mundani	kě-nkpě	face-mark	PD

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Anichi (1991, II:253).

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

82. #-kpã load

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Edoid				
Akpes				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	èkpo		Ba
Plateau	Eggon	okpã		H
Tivoid				
Momo				

Commentary:

Ref:

83. #-kpa(ta) knife

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Akpes				
Nupoid				
Idomoid				
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	ìkpàl		RMB
Jukunoid	Chomo	a-kwã		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Vute	mùkpáàn	matchet	Co
Bantu	Isu (A group)	kpátá	'sword'	Mutaka & Ebobisse

Commentary:

Ref:

84. #-kpero bush-fowl

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Ukaan				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	kparo		Ba
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau				
Cross River				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kpèèrá		BF
Mambiloid	Ndoro	tukwara ⁺		Meek
Ekoid	Ejagham	kpáé	19/3	W
Bantu	PB	-kuade		M

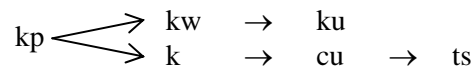
Commentary:

Ref:

85. #u-ka	rat (generic)				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Nupoid	Nupe	etsú		Ba	
Kainji	Lopa	kyau		RMB	
Plateau	Horom	kí	í-kí	RMB	
	Koro	ì-kpí		Ge83	
	Hyam of Kwoi	kpyi		Ge83	
	Hasha	ikwi		RMB	
	Alumu	ì-kwì		RMB	
	Berom	cù		RMB	
	Kulu	geshú	pl. beshú	Mo	
Tarokoid	Pe	ikuu		RMB	
Cross River					
Mambiloid	Nizaa	kùùŋ		Co	

Commentary: In Kwa, Ewe has **kísi** and Twi **o-kísí(e)** which could be connected. Assuming all these forms are a single root then a variety of analyses are possible. The final nasal in Nizaa is assumed to be a later addition.

The forms in East Benue-Congo without Lopa suggest an original form something **#ikpi**, which would yield both the Tarok **ìpi** and the labialised forms such as Hasha **ikwi**, before palatalising to yield **cu** and finally – **tsu**.



Gerhardt (1983:100) reconstructs ***-kwi** for his PP2. The Lopa word suggests a completely different reconstruction, however. The palatalisation should reflect a previous **i-** prefix. The stem **-u** probably reflects a previous labialisation of the velar and eventually a **u-** prefix. The **-a-** then remains the original stem-vowel, deleted in almost all other attestations.

u-ka → kwa → i-kwa → i-kau → kyau

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:100)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

86. #-kuN door, threshold, road.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	èlèkù		
Edoid	Aviele	ðkó		
Igboïd	Oñica	à-kú		
Nupoid	Nupe	yèkó		Ba
	Nupe	kpàko	wooden door. 2nd element cognate?	Ba
Okò				
Idomoid	Idoma	ókó		
Kainji	Kambari	íkpákú	? loan from Nupe.	
Plateau	Mada	nkòṅ	door, road	Pr
Jukunoid	Takum Jukun	nyakoon	doorway	W
Cross River	Ogbia	ègú		
Mambiloid	Tep	ku	door	Co
Nyang	Kenyang	ne-kok /ba-	door	Mb
Bantu	PB	-kondo	path	

Commentary: This is a particular semantic oscillation that has been applied to an older root meaning road. In Nupe at least, the two means still exist synchronically. Elsewhere, however, the two have become separate lexemes, and 'road' in particular has been subject to replacement in EBC.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:641-400)

87. #kuʃ-

to wash

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Ghotuṓ	kɔ	wash body	E
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	kusu		Ga
	Berom	kūʃ		Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Gembu	kùlá		Co
Eastern	PEG	*-cùg-		ELV
Grassfields				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

88. #-kuN	bundle			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Edo	ìkú		
Igboid	Owere	ùk ^{wh} ù		
Nupoid	Nupe	èkpo		
Plateau				
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Ibibio	ék'u		
Bantoid				
Tivoid	Tiv	ìkàgh		
Ekoid		è-kàn		
Bantu	PB	-cómbu		

Commentary:

Ref:

89. #lyama	to lick			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Èdo	lalo		Ag
Kainji	cLela	lèmsé		
	Buji	lama		
Plateau	Horom	lyes		RMB
	Kwanka	lyam		
Tarokoid				
Cross River	Okobo	lái		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Nizaa	lāŋ		Co
Ekoid				
Beboid	Noni	lá		Hy9
Grassfields	Lamnso	la		
Momo	Mundani	ela ⁺		PD
Ring	Babungo	ndá(ló)		S
Eastern	PEG	*dád		
Bantu	PB	-damb-		

Commentary:

Refs:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

90. #li	rain				
Group	Language			Comment	Source
Yoruboid		e	l	i	
Akokoid	Akunnu				
Akpes	Ikaramu	e	y	e	?C
Edoid					
Nupoid	Nupe	e	l	e	Ba
Oko					
Idomoid					
Igbooid	Igbo	mm	l	i	'water'
		i			
Kainji					
Plateau	Gwantu		r	i	(h)
Cross River	Odual	è	l	è	bè
Mambiloid	Tep		l	i	Co
Bantoid					
Bantu					

Commentary: However, compare Proto-Ijò forms such as ***érèì**. If these are true cognates and not loanwords then this root must be reconstructed to PAC. Sometimes, as in Igbo, compounded with forms that mean 'rain-water'.

91. #lo	to go				
Group	Language	Attestation		Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	lo ⁺			
Edoid	Emai	lòdè			
Igbooid					
Nupoid	Nupe	lo ⁺			Ba
Idomoid					
Bantu	Yamba	lo ⁺			

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:652-411)

92. #-lo	antelope				
Group	Language	Attestation		Comment	Source
Yoruboid					
Edoid					
Igbooid					
Nupoid	Nupe	elo ⁺		kob antelope	Ba
Oko					
Idomoid					
Plateau	Ce	ilo			RMB
Cross River	PLC	*é-lòp		pl. i-	Co91
Bantu					

Commentary:

Ref:

93. #- to learn, test, imitate

maNa

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Aoma	mama	to learn	E
Igbooid				
Plateau	Berom	mara	to learn, test, imitate	RMB
	Izere	maas	to mimic; imitate	RMB
Tarokoid				
Ekoid				

Commentary:

Ref:

94. #-maN to suit (of clothes)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Èdo	má	'to suit' (of clothing)	Ag
Igbooid				
Nupoid	Nupe	má	'to be just right'	Ba
Idomoid				
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	ma⁺	to be appropriately dressed	LB
Ekoid				

Commentary:

Ref:

95. #-maN to be sweet

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	má		B
Plateau	Mada	món		Pr
	Horom	mwet		RMB
	Ce	máŋ		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	mel		RMB
Jukunoid	Jiru	maŋ		Sh

Commentary:

96. #-maN- to cut open [people or animals]

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Èdo	mǎǎ	to operate surgically on	Ag
Nupoid	Nupe	mú	to cut	Ba
Tarokoid	Tarok	mù	to operate on [surgically]	LB

Commentary:

97. #-mbak- Group	to measure, Language	test Attestatio n	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Edo	ṁjǎǎ	to measure	Ag
	Degema	ma		E
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	mà	to measure	B
Idomoid	Idoma	mà	to test	Armstrong (1963)
Plateau	Mada	mà	to measure	Pr
	Ce	mak⁺	to measure	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	ma⁺	to measure, to test	LB
Jukunoid	Oohum	mbák	to measure	Sh
Ekoid				

Commentary: The nasalisation of the Edo form is unusual and is tentatively not reconstructed.

Ref:

98.#-mi Group	faeces Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	imí		
Ahan		imĩ		
Edoid	Edo			
Idomoid	Idoma	èmi		
Nupoid	Kakanda	amì		
Plateau	Ayu	imbi		

Commentary:

99. #misi Group	laugh Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Igboid	Udi	mú		W&OA
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	mis		RMB
	Izere	mas		Ga
	Ningye	mwar		RMB
	Nindem	más		Ge83
	Ayu	mèm		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	misi		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:131) reconstructs ***mar/mas** for PP4. Also found in Chadic, e.g. Diri **mēs**, Tera **mósó** but probably a loan into Chadic.

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:131)

100. #-mVN-	child				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Èdo	ḍ-mô		E	
Plateau	Alumu	mere ⁺	pl. amere	RMB	
	Hasha	a-mweŋ		RMB	
	Ce	ɔ-vɪn ⁺	í-ŋmín	RMB	
	Ninzo	uvúvur	àmúmàr	RMB	
	Ningye	ven	mumwen	RMB	
Jukunoid	Jiru	m-min		Sh	
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	mónò		Co	
Tikar	Tikar	mwãẽ			
Jarawn Bantu	Jaku	mín			
Bantoid	Bapi	mwén			

Commentary:

Refs:

101. #naN-	to dream				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	Igala	ná			
Akpes	Ase	nasíná			
Nupoid	Nupe	nǎ		B	
Idomoid	Idoma	nā			
Plateau	Mada	rá		Pr	
	Ninzam	ú-lá	a dream	Ge83	
	Kulu	náálá		Mo	
Jukunoid	Hone	nár		St	
Cross River	PLC	ń-lááp		Co91	
Ekoid	Ejagham	rèm		W	

Commentary: Ohiri-Aniche connects this with PWS #la 'to lie down or sleep' which surfaces in Igbo as l̩. These may be a quite separate series, connected with the widespread root #ele for sleep, while 'dream' should probably be treated as distinct.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:134); Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:473-231)

102.#nàN-	to wash	(hands etc.)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid					
Edoid					
Akpes	Daja	nǎnǎ			
Igboid					
Nupoid	Nupe	nà		Ba	
Idomoid	Idoma	nà		Ar63	
Plateau	Nindem	nár		Ge83	
Tarokoid	Tarok	nàl		LB	

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: The tone has been conserved across a very wide scatter of languages.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:132)

103.#-niin. One

Commentary: This root was discussed and the evidence set out by Williamson (1989:255). This root partially replaces a PAC root #kVN and in turn gives way to a #mom root in Bantoid (see below).

Kila Yang nyúnū

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
104. #-N-kpiN-	male goat			
Yoruboid	Işekiri	àlú kpéré		
Edoid	Okpe	ì-kpí		E
Ukaan	Ukaan	è-fín ñi-	?C or a loan word	
Igboid	Èkpeye	ì-kpí		
	Ika	m̀kpí		
Idomoid	Idoma	òpí		
Kainji	Basa-Benue	u-pi	pl. e-	RMB
Plateau	Horom	pik	ì-pik	RMB
	Mada	nkrù		Pr
Cross River	Koring	ṅkkpé		
Dakoid	Daka	pìsá		RMB

Commentary: Ijọ has **e-kpé**, which is identical to Degema, suggesting a loan since this root is well established in Edoid. The Ukaan form is not definitely cognate but could be a loan from Idoma or a related language since p>f is not an unlikely sound-change.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:724-484)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
105. #nyaN-	thing			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Nupoid	Nupe	enya		Ba
Igboid				
Idomoid				
Kainji	Chawai	nyen		BCCW
Plateau	Hasha	nina		BCCW
Tarokoid	Sur	ni		RMB
Cross River	Kegboid	nu		
Dakoid				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
106.#-nya-	to dance			
Nupoid	Nupe	nya		Ba
Bendi	Bekwara	nyàà		St

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
107.#eyiN-	sun			
Nupoid	Nupe	eyi⁺		Ba
Oko	Magongo	eyi		
Jukunoid	Hone	n-yínù		St

Commentary: In Nupe, the word for 'sun' also means 'afternoon'. Ekpeye has **èyè** for 'afternoon'. As this is not the common Igboid root, this may be just a coincidence.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
108.#-kpa-	Bambara groundnut			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ekpa		
Edoid	Isoko	upapa		
Igboid	Igbo	okpa		
Nupoid	Gbagyi	opwa		
Idomoid	Idoma	ikpeyi		

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
109.#NzuN.	Potters' clay.			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid	Ọ̀ṣiṣa	ń'zú		
Nupoid	Nupe	ezù		B
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau	Mada	ntōn	?C	Pr
Cross River	Ibibio	ńsáj		
Tivoid	Esimbi	ézi	mud	
Bantu				

Commentary: White clay used for decoration.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
110. #-pal-	floor-beater			
Nupoid	Nupe	epa		Ba
Plateau	Cara	i-pal		RMB
	Jijili	upane	pl. apane	RMB
Mambiloid	Mambila Cambap	pépāp		Co

Commentary: Possibly independently derived from a widespread root #pa ‘to beat’.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
111. #-rép-	to sell, buy			
Edoid	Okpe	rhe		E
Igboïd	Central Igbo	ré	to sell	WO
	Ekpeye	dé		WO
Plateau	Izere	rep	to buy	Ga
	Berom	rew	to buy	Ku
	Kulu	lep	pl. líbí	Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	ré	to agree to sell	LB
Dakoid	Dõ	rep	to buy	RMB
Cross River	PLC	*lep	to buy	Co91
Bantu	PB	#dip		

Commentary: This root is given in Gerhardt (1983) and is found loaned into Plateau Chadic. The loss of a bilabial stop in C₂ position may be typical of WBC.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
112. #-rwa	to be sick, to feel pain			
Igboïd	Central Igbo	-ryà	'to be sick'	KW
Tarokoid	Tarok	rwa⁺		LB

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
113. #-sa(r)-	to cut			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	já	to slash	Ab58
Edoid	Uneme	se	to split	E
Nupoid	Nupe	sá	to cut, divide	Ba
Kainji	Lopa	sari	to cut off	RMB
Plateau	Mada	sär	to cut	Pr
	Izere	sá	to split wood	Ga

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: See also

Ref:

114. #-sa- Group	net Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	esa		Ba
Plateau	Kulu	isàk		Mo

Commentary:

Ref:

115. #-je- Group	guinea-fowl Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	felū	-lu is 'bird'	B
Kainji				
Plateau	Bu	etse		RMB
	Mada	tsè		Pr
Mambiloid	Nizaa	côû		Co

Commentary: See also 319., 329.

116. #-si Group	sesame Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	eso		
Idomoid	Idoma	oca		
Kainji	Mala	iswa		
	Pongu	kisere		
	Kamuku (Uregi)	bisawa		
	Kamberi	isua		
	tHun	gishak		
Plateau	Aten	ncwele		
	Ninzo	ashishi		
Jukunoid	Kpan	ishen		
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Tivoid	Tiv	ishwa		
Bantu				

Commentary: Sesame (*Sesamum indicum*) is usually to have been considered to have been domesticated in West Africa, so the term may well also apply to its wild relatives.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

117. #fir-	to run						
Group	Language	Attestation			Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	Yoruba	s	a		sa ⁺		
	PYIG	*s	á				
Edoid	Degema	s	ì	r	e		
Igbooid	Igbo	ḡ	s	ḡ		race, running	
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere		h	u	r	e	Ol
Nupoid	Nupe	bi	c	i	+		Ba
Idomoid							
Ukaan	Ishe	s	í		jó		
Kainji	Reshe	c	o				
Plateau	Shall	s	i	m			
	Ninkyop	s	i		yor		
	Izere	ì	ts	í			Ga
Tarokoid	Tarok	c	í	r			
Jukunoid	Hone	ʃ	á	r			St
Cross River							
Mambiloid	Kwanja	c	í	r	é	running	WW
Bantu	Yamba	c	ə	ŋ			

Commentary: Unless Guan **sili** is cognate, in which case this is PBK. Reconstructed for PIYE as *sra by Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:106).

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:136); Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:106)

118. #-ʃiN	pig				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Yoruboid	OD	esì		COA	
Edoid	Degema	è-sí		E	
Igbooid	Owere	éʒĩ			
Nupoid	Igara	eshi			
Idomoid					
Kainji	Reshe	hí-shíshibu	(í-)		
Plateau	Berom	zà			
Plateau	Eggon	è-dzì	(é-)	BCCW	
Plateau	Fyem	rifi	pl. bà-rìʃi	RMB	
Jukunoid	Jibu	zò			
Cross River	Umon	í-sí			
Bantoid					
Bantu					

Commentary: Presumably the wild pig, *Potamochoerus porcus*, although it has been sporadically adapted to the domestic pig. Igbooid is the only source for attestations with nasalization. It is possible that the za/zo forms in Plateau and Jukunoid are a separate root.

Refs: BCCW, II:266-269, Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:324-283)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

119. #-fi	dog			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	ashwa		Ol
Nupoid	Nupe	efi		Ba
Oko				
Idomoid	Eloyi	i-zu	(i-)	
Kainji	Kambari	mùùsô		
Plateau				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Fam	azho		
Bantoid	Tiv	swéndé		
Bantu	Setswana	nca		

Commentary: Note that this appears to be common Nilo-Saharan for 'dog' as well (Bender, 1981:258). This root is extremely widespread in Central Africa and yet does not form a convincing pattern. Bender (1981:258) marshals evidence for attestations in Fur, Sudanic, Kordofanian (he also cites Ari [Omoti] but this is probably just chance). Some of the Berber forms also seem to be connected with this, e.g. The domestic dog is not native to Africa (Epstein 1971:xx) and it is likely that Benue-Congo borrowed this root at an early date, perhaps contemporaneously with the diffusion of the dog itself.

Refs: Bender, 1981:258;

120. #-jim	hips, back			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Iyayu	asinmi		
	Okulosho	eshimi	back	
Akokoid	Oge	òsū		
Igboid	Igbo	aci	hip-joint	
Akpes	Daja	èfū		
Nupoid	Nupe	eshi		
Oko				
Idomoid	Yala	e-fi		
	(Ikom)			
	Eloyi	ósú	back	Mac64
Kainji	Ror	u-jin		Rg
	Ngwoi	e-əss		
Plateau	Eggon	usī		BCCW
Tarokoid	Tarok	a-səm		LB
Jukunoid	PYK	*sím		Sh
Cross River	Bokyi	esem		
Tivoid	Tiv	íkóósó	(?C)	
Ekoid	?	ny-səm		
Beboid	Noni	jim/jim	back	
Nyang	Kenyang	nsem	back (5)	Mb
Eastern	PEG	*-jim`	back	ELV
Grassfields				

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: This root is discussed in Williamson (1989,b:257) but with a different analysis. There is an old NC root #**ma** which is largely replaced by these #**siN** roots in BC. Following these forms, there is a development of a #**dum** root in Bantoid-Cross (see below). Forms such as the Tiv probably represent a compound with an old root #--ko which is found widely outside BC. Note, however, also Mumuye **sáń** 'waist' and Bambara **solo** 'lower back'.

Refs: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:526-285), Williamson (1989,b: 257)

121. #-sò	cowpea ⁴			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Nupoid	Nupe	ezo ⁺		B
Kainji				
Plateau	Alumu	dòsò		RMB
	Irigwe	ńzò		
Tarokoid	Tarok	asò		LB
Jukunoid	Wapan	a-sò		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Also in Adamawa: Mumuye **z̀̀k̀̀k̀̀**. See BCCW,8

122. #soN	sing			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Edo	só		Ag
Idomoid	Eloyi	so		
Kainji	Chawai	ɟam		
Plateau	Amo	su		
	Mada	seŋ		Pr
Jukunoid	Takum	sò		Sh
Tarokoid	Tarok	shì		LB
Cross River	Ukele	li-soom ⁺		BCCW
Mambiloid	Vute	soŋ		
Dakoid	Mapeo	sò̀̀n	a dance	
Tivoid	Tiv	ícam		
Bantu	Aghem	z̀̀m		

Commentary: This root is apparently not connected with the ***ko** root that appears to reconstruct to PVC level. However, it does occur in some Adamawa languages, e.g. Mumuye **sóó**, and was probably loaned into BC. Surprisingly, not cited in BCCW, despite its scattered presence throughout.

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁴ (*Vigna unguiculata*)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

123. #-soCu	God			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Okpamheri	oʒoʔozi		
Igboid	Igbo	cukwu		
Akpes	Daja	óòsùlù		
Nupoid	Nupe	sòkó		B
Oko				
Idomoid				
Kainji	Kambari	śśśóló		Ho65
Plateau				
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Biakpan	sukuren		
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Bantu	Ekparabong	ò-sówò		

Commentary: It is uncertain whether these are two distinct roots or a single root that has undergone an unusual shift. However, both the /l/ and /k/ in C₂ position are widely geographically dispersed. Obviously, a term like this is often a loan-word -still the geographical separation of the source terms argues that an *a priori* case can be made.

124. #ta-	to sting			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ta⁺		Ab58
Plateau	Izere	tá		Ga
Tarokoid	Tarok	tá		LB

Commentary: In Izere, the other common meaning is ‘to shoot’ which is the Proto-Niger-Congo root #ta. If this is a common transferred meaning then this maybe be a recurring semantic link rather than a distinct cognate set.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

125. #u-koro okra				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Isekiri	ikarabo		
Edoid	Isoko	okru		
	Degema	okru		
	Egene	ikuromu		
Igbooid	Igbo	tukwuru		
		okuru		
	Ukwuani	oka neetee		
Nupoid				
Idomoid	Idoma	ikpoho		
Kainji	tHun	tuko mek		
	cLela	tukwe nebe		
	Ura	ungu na		
	Basa-Gurmana	mu' una		
Plateau	Gusu	tukuku		
	Aten	kusat		
Cross River	Ogbia	okuru		
	Abuan	ukuru		
	Obolo	okpro		
Bendi	Bokyi	otu		
Mambiloid				
Tivoid	Tiv	atuul		
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

126. #-tsa to laugh				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Igbooid				
Nupoid	Nupe	etsã	n.	Ba
Cross River	Ibibio	sák		Co91
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sòr	laughter	Co
Tivoid				
Momo	Mundani	etso'o	to laugh	
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

127. #-tsu to die				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	tsu ⁺		B
Plateau	Mada	tsú		Pr
	Ningye	tu		RMB
Mambiloid	Nizaa	cwáa		Co
	Len	tsù		Co

Commentary:

Ref:

128. #-tsu chief, ruler				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	etsu ⁺		Ba
Idomoid	Idoma	òcé		Ab51
Plateau	Ninzo	ùcù		Hoe
	Kanufi	túm		Ge83
	Mada	cúnj		Ge83
Jukunoid	Chomo	kù		Sh

Commentary:

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:138)

129. #[u]-tsɛN star				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	tswangi ⁺	-gi = 'small'	Ba
Plateau	Mada	ntsē		Pr
Jukunoid	Wapan	a-tswí		Sh
Mambiloid	Tep	swauṽa		Co
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-sàŋ´		ELV

Commentary:

Ref: ELV (100)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

130. #-tsuN	Neck, throat			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Iyayu	ithuu		
	Atte	uturi		
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	kpatsù		B
Ọkọ				
Idomoid				
Kainji	Kambari	ḍḍl̀àkútsù		
Plateau	Aten	tsì̯ntsɔ		
Jukunoid	PJ	*tu		
Cross River	Ibibio	ìtóṅ		
Mambiloid	Tep	tóṅ		Co
Tivoid	Bekwara	ìtyúṅ		
Bantu	PGB	*tóṅ		

Commentary: This is a much rarer root than #koro which is widely attested in Benue-Kwa and perhaps in Adamawa as well. The nasal+affricate sequence only occurs in Nupe attestation but affricates occur widely even where reconstructions such as in Jukunoid and Plateau delete it. In Jukunoid, for example, Shimizu reconstructs *tsu for many subgroups, and it seems more credible that this should be taken for the group as a whole. Gerhardt reconstructs PP2 & PP4 without the affricate, but this too seems problematic.

131. #-tsuN-	spitting cobra			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Akpes	Ikaramu	ejò	snake	
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	etsù	cobra	B
Kainji	Kambari	ḍ̀'̀súsò	snake	Ho65
Plateau	Aten	tsum		
	Berom	tsés	snake sp.	Ku
	Koro	gá-ǰú	snake	Ge83
	Hyam of Kwoi	ǰúṅ	snake	Ge83
	Jili	sǿ	python	St76
Jukunoid	Abinsi	bu-su	snake	
Cross River	Legbo	zɔ	snake	
Mambiloid	Len Mambila	tsōn	cobra	Co
Tivoid	Esimbi	è-zù / é-	snake	St
Beboid	Mashi	dzú⁺	snake	K
Nyang	Kendem	ò'sù	snake	T & T
Bantu	Yamba	sòṅ		

Commentary: It is at least possible there are two distinct roots here, one of the form **-tsuN-** which applied to a species of snake, probably the spitting cobra, and the other, a generic form 'snake' which had the form **-saka** (see below 279.). The source of this may well have been Adamawa languages. The loss of the second syllable in some cases makes the assignment of individual roots difficult. Also in Chadic: Mangar **sô**, Gerhardt (1983:105)

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:105)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
132. #tolo	sew			
Edoid	Èdo	d̀̀l̀̀		Ag
Plateau	Horom	t̀̀l̀̀		RMB
	Fyem	twol		N
	Berom	t̀̀l̀̀		Ku
	Jijili	tu		RMB
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Camba	sárá		Co
Jarawan		#soro		
Bantu				
Bantu				

Commentary: Also in Chadic: Daffo, Bokkos **toor**, Fyer **sool**, Goemai **taan**.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:307).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
133. #-toNo	diarrhoea			
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Emai	otoo		
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	átũ		B
Plateau	Berom	tán		RMB
	Izere	kútaŋ		Ga
Cross River	Efik	ùtóró		
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
134. #-tswa	moon			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ofù		
Edoid				
Igboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	osu, ofu	? < Yoruba	O1
Nupoid	Nupe	etswa ⁺		
Ọkọ				
Idomoid				
Plateau	Jili	ɔtsa		St76

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

135. #wa		to want, desire		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	wa	Not in Abrahams!	
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	wá		Ba
Idomoid				
Kainji				
Plateau	Kadara	waŋ		BCCW
	Ayu	wǒk		RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	wá		LB
Cross River	Yakö	wó		
Ekoid				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:660-420)

136. tail

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Degema	ò-dúdù	penis	
Ayere		ùndu	penis, tail	
Akokoid	Arigidi	ìndù	penis	
Nupoid	Ebira-Koto	ìrètù	penis	
Plateau	Ce	u-ndú	tail	
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid				
Tivoid				
Beboid				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

137. #wa(N) to drink, ingest		Attestation			
Group	Language	I	II	Comment	Source
Yoruboid					
Edoid	Èdọ		wó		Ag
Plateau					
Tarokoid	Tarok	wá			LB
Jukunoid	Hone	wàà			St
Cross River	PLC		*ŋwóŋ		Co91
Mambiloid	Kara	wa			Co
	Ndoro		ŋgwō		Co
Ekoid	Ekajuk		wó		C
Tivoid	Amasi		ŋwó		
Beboid	Noni		wó		P

Commentary: The analysis of this root depends on whether it is considered to be the same as the more common **nó** roots via the medium of the an initial velar. Thus (Tivoid) has and it is possible that this has independently weakened in different places to produce the **waN** root.

Ref: Piron (1996, I:59)

138. #-wo to feel		Attestation		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	wo		Ba
Plateau	Ningye	wɔ		RMB
	Berom	wók	pl. wogos	RMB

Commentary: This may be just an extension of the more common **#wo** ‘to hear’ (67.).

Ref:

139.#(N)wom to be dry		Attestation		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	wo		Ba
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	wom		LB
	Yangkam	mwom		RMB
Jukunoid	Takum Jukun	wom ⁺		We
Cross River				
Bendi	Basang	ŋwom		RMB
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Camba	wúmníâ		Co
Bantu	PB	-yóm-		

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
140. #vwu	to jump			
Yoruboid	Igala	é-wù		
Edoid				
Igbo	Igbo	wù		
Nupoid	Nupe	fù		Ba
Okò				
Idomoid	Idoma	wù		
Kainji	Kambari	'y'yàwâ		Ho65
Plateau				
Jukunoid	PJ	*vwun		Sh
Cross River	Olulomo	wó		
Mambiloid	Vute	wày		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	PM	*-fèb		(?C)

Commentary: In some glosses the term for 'to fly' is used, as these can be the same word in some language families. There is, however, another reconstruction for 'to fly' #fu, which is evidently related (see above).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
141. #-ya	friend			
Yoruboid	Ife (Togo)	íya		
Edoid				
Igbo	Igbo	òyì		
Nupoid	Nupe	èyà		B
Okò				
Idomoid	Idoma	òyà		
Kainji				
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	ù-yén		LB
Cross River	Abuan	òyághìrì		
Dakoid	Gaa	nyàà		Boyd (ined.)
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
142. #ya	to give			
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Okpe	yε		E
Igbooid				
Nupoid	Nupe	yà		Ba
Idomoid				
Kainji	tHun	yá		Rg
	Gwamhi	yal		Rg
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Hone	yá		St
Cross River				
Tivoid	Tiv	ìyùá	'gift'	
Bantu				

Commentary: These scattered occurrences could be independent weakenings of the much more widespread /nya/ (also as na and nga) root (see BCCW:180).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
143. #yan-	spread in sun to dry			
Edoid	Isoko	yaya	be dry	E
Plateau	Kwanka	yan		BCCW
Cross River	PUC	*yáni		
Dakoid	Mapeo	yàrì		
Ekoid + Mbe	Mbe	yíánî		Bm
Tivoid	Ceve	íyanə		
Bantu	PB	-yáník-		
	Bulu	-yánè		

Commentary: cf. Mumuye yàà and related forms.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
144. #yaN	to yawn			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	yǎ		Ab58
Edoid	Edo	yǎyǎ		Ag
Igbooid	Ọñca	yé		(?C)
Nupoid	Nupe	yàyǎ		Ba
Idomoid				
Jukunoid	Kuteb	yàm		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid	Daka	yáa		
Mambiloid	Saam	é-yā`m		Co
Tivoid				
Bantu	CB	#-yáyũ		

Commentary: If the Igbooid citation is cognate then the initial consonant was presumably a velar. This is presently not cited, as all the other witnesses have an initial palatal. It is noticeable that these roots closely resemble the English 'yawn', suggesting that sound-symbolism may be involved in their formation.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:703-463)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

145. #(n)-(g)yati	buffalo			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	eya⁺		Ba
Kainji				
Plateau	Toro	yari		RMB
	Rukul	ì-yàt		RMB
	Cara	ì-yàt	pl. yat	RMB
	Mada	gyàr		Pr
Tarokoid	Yankam	yyet		RMB
Jukunoid	Oohum	ì-yà	pl. bà-	Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kara	nar		Co
Bantu	PB	#-náti		

Commentary: BCCW, 12 observed that a fused nasal prefix was characteristic of Bantu, but it also occurs in some Mambiloid lects. There is no evidence for C₂ in any WBC language. Also in Chadic: Daffo **yàt**

Refs: BCCW, I, 12;

146. #-ya	canoe			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	eya⁺		Ba
Kainji				
Plateau				
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Oohum	ku-ya	pl. a-	Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantu	PB	-(y)áto		

Commentary:

Refs:

147. #-ye	year			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Nupoid	Nupe			Ba
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere			Ga
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Kuteb	iyè		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Refs:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
148. #-ye	eye			
Yoruboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	eye		Ba
Kainji				
Plateau	Kulu	ì-zhí		RMB
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Icen	iyi		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
149.#-yoyo	snake			
Yoruboid	Igala	éjò		
Edoid	Èdọ	ènyé		
Kainji	Srubu	pi-yowo		BCCW
Plateau	Idun	i-yowo		BCCW
	Horom	ỳ̀	pl. iỳ̀ snake sp.	RMB
	Cara	ỳ̀̀	pl. ỳ̀̀	RMB
	Kulu	iỳ̀́́	pl. iỳ̀́́	Mo
Jukunoid	Wapan	a-j̀̀		
Cross River	Yakö	ỳ̀l		
Mambiloid	Kwanja	ỳ̀̀		
	Vute	ɲ̀̀́		Co
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	ỳ̀́́		B
	Tiba	ỳ̀́́		B
Buru	Buru	èỳ̀ /eỳ̀́		K
Tivoid	Tiv	ì-ỳ̀́		
Jarawan	Jaku	ỳ̀̀́́		
Nyang	Kenyang	nnỳ̀́		Mb
Beboid	Dzodinka	nỳ̀̀		LQ
Bantu	PB	#-ỳ̀́́kà		

Commentary: See also . The nasalization that first appears in Jukunoid is extremely widespread in Bantu proper. Initial nasals that show up in a number of languages are probably the frozen relics of a nasal prefix rather than part of the stem. The velar fricative in C₂ position is reconstructed solely on the basis of Jaku - this may turn out to be a relic of compounding.

Refs:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

150. #-ziN	blood			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Èrùwa	à-zí		E
Kainji				
Plateau	Koro	bà-jì		Ge83
	Gyong	kì-zí		Ge83
	Hyam	zì		Ge83
	Nindem	ù-Njì		Ge83
	Kulu	bèjí		Mo
	Mada	mègì		Pr
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Anang	í-dzùp		Co91
Mambiloid	Tep	dzìrĕ		Co
Bantu				

Commentary: cf. Hausa *jinni*

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:107, 128); Skinner (1996:xx)

3. Eastern/Western BC Dichotomy

3.1 Western Benue-Congo

3.1.1 Membership of Western Benue-Congo

3.1.2 Isoglosses Characterizing Western Benue-Congo

Ayere Chameleon **ayinlo** cf. Gade **áńáńa**, Igala **àhínya**, Idoma **àńáńa**,

151.#-bà	fever			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ibà		
Edoid				
Igboid	PI	*í-bà		W
Ayere- Ahan	Ayere	iba		OI
Nupoid	Nupe	ebà		B
	Gade	rɪ-bà		
Ọkọ	Magongo	iba		
Idomoid				

Commentary: These words are so similar to one another that a widespread loan must at least be suspected.

Refs:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
152.#da	to break			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	dá		Ab58
Edoid				
Akpes	Daja	làge		
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	la ⁺		Ba
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Ayere Basket (generic) **agb̀̀** cf. Epira **àb̀̀**, Yoruba **agb̀̀**, Igala **ágbà**

Ayere Pot (generic) **ufà** cf. W. Gbari **ɟawũ**, Igala **ùcà**,

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
153. #-dagba	elephant			
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Egèṅe	ś-dógb̀̀		E
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	dagba		Ba
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
154.#-de	to soak			
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Nupoid	Nupe	da ⁺		
Oko				
Idomoid				
Igboid	Ọ̀nịca	dè		

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
155.#eje	rain			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	òjò		
Ayere	Ayere	eji		
Edoid				
Nupoid	Gupa	eje		
Oko				
Idomoid				
Igboid				

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

156.#-ga chair, stool

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	àgá		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	ágá		Ag
Igboid	Owere	àgàd ^h à		W
Nupoid				
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary: Unless Mambila Cambap **gbaa** and similar forms are cognate.

157.#gba to follow (a road)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gba ⁺		Ab58
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	gba ⁺		B
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary: The Nupe form also means 'worship' and it is possible that this should be combined with **gɔN** 'to worship'.

158.#-gba fence, yard

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ḡgbà		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	ó-gbà		Ag
Igboid	Izii	m̀gbá		
Nupoid	Nupe	egbà		B
Idomoid	Idoma	ɔgbà		

Commentary: The most puzzling feature of this gloss is the presence of a syllabic nasal as a prefix in the Izii form. Other Igboid languages are more conventional, e.g. Owere **ṣbà**.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:759-520)

159.#-gbe hedgehog

Group	Language	Attestation				Comment	Source
Yoruboid							
Edoid	Emai	a	é	gb	é		
Igboid	Igbo		e	gb	e		
Nupoid	Nupe	kul	eŋ	b	e	Ba	
Idomoid	Idoma		ò	g	ò	(?C)	

Commentary: The common hedgehog, *Atelerix albiventris*.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
160. #-gbɛN	to plant	(tubers etc.)		
Yoruboid	Igala	gbè		
	Yoruba	gb̩		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	gbòó	'plant seedlings'	Ag
Igboid	Ọ̀nịca	bá	'cultivate cassava and other plants from cuttings'	
Nupoid				
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary: Suggested by Ohiri-Anichi (1991). Compare also the set for 'seed-yam' below which may be cognate. These words tend to be connected with the word for a plant in general -thus Yoruba **gb̩** gives rise to **égb̩** 'any plant'.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
161. #-gbi	seed yam			
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Emai	ígbi		
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	èbù		B
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary: This set may be connected with the general word to plant, treated earlier (q.v.). If so, then Yoruba **égb̩** a general term for plant, becomes cognate.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
162.#-gbɔ	witchcraft			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	egbére	elf/sprite	Ab58
Edoid	Auchi	ó-'gbɔ		
Igboid	Ụkwụani	ɔ-gbɔme		
Akpes				
Nupoid	Nupe	egà	witch's familiar	Ba
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:761-522)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
163.#-gbunu	world/people			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	àgbáyé		whole world
		gbogbo ayé gbàà		
Edoid	Èmalhẹ	ègbò		people
Igboid	Owere	àg^{wh}ùrù		people

Commentary:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:752-513)

164. #- chameleon

gemo

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	agemo		
Edoid				
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	gyama		
Ọkọ				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

165. #-golo earthworm

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	èkòlò		Ab58
Edoid	Avianwu	òxòlì		
Igboid	Igbo			
Nupoid	Nupe	ègo		Ba
Ọkọ	Magongo	ekòri		
Idomoid	Idoma			

Commentary:

166.#-gòN to worship

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid	Èdo	gò		Ag
Igboid	Ọnịca	gó		
Nupoid				
Ọkọ				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:671-431)

167.#ile Profit

Group	Language	Attestation			Comment	Source
Yoruboid						
Edoid	Emai	è		è		
Igboid	Igbo	è	l	è	lè	
Akokoid	Uro	e	r	e		
Ayere	Ayere	ε	l	é	money	
Nupoid	Nupe	è	l	è		B
Oko						
Idomoid	Idoma	ì	l	è		

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: Unless Dogon *tile* 'trade' is cognate. Also see Kulu *díbilì*.

168.#kɔ	to plant (tubers)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kɔ ⁺	dig (yam-heaps)	Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	kɔ		E
Igboid	Ọ̀nị́ca	kɔ	'plant tubers'	
Nupoid	Nupe	ká	to plant	B

Commentary: N.B. This may be Westermann's PWS root #kù-.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:583-342)

169.#-khekhe	Yam bean			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	sheshe		
Edoid	Èdọ	ikhekhe		
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	shinshere		
Idomoid				

Commentary:

170. #-kiN	ground			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba			
Edoid	Aoma	è-kè		E
Igboid				
Nupoid	Nupe	kin		Ba

Commentary:

Ref:

171.#ko	to uproot			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igboid	Igbo	kwò		
Nupoid	Nupe	ko ⁺		
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary: Only two examples, unless this is connected with Westermann's PWS root (W:234).

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
172.#-kɔ̃	heart			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ɔkɔ̃		Ab58
Edoid				
Igboid				
Ayere	Ayere	ɔkɔ̃		O61
Nupoid	Gade	rù-kwɔ̃		St
Okò				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
173.#-kpa	to sweep			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gba		
Ahan		kpàá		
Edoid	Urhobo	è-xwéré		
Akpes				
Igboid	Ọ̀nị́cá	k ^w a		
Nupoid				
Ọ̀kọ̀				
Idomoid				

Commentary: Suggested by Ohiri-Anichi (1991).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
174. #-kpala	flat			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kpelebe		
Edoid	Isoko	kpàlà		
	Èdo	pèrè		
Igboid				
Nupoid				
Ọ̀kọ̀				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:251)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
175.#kpɔ	to be cheap			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	kpɔ̃		
Edoid	Emai	kpo		
Igboid				
Ayere-Ahan	Ayere	kpɔ̃		O1
Nupoid	Nupe	kpwò		
Okò				
Idomoid				

Commentary: The original meaning may well have been 'to be numerous'.

176.#-la comb of bird

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igbo	Igbo	álò		
Nupoid	Nupe	èlǎ		
Oko				
Idomoid				

Commentary:

177.#-na Face-markings

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Èdo	ònǎ	design, pattern	Ag
Nupoid	Nupe	enà		
Idomoid	Idoma	ínà		

Commentary: Ijò (Gbanrain) has ìnǎ for 'tribal mark' (on face). This may be a culture word in this region.

178.#ofa arrow

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ofà		
Nupoid	Etuno	opà		
Ayere		ofa	unless < Yoruba	
Idomoid				

Commentary:

179.#-tsu hammer

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid				
Edoid				
Igbo	Igbo	ótùtù		
Nupoid	Nupe	ètsu		
Idomoid				

Commentary: Only two examples. N.B. Not if /cura/ (Kinyarwanda 'to smith' is cognate).

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

180.#-ze to reply				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	je		
Edoid	Edo			
Igboïd	Ọ̀nị́ca	za		
Nupoid	Nupe	zhè		Ba
Okò				
Idomoid	Idoma			

Commentary:

3.1.3 South-West Benue-Congo (Yoruboid-Edoid-Igboïd)

The languages within Yoruboid-Edoid-Igboïd are the core of Ohiri-Aniche's reconstructions, although her work is not aimed at establishing this as a distinct subgroup of Benue-Congo. However, subsequent research has cast doubt on the grouping of Akokoid with Yoruboid and the position of Ukaan is best described as uncertain. Provisionally Ayere-Ahan and Akpes are given their own co-ordinate branches. This is highly unsatisfactory historically and awaits further more detailed research.

181.#ba granary

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	abà	granary	
Edoid	Èdo	?		
Igboïd	Ọ̀nị́ca	ób'a	yam-barn	

Commentary:

Ref: Westermann (1927:204)

182.#bi to vomit

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Yoruba	bì		
Edoid	Èdo	bí		
Igboïd	Ọ̀nị́ca	bì		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:322-80).

183.#-bi heart

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Yoruboid	Igala	ù-bì		
Edoid	Isoko	ú-bí		
Igboïd	Ọ̀nị́ca	ó-bì		

Commentary: See also other roots for 'heart' (43., 334.).

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,48)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
184.#cáN	to fade			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ǰá		A
Edoid				
Igboïd	Owere	cá		
	Ọ̀nịca	cá	'turn pale, grey (hair)'	

Commentary: First suggested by Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:129). May be connected with the Proto-Volta-Congo #-kua- (perhaps better #kpara) of Westermann (1927:239).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
185.#ce	sigh (n)			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	òǰé		A
Edoid	Èdọ	suěě	to sigh	Ag
Igboïd	Ọ̀nịca	ósò		

Commentary: This word may have a phonaesthetic component.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (ined 293).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
186.#cu	to fall (darkness)			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ǰu		A
Edoid	Èdọ	so		M
Igboïd				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (ined. 289).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
187.#đĩ	to fry			
Yoruboid	Igala	dé'		
	Yoruba	đí		Ab58
Edoid				
Igboïd	Èkpẹyẹ	dè		

Commentary: See also 70.

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:114)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
188.#èpí.	penis, foreskin			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	è-pí	penis	
Edoid	Èdọ			
Igboïd	Ọ̀nịca	à-pí	foreskin	

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:24-4).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
189. #èpǎ́	hornbill			
Yoruboid	Yoruba			
Edoid	Èdo	è-pyápyà		
Igboid	Ọ̀nịca	à-pyá		

Commentary: First suggested by Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:24-5).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
190.#-gbe	Dance			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	gbè		sing chorus
Edoid	PE	gbe		
Igboid	Igbo	í!gbá	'dance' (in compounds)+ noun	

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
191.#-ja	Cloth for holding baby			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ḍ-já		
Edoid	Èdo	ḍ-zá		
Igboid	Owere	ḥ-jà		
	Agbani	ḍ-já		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:131)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
192. #ke	to rot			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ké		
Edoid	Èdo	keke+		Ag
Igboid				

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,I:137)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
193. #o-	rope			
kuN				
Yoruboid	Yoruba	ò-kù		Ab58
Edoid	Èdo	o-kū		Ag
Igboid				

Commentary:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
194.#pɪ	to carve	(wood etc.)		
Yoruboid	Yoruba	fɿ		
Edoid	Edo			Ag
Igbooid	Ọnịca	pí		

Commentary: First suggested by Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II:24-3).

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
195.#pu	to germinate			
Yoruboid	Igala	fù		
Edoid	Èḍọ	hu	grow (of children)	
Igbooid	Ọnịca	pú		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
196. #rV	to rot			
Yoruboid	Yoruba	rà		
Edoid	Èḍọ	ɾo		
Igbooid	Owere	re		

Commentary:

Ref: Ohiri-Aniche (1991,II,444:202).

3.1.3 Edoid-Akpes

Some lexical items shared between Edoid and Akpes suggest that the two are linked but this connection is clearly not strong.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
197.#-hoN	breast			
Edoid	?	ehani		
Akpes	Akpes	ɔhɔ̃		

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
198. #-komi	head			
Edoid	Ukue	ú-kòmì		
Akpes	Akpes	i-cūm		

Commentary:

Ref:

3.1.4 Nupe-Ọkọ-Idomoid

Fragmentary evidence is available from Ọkọ to support or disconfirm the NOI alignment.

199.#-fu	Chalk			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	efũ ⁺		Ba
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma	áfu		

Commentary:

200.#-gak ^{wu}	Crowned crane			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe		gakú	
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma		ògakwú	

Commentary:

201. #-tu	latex, gum			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nupoid	Nupe	ète		
Okó				
Idomoid	Idoma	ítu		

Commentary: This usually refers to the white latex from plants such as the rubber vine, used as a gum to snare birds etc.

3.2 Eastern Benue-Congo

3.2.1 Isoglosses Characterising Eastern Benue-Congo as a whole

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

202. #(N)-byep

oil, fat

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Chawai	bap		
Plateau	Berom	sēbwép	suet	Ku
	Nindem	à-hép		Ge83
	Bu	evi		RMB
	Jijili	mbye		RMB
	Kulu	dìpép		Mo
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	m-byep		RMB
	Tarok	m̀pìp	fat [animal]	LB
Jukunoid	Ashuku	-bu (e-)		Sh
	Hone	bìrù		St
Cross River	Ukele	le-be		
Dakoid	Nnakenyar	byep		
	e			
Mambiloid	Wawa	béléré	?C	Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Unless forms like Emai 'evbi' are cognate.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:134)

203.#-daka

leg, foot

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Chawai	tak		BCCW
Plateau	Eggon	o-daga		H
	Izere	ku-ták	pl. a-ták	Ga
Cross River	Akunakuna	o-dak		
Mambiloid	Len	dʒāk		Co
	Mambila			

Commentary: However, compare also Akpes-Ibaram **òdùk**, probably weakened from **òdùgù** (Daja) and possibly also cf. Momi **tàgá** 'foot'.

Ref: Boyd (1994:74)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

204. #-del		chin, beard		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	Obolo	í-dʒèt	beard	Co91
	PLC	*í-dèt	hair	Co91
Mambiloid	Mambila	deh²		PM
	Tep	dḕrè	chin	Co
Buru	Buru	e-dín (a-)		K
Tivoid	Tiv	índí'ér		
Beboid	Noni	ke-déw		Hy
Nyang	Kenyang	be-di		M
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-dìl'		ELV
Manenguba	PM	*-jèd		He45
Bantu	CB	*-jèdù		G930
	PB	-dèdù		Mh/Gr

Commentary: The Proto-Bantu reconstructions are applied to both chin and beard. This is found in Upper Cross as part of a semantic complex with 'chin' and 'jaw' and in Lower Cross as a general term for 'hair' (Connell, 1991:300). The innovation is thus only semantic and not phonological although the lateral in C₂ position appears to be a Bantoid innovation.

205.#-duma		back (body)		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	cLela	dìmà		
Plateau	Rukul	ì-dùŋ	pl. i-duŋ	RMB
Cross River	PUC	*-dìmá		
Dakoid	Mapeo	dìmáà	'back' in spatial sense	
Dakoid	Daka	dìm		
Mambiloid	Vute	njuúm		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	#-yùmá		

Commentary: This root is presumably a subset of the root for 'waist, hips' given above as #-**jim** which began to co-exist with it at the EBC level.

Ref: Williamson (1989:257-8).

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
206.#gwom	Chief, ruler, king			
Kainji	Butu	gwomu		
Plateau	PP2	*-gwam		
	Kulu	egwam		Mo
Jukunoid	Wapa of Mavo	kəmu		St
Cross River	Abuan	ùwémú		
Dakoid	Mapeo	gàŋ		
Mambiloid	Mambila	gáŋ		?
Bantoid				
Eastern	PEG	*-kúm		ELV
Grassfields				
Bantu	CB	#kúmù	(9/10)	

Commentary: Discussed in Voorhoeve (1980:71). The Mambila form /**gaŋ**/ is occasionally attested in Adamawa languages, e.g. Kim, and is possibly a (rare) loan into Adamawa from EBC. This may be a widespread culture-word in this region.

Ref: Voorhoeve (1980:71)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
207. #-haCa	to refuse (request)			
Kainji				
	Lopa	ahã		RMB
	cLela	hòlà		
Plateau	Fyem	ha		N
	Horom	hai		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: likely to be weakenings of more general **#ka** roots in Plateau

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
208. #hondo	gourd			
Kainji	cLela	ì-hònò		
Plateau	Təsu	h^wondò	hondò	
	Tyap	hám		
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Bantu				

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: This is the likely source of Hausa **kondo** which has in turn be been reborrowed into other languages such as Nupe **kondo**.

Ref:

209. #- Group	fan-palm ⁵ Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji Plateau	Horom	gàŋ		
Tarokoid	Tarok Yaŋkam	̀ngàŋ kaŋa		
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

210.#-kombi Group	ten Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji Plateau	Kulu	ukop⁺		Mo
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Jarawan Bantu				
Eastern Grassfields Bantu	PEG	*-(í)-gúm` -kúmi		ELV

Commentary:

Ref:

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁵ *Borassus aethiopum*

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

211. #-kɔ̀tɔ̀	giant rat			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	kwede		RMB
	Rukul	a-hɔ̀tɔ̀		RMB
Tarokoid	Yankam	ikot		RMB
	Sur	kwɔ̀r		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

212. #-kpaNa	to give			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Kambari	cââ		Ho65
	Lopa	kam		RMB
	Cinda	panam		Rg
Plateau	Rukul	kaŋ		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Kara	ha		Co
Ekoid	Ekoid Q	kâr		Cr
Bantu				

Commentary: Perhaps cf. **ke** forms in Edoid.

Ref:

213. #-kum	ten			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila			
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kúum	'nine' [!]	BF
Tivoid				
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	èghem		J
Ring	Aghem	é'ghím		Hy7
Eastern				
Bantu	CB	*-kúmɔ̀		G

Commentary: It may seem rather eccentric to cite 'nine' in Nnakenyare as a cognate for 'ten', but the closeness of the forms does suggest an erroneous interpretation of a loan-word. Hoffmann (1970:) notes that this seems to have been borrowed from proto-West Chadic.

Ref:

214.#-korə	gourd-bottle ⁶			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Basa	ee-kele		
Plateau	Təsu	kro		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Yakö	lè-kòló		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Ndoro	kǎrá		Co
Jarawan	Mama	koro		
Bantu				
Bantu				

Commentary: The vowel-shifts are less than transparent at present.

Ref: BCCW, I, 14;

215. #-kunu	bean sp. (cowpea?)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Buji	bi-cun		BCCW
Plateau	Horom	kúnì	pl. í-kúnì	RMB
	Reshe	hí-kòndò	pl. í-	BCCW
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Kuteb	cukùn		Sh
Cross River	Usakade	ṅ-kúndì		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Cambap	kúkúndì		Co
Jarawan	Mama	kuní		BCCW
Eastern	PEG	*-kún`		ELV
Grassfields				
Grassfields	Kom	è-kún	pl. à-	BCCW
Bantu	PB	#kúnde		BCCW

Commentary:

Refs: BCCW,I

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁶ (*Lagenaria siceraria*)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

216.#-kupu	bone			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	húp		RMB
	Bo	ukúp		N
	Jijili	uko	pl. ako	RMB
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	kup		RMB
Jukunoid	PJ	*kup		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Mvanip	foup		
	Kwanja Ndung	kfê		Co
Jarawan				
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-gùb`		ELV
Bantu	PB	*-kúpa		

Commentary:

Refs:

217. #-kuru	Nile crocodile			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Kambari	má-kúné'ǵ		Ho65
Plateau	Alumu	kùrù		RMB
	Ninzam	ŋkuru		Hoe
	Nindem	a-kur		Ge83
	Nungu	mekru		BCCW
	Kulu	èguru		Mo
Jukunoid	Kuteb	ù-kúr		Ko
Cross River	Ufia	kí-kwù		BCCW

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:131) reconstructs *-kut for his PP4. May be linked with widespread #-kuru forms for 'tortoise'.

Refs: BCCW,I,24; Gerhardt (1983:131);

218. #-mbal-	water			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Ura	mò		BCCW
Plateau	Horom	bamal		RMB
	Mabo	mal		N
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Icen	m̀bu		Sh
Bendi	Bokyi	ɔ-mo		BCCW
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Mvanip	mboo		Co
	Tep	mbúfī		Co
Bantu				

Commentary: Also found in Chadic, e.g. South Bauchi languages: Tala **maal**, Buli **màl**, but probably a loan into Chadic.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Refs:

219. #-num-	sun, dry season			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau				
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	PJ	*-nun	dry season	Sh
Bendi				
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kabri	nu	sun	Co
Eastern	PEG	*-núm`		ELV
Grassfields				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

220. #-rúŋù	knee			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Lopa	kuna rugu	kuna = leg	RMB
Plateau	Fyem	ðurúm	pl. arúm	N
	Kulu	guluŋ⁺	pl. eluŋ⁺	Mo
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	rúŋ	pl. arùŋ	RMB
Cross River	PLC	*é-lóŋ	pl. n-	Co91
Mambiloid	Mambila	nɔ²		PM
Dakoid	Nnakenyare (M)	lúù		BF
Buru	Buru	e-nú /a-nu		K
Bendi	Bekwara	ìrìnùŋ		St
Ekoid	Ejagham	rúŋ	5/6	W
Mbe	Mbe	lè-lú /bè-		BA
Tivoid	Batu Afi	ø-nún /á-		K
Beboid	Bukwe	ńnyũ		K
Grassfields				
Ring	Isu	íŋŷ		R
Nyang	Kenyang	né-nén /má-		Mb
Manenguba				
Bantu				

Commentary: Also in Chadic, e.g. Kulere 'arôm, Tangale purum and Mupun fùrùm. This is so widespread in Chadic that the #-rum element may have been loaned into Plateau and its prefix re-analysed.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

221.#manaCi	oil			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Gure	mani		
	Central Kambari	màni̯		
	Gwamhi	m-nomo		
	Lopa	mum		
Plateau	Tesu	amene		RMB
	Rukul	manai		RMB
	Berom	nói		Ku
	Aten	noi		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Abua	a-mUNUM		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Tivoid	Batu	mɛm		
Jarawan	Mama	murú		
Bantu				

Commentary: Although this form seems well established enough in Plateau and Kainji to imagine that its source is there and gave rise to Hausa **mai**, the Hausa form may well have been borrowed back into some languages giving rise to irregularities.

Ref: #mor- 'fat, oil, grease (D.:40,W.:257); Ehret p. 312

222. #	name			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	dí-fá	à-fá	RMB
	Cara	za		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary: The #sa- element is widespread in Plateau and Kainji given as #-**tak** in BCCW, II. Perhaps also Chadic cf. D-B and others **súm**

Refs:

223.# soCo	to drink			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Kambari	sòwô		Ho
Plateau	Aten	só		
	Berom	sõ		Ku
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid	Dõ	so		RMB
Mambiloid	Wawa	sòó-		P

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: Extremely similar forms to this turn up in Chadic languages and it seems quite likely that these were borrowed from Plateau Chadic into Plateau languages, as Newman (1966) reconstructs *sa as proto-Chadic. Gerhardt (1968/9:236) proposed *swa as proto-Plateau for ‘drink’.

Refs: Newman (1966); Gerhardt (1968/9:236); Piron (1996,I:68)

224. #soN- Group	to burn Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Wap ^{ba}	s ^w òṅ		St
	Icen	to		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid				
Nyang	Kitwii	sóŋ		T&T
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref: Piron (1996,I:90)

225. #(a)shishiri Group	sand Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	ʃiʃal		RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	ashishiri		RMB
	Pe	aʃiʃei		RMB
	Yaŋkam	ʃyar		RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	i-sa		Sh
Mambiloid	Vute	sasé		Gu
	Kwanja Ndung	sǎ		Co
Dakoid	Jangani	ʃu		RMB
	Gaa	aʃemʃemta		RMB

Commentary:

Ref:

226. #taŋ to think

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Berom	tórɔ̃ŋ		Ku
	Izere	tɔrɔŋ		Ga
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	PJ	taŋ		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Perhaps cf. Hausa **tuna**.

227. #Nton-

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	t-Hun	tònò		
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	ndom		LB
Jukunoid	Nama	dò		
Cross River	Nkekeleto (F)			
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	dṑ		Co
	Somyev	dwī		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	CB	-dì		

Commentary: This root is probably connected with the much more widespread roots with initial fricatives, e.g. Plateau /**ʃim**/ or Ogbia /**à-sòò**/ by the process t>ts>s and probably therefore ultimately to CB *-càk. Voicing the initial consonant gives the widespread but scattered /do/ forms. Discussed in BCCW:391 but with a different analysis.

CHECK!

228. #zomo

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	cLela	zomo		BCCW
Plateau	Horom	̀n-zòm	pl. i-zom	RMB
	Cara	izum		RMB
	Kulu	gésom	pl. bésom	Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	izum		LB
Jukunoid	Pindiga	zom̩ daũ		Sh
Cross River				

Commentary: Probably the origin of Hausa **zómóó**. cLela **zo** + **mo** i.e. root + noun-class affix.

3.2.2 Glosses defining EBC without Kainji

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
229.#-bànjà	arrow			
Plateau	Ningye	banduŋ	‘quiver’	RMB
Jukunoid	Kente	bagã		Sh
Bendi	Bekwara	ìrì-bán		BCCW
Mambiloid	Camba	banan		Co
Ekoid				
Mbe	Mbe	lè-bán	/bè-	BA
Tivoid	Tiv	í-vááń	/ á-	BCCW
Nyang				
Manenguba				
Bantu	CB	#-bànyà	(11/10)	G

Commentary: The Ningye citation is a guess – that quiver is a compound containing the **ban-** element. Strangely, Meeussen omitted this from his list of Bantu lexical reconstructions although it is clearly proto-Bantu.

Ref: BCCW (1:16)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
230.#-bV	to rot			
Plateau	Mada	bə	‘decayed’	Pr
Cross River	Ibibio	bù	be rotten	Co91
Eastern	PEG	*-bè-		ELV
Grassfields				
Bantu	CB	#-bòd-		CB
	PB	-bund-		

Commentary: See also #voN (26.), #kε (192.), #rV (196.).

Ref: Westermann (1927:213)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
231.#-bara	nail			
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	para	pl. a-para	RMB
Cross River	PLC	*ù-bàlá		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Ekoid				
Nyang				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

232. #-bin Group	drum Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Cross River Mambiloid Bantoid Ekoid Jarawan Bantu Bantu	Ibibio	í-bîť		Co91

Commentary:

Ref:

233. #-boN- Group	mosquito Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Cross River Dakoid	Nnakenyar e	bóóśí		BF
Mambiloid Bantoid Ekoid Jarawan Bantu Bantu	Somyev PB	təbogo -bu		

Commentary:

Ref:

234. #-boop- Group	blindness Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Berom	bwók		HK
Tarokoid	Sur	boobi	‘darkness’	RMB
Jukunoid	Hone	m̄-búbùp	‘deaf person’	S
Mambiloid	Mambila	bòb		PM
	Vute	ɓuɓu ⁺		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bððp		B
Tikar	Tikar	ɓwùbè		J
Bantu	PB	-bubu	dumb	

Commentary: Possibly a semantic shift from Jukunoid ‘deaf’, e.g. Hone m̄-búbùp ‘deaf person’.

Ref: Boyd (1994:54)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

235. #-gbun- Group	corpse Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Edoid	Ukue	ó-gũ		E
Plateau	Rukul	ru-bun	pl. a-bun	RMB
	Kwanka	pun		BCCW
	Berom	rěvín		Ku
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Legbo	ε-bono		
	Ufia	ù-ǫú		
	Usakade	ó-bó	pl. e-	Co91
Mambiloid	Nizaa	fún		Co
Dakoid				
Tikar				
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-gùń´		ELV

Commentary: Perhaps related to the #buŋ- root ‘to kill’ (). ELV (87) thought this might be an innovation for PEG but its presence in Edoid rather scotches that idea.

Ref: ELV (87);

236. #-càr- Group	woman Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Doka	o-sal		BCCW
Plateau	Lungu	ku-tsar		BCCW
Plateau	Eggon	à-flé		BCCW
Tarokoid	Tarok	ùcàr		L & B
	Sur	fyar		RMB
	Yangkam	ker		RMB
Tivoid	Bitare	o-kasa	pl. bi-	BCCW

Commentary: The Tivoid forms may have incorporated a Plateau prefix.

Ref:

237. #-cèn Group	to walk Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Hasha	fin	pl. fi-fin	RMB
Plateau	Nindem	sen		BCCW
Tarokoid	Tarok	cèn		LB
	Sur	3en		RMB
Jukunoid	Ashuku	cěn		Sh
Cross River	Legbo	seŋ		
Mambiloid	Kara	gen		Co
Ekoid	Common	jèn		
Tivoid	Tiv	dzèndè		

Commentary: These forms are probably related to a wider series with a stop in C₁, reflecting CB #-gènd-. Discussed in Williamson (1993: 393)

Ref: Williamson (1993)

238. #-ciN- to refuse s.t.

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Tarokoid	Tarok	cì		LB
Cross River	Akpet	ciŋ		
Cross River	Efik	sìn		
Ekoid	?	tên		

Commentary:

Ref:

239. #dana termite

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Ningye	dan		RMB
	Horom	dî-tàn	pl. à-tàn	RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	i-kataan		RMB
	Yaŋkam	daan		RMB
Jukunoid	Kente	età		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

240. #daNi louse

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Sur	dani		RMB
Cross River	PLC	*-láj		
Mambiloid	Nizaa	lām		Co
Ekoid				
Bantu	PB	-dá		

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
241. #dúrù-	go out, exit			
Plateau	Fyem	dú		N
Tarokoid	Yankam	turuk		RMB
Jukunoid	Chomo	dù		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Nizaa	dāw		Co
Ekoid	M	dúù		Cr
Bantu				

Commentary: Also found in some Plateau Chadic, e.g. Bokkos **du**, Fyer **ḍoo** but probably a loan into these languages.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
242. #-fala	twins			
Plateau	Chori	a-fala		
Cross River	Korop	-fát		
Dakoid	Mapeo	bàrùp		
Mambiloid	Mambila	fəl		
Bantoid				
Bantu	PB	*-pácà		

Commentary: Discussed in BCCW:389 and in De Wolf. Originally derived from an old PNC root for 'two'.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
243. #for	fry			
Plateau	Eggon	vro		H
Tarokoid	Tarok	for		LB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Tivoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: cf. also 187. Also in Chadic: cf. Bokkos **fwo'**, Kulere **máfòd**.

Ref:

244. #-fen	slave			
------------	-------	--	--	--

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	fén	pl. bá-fén	RMB
Jukunoid	Icen	fí		Sh
Cross River	LC	ífèn		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Len	mfè		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Jukunoid appears to have lost all trace of nasalisation. Also found in some West Chadic languages, e.g. Ngas **nfwan** but probably borrowed by them.

Ref:

245. #-fur- vagina

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	póré		RMB
	Mada	mfèn		Pr
Tarokoid	Yangkam	fyel		RMB
	Sur	fwɔn		RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	rù-mbūr	pl. à-	Sh
	Takum	sur-à		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Nizaa	fūr		Co
Tivoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

246. #-fwi night

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	fwat		RMB
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Wase	afwi		
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Tivoid	Abon	ε-fu		
Bantu				

Commentary: Also in Chadic: cf. Bokkos **fwo**?, Kulere **máfòd**.

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

247.#-gan	to work			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	hana		RMB
	Yeskwa	kan		BCCW
Tarokoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Jarawan	Jaku	gàn		BCCW
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

248.#-gbakVN	cheek			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	PLC	*é-bèk	pl. a-	Co91
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	gə̀yèn		Co
	Mambila	geí		P
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gbáaŋ		BF
Jarawan				
Ekoid	Nkim	ù-kég		C
Tivoid	Tiv	hóngwɛŋ	?	
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	ngò'		PD
Ring	Aghem	kíjò		Hy7
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-gèk'		ELV
Manenguba	Mkaa	εke'		Et
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:122)

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

249. #-k(p)ém to cut

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Jukunoid	Wapha	kəm		St
Mambiloid	Mambila	ker³		PM
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kék		B
Ekoid	Nkim	kêm		C
Mbe	Mbe	kpét~ɾ		BA
Tikar	Tikar	keti		J
Grassfields				
Ring	Oku	kâk	‘to cut loose’	R
Eastern	PEG	*kEk	CHECK!	EVL
Manenguba	PM	*-sél		He632
	Akɔɔse	-kwèl		He632
Bantu	CB	#-kèd		G1029
	PB	#-kek-		

Commentary: Although the first CV seems to be cognate throughout, the diversity of C₂ may be explained by reduplication and compounding. The common Manenguba forms probably are cognate if k→s, but the original initial is conserved at least in Akɔɔse as an alternative. The labial-velar is only preserved in Mbe, hence its reconstruction remains doubtful, although the labialisation in Akɔɔse also suggests its presence.

Ref: Boyd (1994:106)

250.#-kisi leg

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	kwèʃ		RMB
	Yashi	kis		BCCW
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	kwi		RMB
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Jarawan	check	#-kusu		BCCW
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

251. #-kok to grind

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Kulu	kwók		Mo
Tarokoid	Pe	kòk		RMB
Jukunoid	Oohum	hok		Sh
Cross River	PLC	*kók		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Tep	gō`kē		Co
Jarawan				
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-gòk-		ELV
Bantu				

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary:

Refs: ELV (91)

252.#-kom- Group	enset Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Izere	ìzàkòm	enset	Ga
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Kente	m-gbomgbo		Sh
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Eastern Grassfields Bantu	PEG	*-gòm´-	plantain	ELV

Commentary:

Refs: ELV (97)

253. #-koŋ Group	hill Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	PJ	*kùn		Sh
Cross River	Obolo	ó-góòŋ		Co91
Mambiloid	Langa	kun		Co
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kúsum	?C	BF
Jarawan				
Eastern Grassfields Bantu	PEG	*-kóŋ`		ELV

Commentary:

Refs: ELV (91)

254. #koN- Group	elephant Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Jukunoid	Jibu	tí-ŋkùna	CHECK	
Cross River				
Dakoid	Nnakenyar e	kòŋláa		BF
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gòŋ		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: See also #ton (335.). Since this root is apparently not in Plateau or Kainji, and has only scattered occurrences in Jukunoid and Cross River, it might be a Bantoid or Bantoid-Cross innovation. The Jukun forms, especially, look as if they have been borrowed with prefixes.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Ref:

255. #kpa	hatch (egg)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Təsu	kpa sebe	'to pound the egg'	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok	pwak		LB
Jukunoid	Kente	kyã		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

256. #m-bi-	road			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Jukunoid	Wase	pi-uŋ		BCCW
Mambiloid	Somyev	bi		BCCW
Tikar	Tikar	mbí		BCCW
Nyang	Kitwii	m̀-̀bì		TT

Commentary: This root was first identified by BCCW, II:292 and remains extremely scattered. Nonetheless, it is well-enough attested for chance to be excluded.

Ref: BCCW,II:292

257.#-merən	[to swallow],	neck, throat		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	mara	to swallow	RMB
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	mər	to swallow	RMB
Jukunoid	PJ	mèn	to swallow	Sh
Cross River	Kana	mẽẽ⁺		
Bendi	Bekwara	o-mere		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	mìn		BF
Mambiloid	Mambila Ba	m̀nà		Co
		m̀l		PM
Nyang	Kenyang	ε-mi /mε-		M
Bantu	Yamba	mì		

Commentary: This is an old PMC root for 'to swallow' but the semantic shift to 'neck' would appear to be distinctive in East Benue-Congo, perhaps even for Bantoid Cross. Boyd (1994:62) compares Mumuye **vm̀òrè** 'throat' but this is doubtful. This has been argued by Greenberg and Ruhlen to be a candidate for proto-World.

Refs: Boyd (1994:62), Williamson (1989b:253-4)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
258. #Nkat-	axe			
Plateau	Izere	kátèm	pl. nàtèm	Ga
	Nindem	à-Ngát		Ge83
	Mada	glà		Pr
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	PJ	*-kàt-		Sh
Cross River	PLC	*-kùt		Co91
Mambiloid	Ngubin	ngō		Co
Jarawan				
Bantu				

Commentary: Probably the source of Hausa **gatari**.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
259. #-noNi	bird			
Plateau	Horom	nɔ̀n pl. ì-nɔ̀n		RMB
	Mabo	anón		DN
	Kulu	gìnúŋ	pl. nìnúŋ	Mo
Tarokoid	Pe	i-nol		RMB
	Yaŋkam	noi		RMB
	Tarok	inyil		RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	i-noŋ		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Langa	nunu		Co
Bantu	PB	-(y)uní		

Commentary:

Refs:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
260. #N-pya	garden egg ⁷			
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	mpyár		LB
Jukunoid	Kporo	fyā		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid				
Jarawan				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁷ *Solanum melongena*

Ref:

261. #-rúŋù	knee				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Plateau	Fyem	ðurúm	pl. arúm	N	
	Jijili	ulu	pl. alu	RMB	
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	rúŋ	pl. arùŋ	RMB	
Cross River					
Mambiloid	Mambila	nɔ²		PM	
Dakoid	Nnakenyare (M)	lúù		BF	
Buru	Buru	e-nú /a-nu		K	
Ekoid	Ejagham	rúŋ	5/6	W	
Mbe	Mbe	lè-lú /bè-		BA	
Tivoid	Batu Afi	ø-nún /á-		K	
Beboid	Bukwe	ńnyū		K	
Grassfields					
Ring	Isu	íŋy		R	
Nyang	Kenyang	né-nén /má-		Mb	
Manenguba					
Bantu					

Commentary: Also in Chadic, e.g. Kulere **'arôm**, Tangale **purum** and Mupun **fùrùm**. This is so widespread in Chadic that the #-**rum** element may have been loaned into Plateau and its prefix re-analysed.

262.#-ji	fish				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Ukaan	Ukaan	é-ŋíí /í-			
Plateau	Jijili	ufwi	pl. afwi	RMB	
Jukunoid	Hone	jěy		St	
Cross River	Agwaagune	é'zén			
Mambiloid					
Tivoid	Batu Afi	sùù	pl. súú	K	
Jarawan					
Ekoid	Ekparabong	ɲ-sí /bò-		Cr	
Grassfields					
Momo	Mundani	sə-ø /tsə-		PD	
Bantu					

Commentary: Somewhere in Bantu this acquires a nasal prefix, presumably from the leftward movement of the nasal in C₂ position in Cross River.

Refs:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
263.#-ʃok-	bee			
Plateau	Berom	ʃòk		Ku
	Cara	ʃɔ		RMB
	Eggon	eso		RMB
	Kanufi	ì-ʃòk		Ge83
	Ninzo	íʃo		RMB
	Mada	ʃɔ		Pr
	Izere	íʃɔʃ	pl. íʃɔʃ	Ga
	Jijili	íʃɔ		RMB
Jukunoid	Icen	zu		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	síí	? C	BF
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sùú		Co
Bantu	PB	check!		

Commentary:

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:136)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
264. #takap	shoe			
Plateau	Mada	kpə		Pr
	Rukul	i-kpakəsak		RMB
	Fyem	k ^w arzák		RMB
	Horom	paksak		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	kap		RMB
	Tarok	akwàp		LB
	Sur	tukwa		RMB
	Yangkam	taxap		RMB
Jukunoid	Jiru	tak		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tàap		
Mambiloid	Nizaa	tá-w		
Jarawan				
Eastern Grassfields				
Bantu				

Commentary: Also in Chadic: cf. Ngas **kap**

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
265.#n-tok	gourd-bottle			
Plateau	Rukul	n-tòk	pl. i-tòk	
	Gyong	tok		
	Eggon	tuku		
Jukunoid	Kutep	kitù		
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	sɔ̀ɣ		Co
Ekoid	Ekoid S	̀n-tòg		
Bantu				

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: *Lagenaria siceraria*

Ref:

266. #(n)-tóN- Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Izere	ritóm	pl. atóm	Ga
	Jijili	utuma		RMB
Tarokoid	Pe	u-com	pl. a-com	RMB
Cross River	Uda	ńdòk		Co91
Ekoid	Nkim	ń-tâŋ /â-		C
Mbe	Mbe	ń-tâŋ /bén-		BA
Buru	Buru	e-θŋ /a-		K
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	ndŋ⁺		PD
Ring	Aghem	ndóŋ		R
Eastern	PEG	*-dóŋ`		ELV
Manenguba	PM	*-tóŋ		He272
Bantu	PZA	*-tóngò		J

Commentary: The nasal prefix is tentative simply because it is not attested in the ‘highest-level’ languages, Pe and Izere.

Ref:

267. #tópó Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Berom	tòrò	pl. to. ‘to throw spear’	Ku
	Izere	tubuk	to stab	Ga
	Nindem	tór	to stab	Ge83
	Mada	tõ	to pierce	Pr
Jukunoid	Hone	tyàb	to stab	St
	Takum	tò	to stab	Sh
Cross River	*PLC	*tóp		Co91
Mambiloid	Mambila	tɔb³		PM
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tuùp		B
Buru	Buru	etùm	spear	K
Tivoid	Batu Kamino	túmna		K
Grassfields				
Eastern	PEG	*-sòb-	to stab	ELV
Bantu	CB	*-tùp-		G
	PB	-túmo	spear	

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:70); ELV (100); Gerhardt (1983:137)

268. #-tuŋ- earthworm

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Sur	tɔŋli		
Cross River	Ibibio	utuŋ		

Commentary: cf. Adamawa Pugong *susõli*

Ref:

269. #voŋ-

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Eggon	vom		BCCW
Tarokoid	Tarok	wàñ		L & B
	Sur	vɔŋ		RMB
Cross River	Akpet	vðð		BCCW
	Obolo	fũŋ		
Ekoid	A	wðó		BCCW

Commentary: See also Mumuye *wóó*, though as a typical product of weakening this might also derive independently from the other Niger-Congo roots for ‘roast’. See also 1., 70.

Ref: BCCW, II

270.#(g)wɔk

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	wak		RMB
	Bo	wák		N
	Kulu	wók	swim	Mo
	Ce	ɔ-wɔk ⁺	river	RMB
Jukunoid	Hone	wðk		St
Cross River	Efik	wók		Co
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	wóok	water	BF
Mambiloid				
Ekoid	A	wóg		Cr
Nyang	Kenyang	γók		
Bantu				

Commentary: The shift from ‘bathe’ to ‘water’ is unusual, but seems credible here. ‘To swim’ in Daka is *gàà* + *wóok*. Discussed in Williamson (1993: 394)

Ref: Williamson (1993: 394)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

271.#-wol	nose			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Fyem	ɗu-wól	pl. awól	N
	Bo	awol		RMB
	Berom	wól	pl. bāwól	Ku
	Kulu	ìweene	pl. iweene⁺	Mo
Tarokoid	Pe	ti-yol	pl. a-yol	RMB
Jukunoid	Wase	nwán		Sh
	Jiru	nyom		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ɲwǔnâ		RMB
Bantu				

Commentary: The alternation between palatal and labial can be seen within Jukunoid.

Ref:

272.#-wyen	child			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Rukul	a-wyen	pl. i-wyen	RMB
	Horom	ùyèn		RMB
	Fyem	áyin	‘mother’	N
	Eggon	ǵ-wyí		H
	Kulu	ewen	pl. bewén	Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	ùyen		
Jukunoid				
Cross River	PLC	*ó-yén		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Suppletive plurals are common in words for ‘child’. The cognacy of the Fyem form for ‘mother’ is not improbable as there are many cases where words for ‘woman’ and ‘child’ are interchanged.

273.	Come out	(of room)		
#gwutu(k)				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Rukul	wuta^(k)		RMB
	Tyap	gwut		Fo
	Aten	wuru		
	Irigwe	wùrù		
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River	Anaaŋ	wùś		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

274. #-yak	fish			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	vyak		RMB
	Sur	ywak		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River	PLC	*é-ǰák /i-		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Throughout Lower Cross: Connell (1991) reconstructs ***é-ǰák /i-** for PLC. The v- in Yangkam is likely to be an old prefix fused with the stem (Yangkam now has no functioning prefix system).

Ref: Connell (1991)

275. #-yaNa	leaf			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Shall	yaŋ		BCCW
	Don	ya		RMB
Jukunoid	Kpan	à-nyì		
Cross River	Ikun	igwa	?C	
Dakoid	Daka	yáà		
Mambiloid	Mambila	yùè		PM
Nyang	Basho	ì-yà		TT
Bantu	CB	#-yánǵ		G

Commentary:

Ref:

276.#-yiti	body			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	yii		RMB
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	yit		RMB
Jukunoid	Hone	ǰìrì		St
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kabri	yeli		Co
Tivoid	Tiv	íyól		
Jarawan	Jaku	yídí		
Manenguba	PM	*-ól		
Bantu	PB	#yótu		

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
277. #-yok-	bee			
Plateau	Rukul	a-yo^(k)		RMB
Tarokoid	Sur	yyok		RMB
	Yangkam	vyak		RMB
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	yū'γ		Co
Tivoid				
Bantu	PB	 #-yókì		Me

Commentary: Assuming the Yangkam v- is an old prefix now fused to the stem. Sur, like Yangkam, has lost a functioning prefix system and the phonetic long /y/ may be the relic of an original i- prefix.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
278. #-yum-	thing			
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	iyém		LB
	Yangkam	byem		RMB
Cross River				
Bantu	PB	 #-yúmà		

Commentary: Assuming the Yangkam b- is an old prefix now fused to the stem.

Ref: BCCW (II:368)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
279. #-zak-	snake			
Plateau	Sholyo	zaak		BCCW
Tarokoid	Pe	ì-fak		RMB
Jukunoid	Takum Jukun	bu-sùkú		BCCW
Cross River	Ibibio	ásák	snake sp.	
	Ukele	ε-zzokɔ		BCCW
Mambiloid	Ba	sab		Co

Commentary: Cf. Mumuye **sokɔ** 'snake'.

3.2.3 Glosses defining Kainji + Plateau+ Tarokoid+Jukunoid subgroups but not extending outside

3.2.3.1 Kainji + Plateau+ Tarokoid but not extending outside

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

280. #-daŋ agama lizard

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Lopa	kadaŋi	River frog	
	Rogo	u-kundu	?	
Plateau	Berom	kadeng	land monitor	
	Izere	àdàŋ pl. ádàŋ	lizard	
	Mada	njìlàdaŋ	agama	

Tarokoid
Cross River
Dakoid
Mambiloid

Commentary: Probably the source of Hausa **kadangare**.

Ref:

281. #fip(al) carve (wood)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Kurama	ɟava		BCCW
	cLela	sèbè		BCCW
Plateau	Rukul	ɟen		RMB
	Ningye, Bu	ɟe		RMB
	Izere	sep	sharpen	Ga
	Lungu	tsé		Ge83
	Gyong	cè		Ge83
	Cara	ɟipal		RMB
	Kulu, Kwanka	Nindem, sep		BCCW
	Jju	ɟab		BCCW
Tarokoid	Pe	ɟap		RMB

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:106, 135) reconstructs ***tse** for his PP2 and ***sep** for PP4. Is this an innovation for KPT?

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:106, 135)

282. #rowo ram

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Kuki	rago		Rg
Plateau	Izere	ró		Ge83

Tarokoid
Cross River
Dakoid
Mambiloid

Commentary: Perhaps the origin of Hausa **rawa**.

Ref:

283. #-yoŋ-	hunger				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Plateau	Fyem		yóŋ		DN
	Horom	yɔŋɔ			RMB
	Berom		vyōŋ		Ku
	Kulu		iyon ⁺		Mo
	Mada		gyòŋ	starvation	Pr
Tarokoid	Tarok		ayán		LB
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Tivoid					
Bantu					

Commentary: The Berom v- is likely to be an old vi- prefix now fused to the stem. Berom has innovated in its prefix system, but many words have non-prefixing pluralisation strategies. This may be the case with Mada g- as well. The likely source of Hausa *yunwa*.

Ref:

284.#-yok-	gourd (generic)				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Plateau	Fyem		yo	pl. yó	DN
	Horom	yòk		pl. ì-yòk	RMB
	Kulu		ùyóŋ	pl. iyòŋ	Mo
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam		yok		RMB
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Tivoid					
Bantu					

Commentary:

Ref:

285. #zíní	one				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji	cLela	ciŋ		?C	
Plateau	Che	ʃin			BCCW
	Jari	zíní			BCCW
	Hyam	zɪnɪ			BCCW
	Horom	ten			RMB
	Izere	ziniŋ			Ga
	Kulu	dizin			Mo
Tarokoid	Tarok	ziŋ			LB
	Sur	ʒaŋna			RMB
Jukunoid	Jibu	zinzo			Sh
Cross River					
Mambiloid	Saam	tsín			Co
Bantu					

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: See also 103. Gerhardt (1983:95) reconstructs ***gini** for his Proto-Plateau 2, but this seems unlikely, based on the external cognates. If there is a general process whereby an initial stop becomes a fricative, as appears to be the case with ‘walk’ (237.) then this may be cognate with the #kVNi roots found in Benue-Kwa and Ijoid.

Ref: Armstrong (1964:45), Gerhardt (1983:95), Williamson (1989b:255, 1993:396)

3.2.3 Glosses defining Plateau + Tarokoid + Jukunoid without Kainji

3.2.3.1 Glosses defining Plateau + Tarokoid

286. #bara	remember			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	bara		RMB
	Berom	bàrē	‘to think, remember’	Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Bantoid				
Ekoid				
Nyang				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

287. # barak	to throw			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	barak		Ga
	Berom	bárák		Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

288. # besen̄		to spoil		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	besen̄	to spoil	Ga
	Berom	bésèn̄	to be worried	Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

289. # bíriṅ		to roll		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	biriṅ		Ga
	Berom	bíriṅ		Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

290. # b̄or̄ək		to worry		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	b̄or̄ək	‘shifty behaviour’ to worry	Ga
	Berom	b̄r̄ək		Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
291. #buŋ	kill, to			
Kainji				
Plateau				
Jukunoid	Proto-Jukunoid	*bwaŋ		Sh
Jukunoid	Oohum	boŋ		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid				
Momo	Mundani	-bùŋé		PD
	Ambele	bògé		P
Bantu				

Commentary: Piron (1996,II: 496) gives some scattered Bantu forms with -bok- elements she considers may be cognate; this is here considered unlikely.

Ref: Piron (1996,II: 496)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
292.#ciN	to dig			
Kainji				
Plateau	Berom	cīŋ		Ku
	Fyem	cìn		N
	Horom	sim		RMB
Tarokoid	Yaŋkam	suŋ		RMB
	Pe	sum		RMB
	Sur	ʃin		RMB
Cross River	Oro	tí		Co91
Mambiloid	Kwanja	kì		Co
	Ndung			
Bantu	PB	-cimb-		

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
293. #dí	to see, look			
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	di		Ga
	Berom	dí		Ku
Jukunoid	PCJ	*di		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Tep	dā		Co

Commentary:

Ref:

294. #dun	to miss			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	dun	to miss	Ga
	Berom	dún	to not recognise	Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

295. #ei	yes!			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	ei		Ga
	Berom	èi		Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

296. #firik	to squeeze			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Izere	firik	to squeeze	Ga
	Berom	fìrik	to tie tightly	Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
297. #foN	to climb			
Edoid	Egene	funú		T&W
Kainji				
Plateau	Fyem	fùŋ		N
	Horom	fɔm		RMB
	Yeskwa	fó		
	Hyam	fó-r		RMB
	Ce	hu		RMB
Tarokoid	Sur	fwɔŋ		RMB
	Yaŋkam	fwɔm		RMB
Cross River				

Commentary:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
298. #-fwì	Bambara groundnut ⁸			
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	áfwì		RMB
	Nindem	à-Nfi		Ge83
Tarokoid	Tarok	afi		LB
Jukunoid	Kente	à-fyi		Sh
Cross River				
Bantoid				
Bantu				

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:126) reconstructs *-Nfi for PP4. Also found in some West Chadic languages, e.g. Ngas **fɔfwas** but probably a loan into these languages.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:126)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
299. #fwon-	to take the skin/fur off an animal			
Plateau	Berom	wɔnɔ̄		Ku
	Izere	wos		Ga
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Ashuku	fwã		
Mambiloid	Mbamnga	wanē´		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁸ *Vigna subterranea*

300. #gaŋ	to push				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Izere	gaŋ		Ga	
	Berom	gāng	cont. gangas	Ku	
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid					

Commentary:

Ref:

301. #garaŋ	to raise				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Izere	garaŋ	high	Ga	
	Berom	gàràŋ	to raise	Ku	
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid					

Commentary:

Ref:

302. #	grass (generic)				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Plateau	Ningye	gəga		RMB	
	Mada	gōgā		RMB	
	Ce	kugá	pl. agá	RMB	
	Ninzo	agígá		RMB	
	Bu	giga		RMB	
Tarokoid					
Jukunoid					
Mambiloid					
Bantu	PB	-gangu			

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

303.#-hwò	fall			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Fyem	hó		RMB
	Horom	hwa		RMB
	Hasha	hu		RMB
	Aten	hwò		RMB
	Berom	hwò		HK
Jukunoid	Chomo	ho		Sh

Commentary: A weakened form of the more widespread #-gwa root, which appears to be diagnostic for Benue-Congo. The widespread Plateau forms can have a labialised velar, cf. Wapan **ko**, Cara **go**, Jar **ko**, Yala **gwo**, PB #-gwa.

Ref:

304. #kanaŋ	to rinse			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Izere	kanaŋ	to rinse	Ga
	Berom	kānāng	to drain off remainder	Ku
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary:

Ref:

305. #kap	to divide, share			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Kulu	káp		Mo
		*kaP		Sh
Jukunoid	PJ			
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Somyev	gap		Co
Eastern Grassfields	PEG	*-gàb-		ELV
Bantu	PB	-gab-		

Commentary:

Ref: ELV (88)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

306.#-kok	chest			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Kulu	ìkwòk	pl. ikwók	Mo
	Horom	kàcík	ì-kàcík	RMB
	Sur	nkwak		RMB
	Tarok	ìkóksók		RMB
Jukunoid	Kuteb	kì-kok	pl. à-	Sh
Mambiloid	Tep	kàŋ		Co
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gàngà		BF
Bantu	PB	-kodo		

Commentary:

Ref:

307. #mana	salt			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Ror	r-ma		Rg
	Kuki	maand		Rg
Plateau	Toro	ama		RMB
	Cara	maŋ		RMB
	Rukul	mmøk		RMB
	Ninzo	ì-mà		Ge83
Tarokoid	Tarok	m̀m̀àn		LB
Jukunoid	Takum Jukun	manà		We
	Oohum	bu-ma		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Nizaa	mám		Co
Bantu				

Commentary: Fulfulde has **manda**, presumably a loan from a Kainji language, and Hausa uses this word for medicinal salt.

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:131);

308. #mbe	ask (question)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	mwe		RMB
	Bu	mye		RMB
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid		#mbe		
Cross River		#mbe		
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Refs:

309. #m-bin	ground, earth				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Tyap	m̀-bỳin		Ge83	
	Mada	m̀me	soil	Pr	
Tarokoid	Tarok	m̀-b̀in		LB	
Jukunoid	PJ	*m-bi	clay, mud	Sh	
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid	Nizaa	́in		Co	

Commentary:

Ref:

310. #mok	to wish, desire				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Izere	mok		hope	Ga
	Berom	m̀k	pl. mogos	to wish, desire	Ku
Tarokoid					
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid					

Commentary:

Ref:

311. #-naraŋ	spider				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Plateau	Izere	anaraŋ	pl. ánaraŋ		Ga
	Berom	nàràŋ			Ku
	Aten	naraŋ	pl. nwyaraŋ		RMB
Tarokoid					
Jukunoid					
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid	Vute	ndàŋdāréé			Co

Commentary:

Refs:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
312. #-nesit	person			
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	nèsít		RMB
	Nindem	nesit		BCCW
	Yeskwa	unet		BCCW
	Berom	mwāsī	<mwat swi = black person	Ku
Tarokoid	Pe	u-nsit		RMB
	Yaŋkam	nyit		RMB
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary: A regional expansion of the much older PMC root #ni-, #nu-.

Refs:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
313. #-murum	hyena ⁹			
Kainji				
Plateau	Hasha	murun		RMB
	Berom	mwùrúm	bēm̀wùrúm	RMB
	Izere	amurum	ámurum	RMB
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid	Kporo	ì-tùmú	?C	Sh
	Jiru	à-lùm		Sh
Cross River				
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				

Commentary: Also in Chadic: Ron **murum**

Refs:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
314. #-no	to fight			
Plateau				
Jukunoid	PJ	#nu		Sh
Cross River	PUC	#no		D
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Ekoid	Mbe	lie		
Nyang	Kenyang	nu		
Bantu	CB	-dù		G

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

⁹ (*Crocuta crocuta*)

Commentary:

Refs: Mische (1985:264)

315. #-rVmá	farm				
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Horom	rámá	i-rámá	RMB	
	Fyem	rám		DN	
	Lungu	rúm		Ge83	
	Gyong	kì-lúm		Ge83	
	Nindem	à-rúm		Ge83	
Tarokoid	Pe, Yaŋkam	ram		RMB	
	Tarok	irà̀m		RMB	
Jukunoid					
Cross River					
Dakoid					
Mambiloid					

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:101, 126) reconstructs *-lum for his PP2 and *-dum for PP4. Ngas (West Chadic) has mà̀r which looks like metathesis

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:101);

316. #reNe	say (+ direct	speech)			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Kainji					
Plateau	Egon	lú	?C	H	
	Horom	reŋ		RMB	
	Mada	ré		Pr	
	Kamanton	ren		BCCW	
	Nindem	ù-ré		Ge83	
Tarokoid	Tarok	là		LB	
Jukunoid	Takum	dã		Sh	
Cross River	Bokyi	laa			
Grassfields	Wimbun	lá			

Commentary: BCCW, II proposes a different analysis.

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:125);

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

317. #rip Ask a question

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Surubu	rivi		
Plateau	Rukul	rip		RMB
	Nindem	rip		Ge83
	Mada	rì		Pr
	Lungu	dèpá		Ge83
	Gyong	riptsá		Ge83
	Doka	lirbi		
	Hyam	lib(rə)		Ge83
	Hasha	rifi		RMB
	Ningye	ryip		RMB

Tarokoid
Jukunoid
Cross River
Dakoid
Mambiloid

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:101, 125) reconstructs PP2 as *lip +V and PP4 as *dip.

Refs: Gerhardt (1983:101)

318. #rusu to strike, beat

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Berom	rūsū	pl. rū	Ku
	Izere	rus		Ga
Tarokoid				
Mambiloid	Camba	lúâ		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

319. #-ʃɔk-

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji	Lopa	ʃoogu		RMB
	Reshe	hí-c̀̀̀̀k̀̀̀́		
Plateau	Eggon	i-ʃugu		BCCW
	Kamanton	ʃok		BCCW
	Koro	ì-jók		Ge83
	Lungu	ì-dzók		Ge83
Tarokoid	Tarok	irusok		LB
	Sur	nʃyɔk		RMB
Jukunoid	Pindiga	a-swa-ì		Sh
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Mvanip	sAŋ		Co

Commentary: See also 115., 329. for similar and perhaps related roots. Gerhardt (1983:108) reconstructs *zok for his PP2. The Plateau #wok forms given in BCCW are probably weakened versions of #-ʃɔk-.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:108)

320. #taNda	to count			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Rukul	tan		RMB
	Hasha	tam		RMB
	Jju	twaŋ		
	Kulu	tala		
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	tâŋ		Co
Bantu	PB	#-tád-		

Commentary:

Ref:

321. #tɛ	pour			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Horom	tɛ		RMB
	Berom	tè		Ku
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				

Commentary: Perhaps limited to Plateau, unless Edoid #tu forms are cognate.

Ref:

322. #-tara	nine			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Kainji				
Plateau	Che	ataras		
	Fyem	téres		N
	Doka	o-tara		BCCW
	Nindem	ù-trás		Ge83
Tarokoid				
Jukunoid				
Cross River				
Mambiloid	Kara	tira		Co
Bantu				

Commentary: Presumably all interconnected with Hausa **tárà**, and possibly in origin 3 x 3.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:137)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

323. #tɛnɛ		dry in sun		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Horom	tɛnɛ		RMB
	Berom	tɛ̀nɛ̀		Ku
	Lungu	térá		BCCW
	Nindem	tɛ̀ɛ̀		
Tarokoid				
Mambiloid	Tep	tɛ̀ɛ̀nɛ̀		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

324. #-vat		rizga		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Berom	vát		Ku
	Ce	avat		RMB
	Fyem	vù	pl. fu-vù	RMB
Tarokoid	Tarok			
Mambiloid				
Bantu				

Commentary: A small edible tuber, *Solenostemon rotundifolius*

Ref:

325. #yila		to call		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Ber	yilà	pl. yishi	Ku
	Izere	yis		
Tarokoid				
Mambiloid	Kara	yira		Co
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

326. #zaN		millet		
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau				
Tarokoid	Tarok	ìzàŋzɛŋ	finger-millet	LB
Jukunoid	PJ	*za	millet	Sh
Bantu				

Commentary: Shimizu (1880, II:230) notes that the original meaning in Jukunoid languages was ‘millet’ but that it has shifted to sorghum in most languages.

Ref:

327. #-zat- Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Plateau	Jijili	o-zwa	pl. a-	RMB
	Aten	za		
	Tyap	zat		
	Nindem	ìját		Ge83
Tarokoid	Tarok	izhar		
Jukunoid	Icen	wiza		Sh
Bantu				

Commentary: Gerhardt (1983:128) reconstructs *-yat for PP4, but combines #-zat- and #-ya roots which are here treated as distinct.

Ref: Gerhardt (1983:128)

3.2.4 Bantoid-Cross

328.#-cíŋ Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	PLC	*cíŋ	strong	C
Mambiloid	Vute	tāám	strength	
	Mambila	tuŋ	to be strong	Z
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tóŋ	be strong	BF
Nyang	Kenyang	betaŋ	power	M
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:70)

329. #- kaŋga Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Bendi	Bekwara	à-káŋ		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kaa⁺		BF
Mambiloid	Mambila Ba	ŋgaŋ		Co
Tivoid	Tiv	ì-kángé		
Jarawan	Jaku	góŋ		
Nyang	Kenyang	ε-gháŋ /be-		M
Bantu	PB	#-káŋga		

Commentary: See also 115., 319. for similar and perhaps related roots. This root is first pointed out as a Bantoid-Cross innovation in BCCW,I. It is assumed that devoicing took place several times independently. Dakoid forms presumably omit C₂.

330.#-mboN- to mould

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	PLC	*bót		
Mambiloid	Nizaa	bom		E
Ekoid	Nde	mðŋ	?C	C
Tivoid	Batu Kamino	bòm		K
Beboid	Noni	bóm		Hy9
Ring	Aghem	éboŋ		Hy7
Bantu	PB	*-bómb-		M

Commentary: Discussed in BCCW (II:61) where this root was wrongly identified as a Bantoid innovation. The Lower Cross forms are cognate, although the -t- in C₂ is assumed to be a local development. It is assumed that the Ekoid forms are cognate and go back to an old form with a homorganic bilabial nasal. BCCW shows that m/ŋ frequently correspond in the C₂ slot.

331. #n-jəŋ roast, cook

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	Ibino	níðŋ	cook	Co
Dakoid	Daka	jðð	cook	BF
Ekoid	Nkim	yðð	roast	BCCW
Mbe	Mbe	jùe	roast	
Beboid	Noni	yəŋ	roast	Hy9
Tivoid	Esimbi	ŋyu	roast, heat	
Ring	Aghem	éñə	roast	Hy7
Nyang	Kenyang	ná	cook	Mb
Manenguba	PM	*-nyáŋ	roast	He596

Commentary:

Ref:

332.#-saN arrow

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	Okpoto	ke-sa		
Dakoid	Dõ	seŋ		RMB
Mambiloid	Mambila Ba	sàŋ		Co
Ekoid				
Mbe				
Nyang				
Manenguba				

Commentary: cf. Common Mumuye ʃðŋ.

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

333. #-tam	hat			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	PLC	*i-tàm		Co91
Dakoid				
Mambiloid	Ba	tam		Co
Eastern	PEG	*-tám`		ELV
Grassfields				
Bantu				

Commentary:

334. #-tima	'heart, liver'			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	PUC	*-tima		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	téém		
Mambiloid	Mambila	temé ²¹	liver	
Bantoid	Mbe	bù-tèm		
Tivoid	Tiv	ɟima		check
Bantoid (Ring)	Kom	atém		
Bantu	PB	*-tíma		

Commentary: See also other roots for 'heart' (43., 183.). Recent work in Mambila and Dakoid suggests that there are different lexemes for the anatomical heart seen when animals are slaughtered. However, this word is the usual translation of heart, because of its associations with the seat of the emotions. Discussed at length in BBCW (I:201 ff.) as an innovation confined to Cross River and Bantoid. Since it is widespread in neighbouring Adamawa languages, it is likely that these are the source.

335. #ton	elephant			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Cross River	Bete	ù-tò	pl. ì-	
Mambiloid	Len	tòn		Co
Bantoid				
Bantu	Lamnsọ	kì-tàm		
	PB	-tembo		

Commentary: Probably originally borrowed from Adamawa languages (cf. Samba Leeko **ton**). See also #koN- (254.)

Ref:

3.2.5 Bantoid

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

336.#-ɲ-ganda	crocodile			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nàmàn	?C	BF
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ɲ-gaaná		Co
	Mambila Ba	ɲ-gàgà		Co
Tikar	Tikar	ɲ-gã		BCCW
Jarawan	Mbula	gandu		
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	ɲgèe		S
Momo	Meta	ɲ-gàn		
Eastern	Bati	ɲ-gé!ɲ		
Manenguba	PM	*-gàndó		He215
Bantu	PB	#-gandu		
Bantu	CB	*-gàndó		G783

Commentary: No trace of the **-du** element in North Bantoid, so this may have been innovated in South Bantoid, or even as late as Jarawan. The **ɲ-** that appears fused to the stem in Mambiloid was presumably a functioning prefix early in the history of the group, and remains so in Grassfields languages. Yangkam (Tarokoid), however, also has **gaan**, but the absence of this root in any neighbouring language suggest the possibility that it is a Bantoid innovation, carried back to Central Nigeria by Jarawan Bantu and then loaned back into Yangkam.

Ref: BCCW (1:96)

337. #bùɲ	to wrap			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bùɲ		B
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Bantu	CB	*-bùɲg-		G

Commentary: Wapha (Jukunoid) **bàn** may be cognate

Ref: Boyd (1994:54)

338. #bùt	to kill			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bùt		B
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Bantu	CB	*-bùd-		G

Commentary: Boyd (1994:54) makes the intriguing observation that there is a similar root in Central Chadic languages.

Ref: Boyd (1994:54)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

339. #-cebe arrow

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	cèw	'arrow-shaft'	E
Bantu	PB	*-cèbè-		M

340. #-conde mouth

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila (Atta)	sòn		P&H
	Kwanja	sùndù		
Tivoid	Batu Kamino	-só pl. á-		Koops
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	júu		S
Eastern	PEG	*-cò`		EVL
Manenguba	PM	*-sòl		He53

341. #-dàdò bridge

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Kwanja	dàr-bì		W
Beboid	Noni	dwèè		Hy
Grassfields				
Eastern	PEG	*-dàl	CHECK!	
Ring	Bu	óndô		R
Manenguba	Mkaa	ε'lalá		Et
Bantu	CB	*-dàdò		G460

Commentary: Most of the Ring languages have forms something #ula-. It seems likely that the d- in C₁ has weakened to l- and C₂ has been lost. The Bu form is thus the only one that retains C₂ where C₁ l- has gone to n- and C₂ l- has gone to d-.

Ref:

342. #dam tribe

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare			
Ekoid				
Tivoid	Esimbi	u-tumù /o-		St
Manenguba	Mkaa	etúmbá		Et
Bantu	CB			

PLC *-dèn with Dakoid deŋ 'tribe'

Commentary:

Ref:

343. #-dèè to be long

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila	de³	long	PM
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dèè-	far, long	B
Tivoid	Esimbi	odĩ	far, long	St
Eastern Manenguba				
Bantu	CB	*-de-	be long	

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:74)

344. #-guri small ruminant

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	jíí		
	Kwanja	júrì		
Dakoid	Taram	dḡun		
Tivoid	Esimbi	e-ndzàrè	sheep	St
Beboid	Nkor	n-zì pl. ní-zí		
Buru	Buru	aṅgírò	he-goat	K
Jarawan	Jaku	gúrú		
	Mbula	nzûr		
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	dzə-ø /-tsə	goat	PD
Momo	Mundani	ndzǎ-ø /-tsə	sheep	PD
Ring	Aghem	dzí	goat	Hy7
Eastern	PEG	*-jì(e)l		

Commentary: The two Mundani forms show that this word can undergo appropriate semantic differentiation through change in noun-class assignation. Possibly compare Mada (Plateau) **yūr** ‘male goat’.

Ref:

345. #-isi fire

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	yísi		BF
Tivoid	Tiv	ú'sú		
Beboid	Dumbo	busu		
Jarawan	Jaku	bǎsá		
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	wísǎ		S

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: Although this term is a probably a loan from Chadic it has a broader history in Africa and is spread widely through Nilo-Saharan, Afro-Asiatic and the Kordofanian Moro (Bender, 1991c:5 & Blench, in press). Despite this, its exclusive attestation in Bantoid suggests that it may have been borrowed into the proto-language and therefore may count as a genuine innovation.

346. #jóná	laughter			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila	ja³	laugh (n.)	PM
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	jóná		BF
Ekoid	Ejagham	yòê	to laugh	W
Beboïd				
Grassfields				
Ring				
Bantu	CB	*-joda		

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:98)

347. #jèná	daylight			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila	ciee²¹	daytime	PM
	Kwanja	ye⁺	day	W
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	jèná		BF
Beboïd				
Grassfields				
Ring	Kom	ací	day	R
Bantu	CB	*-cená		M

Commentary: In some of the Ring languages the nasal in the C₂ slot appears to be a prefix, for example, Bum **ñcwì**. This makes the reconstruction rather uncertain if Nnakenyare and Bantu have both followed the same process independently.

Ref: Boyd (1994:98)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

348. #koN to climb, mount

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Dakoid				
Mambiloid				
Buru				
Ekoid	Balep	kóm		C
Mbe	Mbe	kúen		BCCW
Tivoid				
Nyang	Kenyang	kó		BCCW
E. Grassfields	Bapi	kóm		BCCW
C. Ring	Kom	kó		BCCW
Bantu				

Commentary: Unless Hone (Jukunoid) **kyààn**, ‘go up’ is cognate.

Ref: BCCW, II:248

349. #kpók to rub

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	kpók		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kók		B
Tikar	Tikar	kpɔ'		J
Bantu	CB	*-kúc-	?C	G

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:110).

350. #kuba bird, fowl

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment/Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila			
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kúbà	'kind of bird'	BF
Ekoid				
Tivoid			?	
Grassfields				
Eastern	PEG	*gúb`	fowl	
Manenguba	PM	*kúb		

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
351. #lɔŋ	river bed			
Mambiloid				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	lɔŋ		B
Beboid				
Grassfields				
Ring				
Bantu	CB	*-dòŋgà		G

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:78)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
352. #mɔkpɔ	one			
Mambiloid	Tep	mō		Co
Dakoid	Dɔ̃	mɔɔp		RMB
Mbe	Mbe	é-mê		
Tivoid	Evant	ka-muk		
Beboid	Noni	maɪ̯		Hy
Nyang	Kitwii	è-mô		T&T
Jarawan	Bankal	mòk		
Tikar	Tikar	m̀bɔ́		J
Grassfields				
Ring	Aghem	mɔ̯?		Hy
Momo	Moghamo	ímɪ̯?		
Eastern	PEG	*mɔ̀k´		ELV
Manenguba	PM	*`pɔ̀g		He1
Manenguba	Babong	m̀vɔ̀k		He1
Bantu	CB	*-mɔ́		G1314

Commentary: Discussed in BCCW (II:103) where it was first pointed out that this root appears to be a Bantoid innovation. Williamson (1989:255) also treats this root although with a different analysis. There are two possible outside cognates, the Gyem (Platoid) form *mwen* and the Bendi *-bɔŋɛ* forms. Both seem to be quite isolated, and these may be accidental similarities.

This word clearly has an intriguing history, producing a wide variety of surface forms. Assuming the final -p of Dɔ̃ is related to the other bilabials, the following developments are proposed;

Original	I	II	Result
mɔkpɔ	mɔpɔ		Dɔ̃ mɔɔp
mɔkpɔ	mɔkɔ	muki	Vute mwi
mɔkpɔ	mɔpɔ	mbɔɔ	Tikar m̀bɔ́
mɔkpɔ	mɔkɔ		PEG mɔ̀k´
mɔkpɔ	mpɔkɔ	pɔkɔ	PM *`pɔ̀g

Ref: BCCW,II:103, Williamson (1989b:255)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

353. #-mundi arrow

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	check		
Beboid	Noni	mũ̀n̄/bòmũ̀n̄		Hy
Jarawan	Mbula	mundi		
Grassfields	Lamnsɔ	mun		

Commentary: BCCW (1:16) claims, inaccurately, that this is diagnostic for Jarawan Bantu.

Ref:

354. #ngii house-fly

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Dakoid	Daka	gèè		BF
Mambiloid	Vute	ngii		
Buru	Buru	egì /égì		K
Ekoid	Ejagham	jíŋ	9/14	W
Mbe	Mbe	è-kìkì		BA
Tivoid	Esimbi	ì-gì /í-		St
Grassfields				
Ring	Bum	ijjì		R
Bantu	CB	#-gi		

Commentary: The Mbe citation is only cognate if C₁ has devoiced and the syllable reduplicated.

Ref:

355. #nòòm to be angry

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	nòòmù	CHECK	
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nòòm		B
Beboid				
Tikar		nyeni⁺		J
Grassfields				
Ring				
Manenguba	Mkaa	ɛ'liniy	?	Et
Bantu	CB	*-nún		G

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:84)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

356. #nyáá to climb

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	nyà		?
	Mambila	naya		Z
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	yáá		B
Momo	Mundani	eyaaba	to reach by climbing	PD

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:102)

357. #-pák- to put inside

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid				
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	pàk	put inside	F
Ekoid				
Tivoid				
Bantu	CB	*-pák-	pack	G

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:52).

358. #-suum to (be) dry

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	súm-		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	suùm		B
Ekoid	Nkim	yôm		C
Mbe	Mbe	yúom		
Grassfields				
Ring	Aghem	ézóm		Hy7

Commentary: The weakening of s →y appears to be characteristic of the Ekoid + Mbe grouping.

Ref: Boyd (1994:86)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

359. #-tambo to set a trap

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	ták	to trap	B
Mambiloid	Kwanja	tárkò	a trap	W
Beboid				
Jarawan				
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	à-tǎ /è-	trap (n.)	PD
Ring	Bafmeng	atám	trap (n.)	R
Eastern				
Nyang	Kenyang	nta	snare (n.) (5)	Mb
Manenguba				
Bantu		*-tambo		

360. #-tim dig

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	cúm		
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tím		B
Mbe	Mbe	tsém		BA
Beboid	Noni	cím		Hy
Tikar	Tikar	shim		J
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	téə		S
Bantu	CB	#-tím		

Commentary:

Ref: Boyd (1994:66)

361. #N-ton twenty

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila	netun		
Ekoid	Nde	nè-tân /à-		C
Mbe	Mbe	le-têl		
Tivoid	Abon	ntata		
Bantu	Zone A	*-tínù	Archaic	

Commentary: One possible cognate is nètûn ‘nine’ in the Beboid language Bukwe. This type of swapping between higher numerals seems to be quite common in this region.

Ref:

Ekoid node: Innovations shared between Ekoid and languages closer to Bantu

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

362. #N-bàdè Two-spotted palm civet¹⁰

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Ejagham	bàè		W
Bantu	B group	N-bàdà		JMH

Commentary: Despite the rare attestations the similarity of forms and tone argues that this is appropriately reconstructed to South Bantoid.

Ref:

363. #-bòbó galago

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Ejagham	bòb	Senegal galago (9/14)	W
Bantu	B group	*bòbó	Western needle-clawed galago	JMH

Commentary: Despite the rare attestations the similarity of the forms and tone argues that this is appropriately reconstructed to south Bantoid.

Ref:

364. #buruŋ- to stir

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Balep	burug		C
Mbe	Mbe	bəŋ		W
Grassfields				
Momo				
Ring				
Eastern				
Nyang				
Manenguba				
Bantu	CB	-búduŋ		G

Commentary:

Ref:

Readers of this paper will immediately notice the debt to Professor Kay Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt. She has encouraged me on this paper with ready access to her card files and commented on it at various stages in its evolution. I would like to acknowledge my thanks for this and at the same time to take full responsibility for points on which we disagree.

¹⁰ *Nandinia binotata*

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
365. #goN	fire			
Ekoid	Nkim	-gôn		C
Beoid	Noni	ngóy		
Grassfields				
Momo				
Ring				
Eastern				
Nyang	Kenyang	n-gó		TT
Manenguba				
Bantu				

Commentary: Buru has **ègúu** and Modele **-gùsù** but these are probably not cognate, as they are not nasalised and probably come from Batu (Tivoid) forms like **kúsu** with loss of C₂ and devoicing of C₁. Piron (1996:200) argues that these are related.

Ref: Piron (1996:200)

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
366. #-jòbó	African civet	<i>Viverra civetta</i>		
Ekoid	Ejagham	jò		W
Manenguba	Mkaa	esǒb		Et
Bantu	B group	jòbó		JMH

Commentary: Despite the rare attestations the similarity of forms and tone argues that this is appropriately reconstructed to South Bantoid.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
367. #-káká	Long-tailed pangolin	<i>Manis longicaudata</i>		
Ekoid	Ejagham		ká	W
Manenguba	Mkaa		kǎ	Et
Bantu	B group		káká	JMH

Commentary: Despite the rare attestations the similarity of forms and tone argues that this is appropriately reconstructed to South Bantoid.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
368. #ku(k)e	lion			
Ekoid	Ejagham	kì	9/14	W
Mbe	Mbe	bè-kùe /bù-		BA
Grassfields				
Manenguba				
Bantu	CB	 #-kócì		G1102

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: This is treated by Guthrie and Bastin as a purely narrow Bantu root but the Mbe citation shows that it is more widespread. This is also an interesting case of a root that is restricted to ‘West Coast’ Bantu, from the Bight of Benin to Angola.

Ref: Bastin (1994:55-57)

369. #-koŋ want, love, to

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Ejagham	kòd	to love	W
Beboïd	Noni	gɔm		Hy
Nyang	Kenyang	ekoŋ	to love	M
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	kóó	?C	S
Eastern	PEG	*-kòŋ		
Bantu	Yamba	kòŋ		

Commentary:

Refs: Guthrie, BCCW 392

370. #mbɛb rat

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Ekparabong	m̄-pɛ̀b /b̀d̄		C
Tivoid	Esimbi	èèbì /eèbì	mouse, ?C	St
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	mbab		PD
Ring	Aghem			
Eastern	PEG			
Nyang	Kenyang	mbwɛp	(9/10)	M
Manenguba	PM	pó	?	Et
Bantu	CB	-bèbà		G

Commentary:

Ref:

371. #-nɔ̀tɔ̀ press, squeeze out

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	N. Etung	nyɔ̀t		BCCW
Beboïd				
Tikar				
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	nũ'		S
Nyang	Kenyang	ŋá		Mb
Bantu				

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

Commentary: This root seems to have first developed in Ekoid and to co-exist with the far more ancient Niger-Congo root #ka-. First discussed in BCCW (II,68). Zeitlyn (p.c.) notes Mambila *nema*, but this is not treated as cognate without further evidence.

372. #-nùŋ		bed			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Ekoid	N. Etung	è-nùŋ /bì-			C
Beoid	Bunaki	-nàŋ			CK
Tikar	Tikar	ndòn			J
Manenguba	PM	*-nòŋ			He193
Bantu (zone A)	Nomande	-láŋà	7a/8 'sleeping room'		J
	Basaa	-nàŋ	7/8		J

Commentary: The Ring languages have innovated with a form something like #-kon.

Ref:

373. #-faN-		to work			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Ekoid	Nkim	í-fáŋ /ŋ-			C
Tivoid	Esimbi	ɔfɛ			St
Beoid					
Grassfields					
Ring	Aghem	éfwâ			Hy7
Momo	Mundani	à-fâ' / è-			PD
Manenguba					
Bantu					

374. #-teme		axe			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source	
Mbe	Mbe	tèm			BA
Tivoid	Esimbi	e-tími /e-			
Beoid					
Jarawan					
Grassfields					
Ring	Aghem	ndzàm			Hy7
Momo	Mundani	a-dzà/ ba-			PD
Eastern	PEG	#jàm'			
Bantu	CB	#-témò	(5/6)		G4:100

Commentary: In Bantu proper, this appears to undergo constant semantic shifts with 'hoe' (G4:100).

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

375. #-yómè bear fruit

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Ekoid	Ekparabong	wóm		C
Tivoid	Tiv	úmè		
Beboid	Noni	yóm		Hyl

Commentary:

Ref:

Tivoid Node Innovations

376. #-cii all

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Tivoid	Tiv	cì		
Beboid	Noni	-cii		Hy
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo	ɲǝ		S
Manenguba	PM	*-sèny'		
Bantu	CB	*-(n)cè		G302

Commentary:

Ref:

377.#-dundo hammer

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Tivoid	Tiv	nondo	pl. I-nyondo	
Bantu	CB	-dùndò		

Commentary:

Ref:

378.#-samba lion, leopard

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Tivoid	Tiv	í-shímbé		?
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	ø-sambàŋ /bè-		PD
Ring	Aghem			
Eastern	PEG			
Manenguba	PM			
Bantu	PB	*-címá	9/10	M

Commentary:

Ref: Bastin (1994:50-51)

379.#-tuŋ	to hoe			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Tivoid	Esimbi	è-sù /e-sú	hoe (n.)	St
Beboid				
Jarawan				
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

Beboid Node

380.#-buuku	nine			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Beboid	Noni	bvùùke		Hy
Jarawan	Jaku	fúyú		BCCW
Grassfields				
Ring	Isu	bùkó		R
Eastern	PEG	-(í)-bùkV		
Manenguba	PM	*-bùg'		He9
Bantu	CB	*-bùá		G219
	PZA	-bùgád-		J

Commentary:

Ref:

Nyang Node

381.#-byom	ten			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nyang	Kendem	-bíòm		T&T
Bantu	Bankong	ì-bòm		BCCW

Commentary:

Ref: BCCW (2:446)

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

382.#-tubu ashes

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Nyang	Kenyang	βa-twóp		BCCW
Jarawan	Jaku	túbù		BCCW
Grassfields				
Ring				
Eastern				
Manenguba				
Bantu	Bulu	à-sǔb		BCCW

Commentary: First pointed out in the BCCW (1:20).

Ref: BCCW (1:20)

Jarawan Node

-kaga firewood

383.#-tuuba six

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Jarawan				
Grassfields				
Ring	Zoa	etobə		R
Eastern	PEG	*tópó		EVL
Manenguba	PM	*-tóób		He6
Bantu	CB	*-tóóbá		G1815

Commentary:

Ref:

Grassfields Node

384.#-cád work, to

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Manenguba				
Bantu	CB	*-cád-		G247

Commentary:

Ref:

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

385.#-dàŋgí bamboo midrib

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Ring	Aghem	óŋŋ		Hy7
Momo	Mundani	alòŋ		J
Eastern	PEG	*dèŋ´		EVL
Nyang	Kenyang	ndɔŋ	5	Mb
Manenguba	PM	*dèŋ´		H164
Bantu	PB	#dàŋgí		G502

Commentary:

Ref:

386.#-fwambi eight

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Ring	Aghem	é´fáa		Hy7
Eastern	PEG	*f´ámá		EVL
Manenguba	PM	*wààm		He8
Bantu	PB	#-àmbì		M3

Commentary:

Ref:

387.#-kpà(ko) four

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	-kpì		PD
Ring	Cha´	kaikò		R
Eastern	PEG	*-kùà		EVL
Bantu				

Commentary: Cited by EVL as an innovation for Grassfields but also found in Bantu languages of Angola and thus promoted to the Grassfields node. The second element in Ring languages may be an innovation for this group and is thus only tentatively reconstructed.

Ref:

388.#-yoŋ to quarrel

Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Momo	Mundani	eyǎ		J
Eastern				
Manenguba	PM	*-jùm´		
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

389.#-sɔŋ	tooth			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Ring	Kom	ĩsɔŋ		HJ
Momo	Mundani	èsɔŋ		PD
Menchum	Modele	-sɔŋ		P
Eastern (Ngemba)	Bafut	-sɔŋ		P
Eastern (Bamileke)	Yemba	-sɔŋ		P
Ndemli	Ndemli	sɔŋ-		P
Bantu	Basaa	li-sɔŋ	ma-	LG

Commentary: This seems to be an excellent gloss defining the Grassfields group with Ndemli. A single Tivoid language, Amasi, has this root **ɛ-/a-shwóŋ** but this seems likely to be an areal loan. Piron (1996:149) argues that Proto-Bantu #-**ɔŋ**- ‘make pointed’ is the same root, although some A group languages, such as Basaa, retain the original meaning as well as the other root with a different class prefix.

Ref: Piron (1996:149)

Manenguba node

390.#-ben-	to refuse			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Beboid				
Jarawan				
Grassfields				
Eastern				
Manenguba	PM	*-báj		He622
Bantu				

Commentary:

Ref:

391.-bumo	belly			
Group	Language	Attestation	Comment	Source
Grassfields				
Ring	Babungo		èbûŋ	H&J
Eastern	PEG			
Manenguba	PM		*-bùm	He79
Bantu	PB		*-bùmò	G229

Commentary: The first element of this is an ancient Niger-Congo root, but originality is claimed for C₂. Perhaps compare Wawa (Mambiloid) **bóma** ‘bellies’.

Ref:

REFERENCES

- Abraham, R.C. 1940. *A dictionary of the Tiv language*. London: Crown Agents.
- Abraham, R.C. 1951. *The Idoma language*. Oturkpo: Idoma Native Administration.
- Abraham, R.C. 1958. *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*. London: University of London Press.
- Abraham, R.C. 1962. *Dictionary of the Hausa language*. London: University of London Press.
- Agheyisi, Rebecca N. 1986. *An Edo-English dictionary*. Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corporation.
- Akinkugbe, Olufemi Odutayo. 1978. *A comparative phonology of Yoruba dialects, Isekiri, and Igala*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Ibadan.
- Angas Language Committee. 1978. *Shək nkarṅ kè shəktok mwa ndèn Ngas. Ngas -Hausa-English dictionary*. NBTT, Jos.
- Anon. 1979 [?]. *Word List of Comparative Ring*. ms. Tervuren. [From the data sheets of Larry Hyman and Harriet Jisa].
- Armstrong, R.G. 1964. *The study of West African languages*. Ibadan: University Press.
- Armstrong, R.G. 1965. Comparative wordlists of two dialects of Yoruba with Igala. *Journal of West African Languages*, II(2):51-78.
- Armstrong, R.G. 1967. *A comparative wordlist of five Igbo dialects*. (Occasional Publication No.5.) Ibadan: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.
- Banfield, A.W. 1914. *Dictionary of the Nupe Language*. Shonga: The Niger Press.
- Bastin, Y. 1994. Reconstruction formelle et sémantique de la dénomination de quelques mammifères en Bantou. *Afrikanische Arbeitspapiere*, 38:5-132.
- Bendor-Samuel, J. ed. 1989. *The Niger-Congo Languages*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Bendor-Samuel, J. T. & Perrin, M. J. 1971. A Note on Labialisation in Mambila. *Annales de 'Université d'Abidjan*, série H. fasc. hors série. Volume 1:119-129.
- Bennett, P.R. 1983. Adamawa-Eastern: Problems and Prospects in Dihoff, I. (ed.) *Studies in African Linguistics, Vol. I*. Foris Publications, Holland.
- Bennett, Patrick R. & Sterk, Jan P. 1977. South-Central Niger-Congo: a reclassification. *Studies in African Linguistics*, 8,3 : 241-273.
- Berry, Jack & Greenberg, Joseph H. (eds.) 1971. *Current Trends in Linguistics Vol. 7, Sub-Saharan Africa*. Mouton, The Hague.
- Blench, R.M. 1984. *Peoples and Languages of Southwestern Adamawa*. Unpublished paper given to the 14th African Languages Colloquium, Leiden
- Blench, R.M. 1989. A proposed new classification of Benue-Congo languages. *Afrikanische Arbeitspapiere, Köln*, 17:115-147.
- Blench, R.M. 1993a. New developments in the classification of the Bantu languages and their historical implication. In *Dating and Chronology in the Lake Chad Basin*. eds. D. Barreteau and C. Von Graffenried. 147-160. Paris: ORSTOM.
- Blench, R.M. 1993b. An Introduction to the classification of Mambiloid languages. *Journal of West African Languages*, XXIII(1):105-118.
- Blench, R.M. and Williamson, K.M. 1987. *Bantoid revisited*. Paper for the 17th Leiden colloquium on African languages. Typescript.
- Blench, R.M. ined.
- Bouquiaux L. et al. eds. 1980. *L'Expansion Bantoue*. (3 volumes) Paris: SELAF.
- Boyd, R. 1978. *A propos des ressemblances lexicales entre langues Niger-Congo et Nilo-Sahariennes*. SELAF, 65. Paris.
- Boyd, R. 1994. *Historical Perspectives on Chamba Daka*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Boyd, R. and R. Fardon ined. *Chamba-English lexicon*. Xerox edition. London: SOAS.
- Christaller, J.G. 1933. *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante language called Twi*. Basel: Basel Evangelical Missionary Society.
- Connell, B.A. 1991. *Phonetic aspects of the Lower Cross Languages and their implications for sound change*. Ph.D. Linguistics. University of Edinburgh.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

- Cook, T.L. 1969. Some tentative notes on the KòHúmónò language. *Research Notes (Ibadan)* 2:3.
- Crabb, D.W. 1969. *Ekoid Bantu Languages of Ogoja*. Cambridge University Press.
- Crozier, D. and Blench, R.M. 1992. *Index of Nigerian Languages (edition 2)*. SIL, Dallas.
- De Wolf, P. 1971. *The noun class system of Proto-Benue-Congo*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Dieu, M. & Renaud, P. 1983. *Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun (ALCAM)*. Paris: ACCT/CERDOTOLA/DGRST.
- Dykstra, M. n.d. *Dictionary of Jukun of Takum*. Mimeo.
- Elias, Ph. Leroy, J. & J. Voorhoeve 1984. Mbam-nkam or Eastern Grassfields. *Afrika und Übersee*, 67:31-107.
- Elugbe, B.O. 1989. *Comparative Edoid: phonology and lexicon*. (Delta Series No. 6.) University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Endresen, R.T. 1992. Diachronic aspects of the phonology of Nizaa. *JALL*, 12,2:171-194.
- Etamé, J.E. 1995. *Lexique Mkaa* ? Yaoundé: Published by the author, B.P. 14277.
- Flight, C. 1980. Malcolm Guthrie and the reconstruction of Bantu prehistory. *History in Africa*, 7:81-118.
- Flight, C. 1988. The Bantu expansion and the SOAS network. *History in Africa*, 15:261-301.
- Gardner, I. 1980. *Abuan-English, English Abuan dictionary*. (Delta Series No. 1.) Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, and Jos: Nigeria Bible Translation Trust.
- Gerhardt, L. 1982. Jarawan Bantu -The mistaken identity of the Bantu who turned north. *Afrika und Übersee*, LXV:75-95.
- Gerhardt, L. 1983. *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Sprachen des Nigerianischen Plateaus*. Glückstadt: Verlag J.J. Augustin.
- Greenberg, J.E. 1974. Bantu and its closest relatives. *Studies in African Linguistics*, Supplement 5:115-119 & 122-124.
- Greenberg, J.H. 1964. Historical inferences from linguistic research in sub-Saharan Africa. *Boston University Papers in African History*, 1:1-15.
- Greenberg, J.H. 1966. *The Languages of Africa*. The Hague: Mouton for Indiana University.
- Greenberg, J.H. 1972. Linguistic evidence regarding Bantu origins. *Journal of African History*, 13.
- Gregersen, E. 1967. Linguistic seriation as a dating device for loanwords, with special reference to West Africa. *African Language Review* 6.102-8.
- Guarisma, G. 1978. *Etudes Vouté (Langue bantoïde du Cameroun)*. (Bibliothèque de la SELAF 66-67) Paris: SELAF.
- Guarisma, G. 1987. Dialectometrie Lexicale de Quelques Parlers Bantoides Non Bantoues du Cameroun. Pp. 281-329 in *La Methode Dialectometrique Appliquée aux Langues Africaines* ed. G. Guarisma, & W. J. G. Mohlig. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag.
- Guarisma, G., & S. Platiel eds. 1980. *Dialectologie et Comparatisme en Afrique Noire*. Atelier Internationale de dialectologie Africaine. *Oralité Documents* Paris: SELAF.
- Guthrie, M. 1969-71. *Comparative Bantu*. (4 vols.) Farnborough: Gregg.
- Hansford, K., J. Bendor-Samuel, & R. Stanford 1976. *An Index of Nigerian Languages*. Ghana: Summer Institute of Linguistics,.
- Hedinger, R. 1987. *The Manenguba languages (Bantu A.15, Mbo cluster) of Cameroon*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies.
- Hedinger R. 1989. Northern Bantoid. In *The Niger-Congo Languages*. J. Bendor-Samuel ed. 421-429. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Hinnebusch, T. 1989. Bantu. in Bendor-Samuel ed.
- Hoffmann, C. 1965. A word list of Central Kambari. *Journal of West African Languages*, 2(1)7-31.
- Hyman, L.M. 1970. *Essentials of Gwari grammar*. (Occasional Publication No. 27.) Ibadan: Institute of African Studies.
- Hyman, L.M. and H. Jisa 1979. *Word list of comparative Ring*. ms.
- Ibrahim-Arirabiyi, F. 1989. *A comparative reconstruction of Akpes lects: Akoko North, Ondo State*. University of Port Harcourt: M.A. thesis.
- Ikoro, S.M. 1989. *Segmental phonology and lexicon of Proto-Keggoid*. University of Port Harcourt: M.A. thesis.
- Jackson, Ellen W. & Carol Stanley 1977. *Description phonologique du tikar (parler de Bankim)*. ms. Yaoundé: CERELTRA-SIL.
- Jackson, Ellen W. 1988. *Lexique Français-Tikar*. Yaoundé: SIL.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

- Jenewari, C.E.W. 1983. *Defaka: Ijo's closest linguistic relative*. (Delta Series No. 2.) University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Johnston, H.H. 1886. *The Kili-manjaro Expedition; a Record of Scientific exploration in Eastern Equatorial Africa*. London.
- Johnston, H.H. 1919-22. *A comparative study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu languages*. (2 vols.) Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kaufman, E.M. 1972, 1985. *Ibibio dictionary*. Cross River State University and Ibibio Language Board, Nigeria, in co-operation with African Studies Centre, Leiden.
- Koelle, S.W. 1854. *Polyglotta Africana*. London: Church Missionary Society.
- Kuperus, J. 1985. *The Londo word: its phonological and morphological structure*. Tervuren: Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika.
- Lemb, Pierre & François de Gastines 1973. *Dictionnaire Basaá-Français*. Douala: Collège Libermann.
- Mackay, H.D. 1964. A word-list of Eloyi. *Journal of West African Languages*, 1,1:5-12.
- Mbuagbaw, T. [1991.] Kenyang word list. Computer printout.
- Meek, C. K. 1931. *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria*. (2 vols) London: Kegan Paul.
- Meinhof, C. 1906. *Grundzuge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantusprachen*. Berlin:.
- Meussen, A.E. 1974. Reply to Prof. Greenberg. *Studies in African Linguistics*, Supplement 5: 119-121.
- Meyer, E. 1939. Mambila-studie. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 30, 1-52,117-148 & 210-232.
- Meyer, E. 1942. Stand und Aufgaben der Sprachforschung in Kamerun. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 32(4), 240-285.
- Mukarovsky, H. 1976-1977. *A study of Western Nigritic*. 2 vols. Wien: Institut für Ägyptologie und Afrikanistik, Universität Wien.
- Ohiri-Aniche, C. 1991. *A reconstruction of Proto- Igboid-Yoruboid-Edoid*. Ph.D. University of Port Harcourt.
- Oloruntoba, C.I. 1986. *An autosegmental approach to aspects of Igala phonology*. M. A. in Linguistics, University of Ibadan.
- Omamor, Augusta P. 1986. Adjectives and adjectivalisation in some languages of the Western Delta of Nigeria. *Journal of West African Languages*, XVI(2):9-26.
- Perrin, M. J. 1974a. Mambila. In *Ten Nigerian Tone Systems* ed. J. Bendor-Samuel. Jos: Institute of Linguistics.
- Perrin, M. J. and M. Hill 1969. *Mambila (parler d'Atta), description phonologique*. Université Fédérale du Cameroun, Yaoundé.
- Perrin, M. J. and Mouh, M. 1992 rev. ed.. *Lexique mambila-français*. SIL, Yaoundé, Cameroun.
- Rongier, Jacques 1995. *Dictionnaire français-éwé*. Paris: ACCT-Karthala.
- Schaefer, R.P. 1987. *An initial orthography and lexicon for Emai: an Edoid language of Nigeria*. Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Schaub, W. & E.M. Nchio-Minkee. 1982. *Dictionary: Babungo-English, English Babungo*. Yaoundé: SIL.
- Shimizu, Kiyoshi. 1980. *Comparative Jukunoid*. (3 vols) (Veröffentlichungen der Institut für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie der Universität Wien. Vienna: Afro-Pub.
- Sterk, Jan P. 1977. *Elements of Gade grammar*. Madison, Wisconsin: Ph.D.
- Stewart, J. 1973. The lenis stops of the Potou Lagoon languages and their significance for pre-Bantu reconstruction. *Research Review (Ghana)*, Supplement 4.1-49.
- Strümpell, F. 1910. Vergleichendes Worterverzeichnis der Heidensprachen Adamauas. Mit Vorbemerkungen von B. Struck. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*. XLII:444-488.
- Thomas, E., and K. Williamson. 1967. *Wordlists of Delta Edo: Epie, Engenni, Degema*. (Occasional Publication No. 8.) Ibadan: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.
- Thomas, N.W. 1914. *Specimens of languages from Southern Nigeria*. London: Harrison & Sons.
- Thwing, R. 1987. *Vute noun phrase and the relationship between Vute and Bantu*. M.A. University of Texas, Arlington.
- Thwing, R. and Thwing, R. 1979. *A phonology of Vute*. ms, SIL, Yaoundé.
- Thwing, R. and Thwing, R. 1981. *Petit Lexique Vute-Français*. SIL, Yaoundé.
- Tyhurst, James J. and Janis L. Tyhurst 1983a. *Linguistic survey of the Nyang languages*. ms. Yaoundé: SIL.
- Tyhurst, James J. and Janis L. Tyhurst 1983b. *Sociolinguistic survey of Kenyang and Denya*. ms. Yaoundé: SIL.

R.M. Blench Proposed Classification of Benue-Congo languages- Circulation Draft

- Vansina, J.T. 1995. New Linguistic Evidence and the 'Bantu Expansion'. *Journal of African History*, 36:173-195.
- Voorhoeve, Jan. 1980. Kenyang. In: Larry M. Hyman and Jan Voorhoeve (eds.) *L'Expansion Bantoue. Volume I: Les classes nominales dans le Bantou des Grassfields*. 275-285. Paris: SELAF.
- Vopnu, S.K. (1991) *Phonological Processes and Syllable Structures in Gokana*. M.A. Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Port Harcourt.
- Watters, J. R. 1989. Bantoid Overview. In *The Niger-Congo Languages*. J. Bendor-Samuel ed. 401-420. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Watters, J.R. & Leroy, J. 1989. South Bantoid. In *The Niger-Congo Languages*. J. Bendor-Samuel ed. 430-449. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Weber, J. & M. Weber 1987. *A Phonology of Kwanja (Súndàní Dialect)*. ms. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon.
- Weber, J. & M. Weber ined. *A Dictionary of Kwanja*. electronic text. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon.
- Welmers, W.E. 1968. Jukun of Wukari and Jukun of Takum. Ibadan: Institute of African studies, University of Ibadan.
- Westermann, D. 1922a. *Die Sprache der Guang*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer.
- Westermann, D. 1922b. Vier Sprachen aus Mitteltoogo. Likpe, Bowili, Akpafu und Adele bebst eigen Resten der Borosprache. *MSOS*, 23,24,25:1-59.
- Westermann, D. 1925. Das Tshi und Guang. Ihre Stellung innerhalb der Ewe-Tshi Gruppe. *MSOS*, 28:1-85.
- Westermann, D. 1926a. Das Ibo in Nigerien. Seine Stellung innerhalb der Kwa-Sprachen. *MSOS*, 29:32-60.
- Westermann, D. 1926b. Das Edo in Nigerien. Seine Stellung innerhalb der Kwa-Sprachen. *MSOS*, 29:1-31.
- Westermann, D. 1927a. *Die Westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Westermann, D. 1927b. Das Nupe in Nigerien. Seine Stellung innerhalb der Kwa-Sprachen. *MSOS*, 30:173-207.
- Westermann, D. 1928. Die westatlantische Gruppe der Sudansprachen. *MSOS*, 31:63-86.
- Westermann, D. 1935. Nominalklassen in westafrikanischen Klassensprachen und in Bantusprachen. *MSOS*, 38:1-52.
- Williamson, K. 1971. The Benue-Congo languages and Ijo. *Current Trends in Linguistics*, 7. ed. T. Sebeok. 245-306. The Hague: Mouton.
- Williamson, Kay (ed). 1972. *Igbo-English dictionary: Based on the Onitsha dialect*. Ethiope Publishing Corporation, Benin.
- Williamson, Kay 1973. *Benue-Congo comparative wordlist: Vol.2*. Ibadan: West African Linguistic Society.
- Williamson, K. 1985. How to become a Kwa language. In *Linguistics and Philosophy. Essays in Honor of Ruben S. Wells*. eds. A. Makkai and A. Melby. Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 42. Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Williamson, K. 1988. Linguistic evidence for the prehistory of the Niger Delta. *The early history of the Niger Delta*, edited by E.J. Alagoa, F.N. Anozie and N. Nzewunwa. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag.
- Williamson, K. 1989. Benue-Congo Overview. In *The Niger-Congo Languages*. J. Bendor-Samuel ed. 246-274. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Williamson, Kay 1989a. Niger-Congo Overview. In Bendor-Samuel, J. 1989 : 3-46.
- Williamson, K. 1992. Some Bantu roots in wider context. In: *Sprach-, geschichts- und literaturwissenschaftliche Aufsätze zu Ehren von Hans G. Mukarovsky anlässlich seines 70. Geburtstags*. W. Ebermann, E.R. Sommerauer and K.É. Thomaneck (eds.) 387-403. Vienna: Veröffentlichungen der Institute für Afrikanistik und Ägyptologie.
- Williamson, K., and K. Shimizu. 1968. *Benue-Congo comparative wordlist, Vol. 1*. Ibadan: West African Linguistic Society.
- Williamson, Kay (in prep). Comparative Ijo.
- Winston, F.D.D. 1964. Nigerian Cross River languages in the *Polyglotta Africana*: Part I. *Sierra Leone Language Review*, 3:74-82.
- Winston, F.D.D. 1965. Nigerian Cross River languages in the *Polyglotta Africana*: Part II. *Sierra Leone Language Review*, 4:122-127.

