

Belnəng, an undocumented Chadic language of Central Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

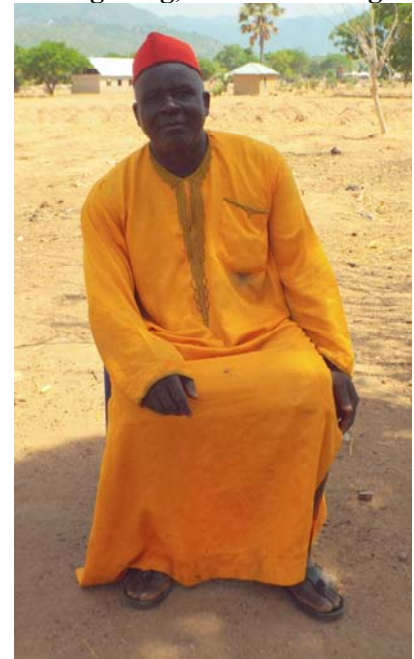
This is an introduction and basic phonology, orthography proposal and a short dictionary of Belnəng, a previously undocumented language in southern Plateau State, Nigeria. Belnəng is part of West Chadic, A3, and the paper presents evidence for its affiliation within the A3 group. The phonology is simplified, like northern languages such as Mwaghavul, without the secondary stop and fricative series characteristic of the neighbouring Tal. Although the Belnəng claim cultural links with the Ngas, linguistically, this is not supported by the lexical data. Belnəng shows some lexical influence from Tal immediately to the east and Miship to the west. However, the presence of idiosyncratic lexical items suggests the possibility that Belnəng is a remnant of former languages spoken in the area now settled by the expanding Tal. The paper argues that Belnəng should be identified as a distinct language and thus assigned an ISO code.

Keywords: Belnəng; Chadic; phonology; wordlist; orthography

1. Introduction

This is an introduction to the Belnəng language, spoken in Langung village in Shendam Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. The wordlist was collected by Roger Blench and Michael Bulkaam from the chief, Disencha Desengafang (Photo 1), on the 14th of April 2016. As far as is known, there is no previous reference to this language in any existing overview on Nigerian languages, although it is now briefly discussed in Blench (2018). The wordlist was collected as a ‘one-shot’ exercise and the transcription must therefore be regarded as preliminary. Transcription was undertaken by Michael Bulkaam and Roger Blench in Jos, October 2019. This wordlist provides basic sociolinguistic data as well as summarising the phonology, based on the wordlist. Given the undocumented status of Belnəng, it considers the evidence for treating it as a distinct language. The wordlist has head entries which use a simple proposed orthography, pending more detailed research and a desire by the community to write their language.

Photo 1. Mr. Disencha Desengafang, Sarkin Belnəng



2. Location, history and sociolinguistic situation

2.1 Nomenclature

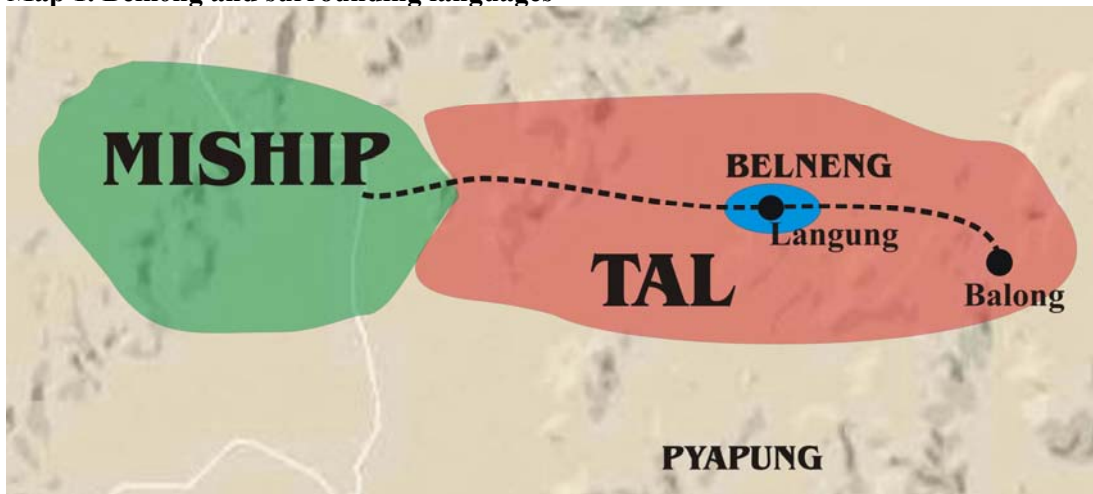
The name of the people and language is Belnəng.

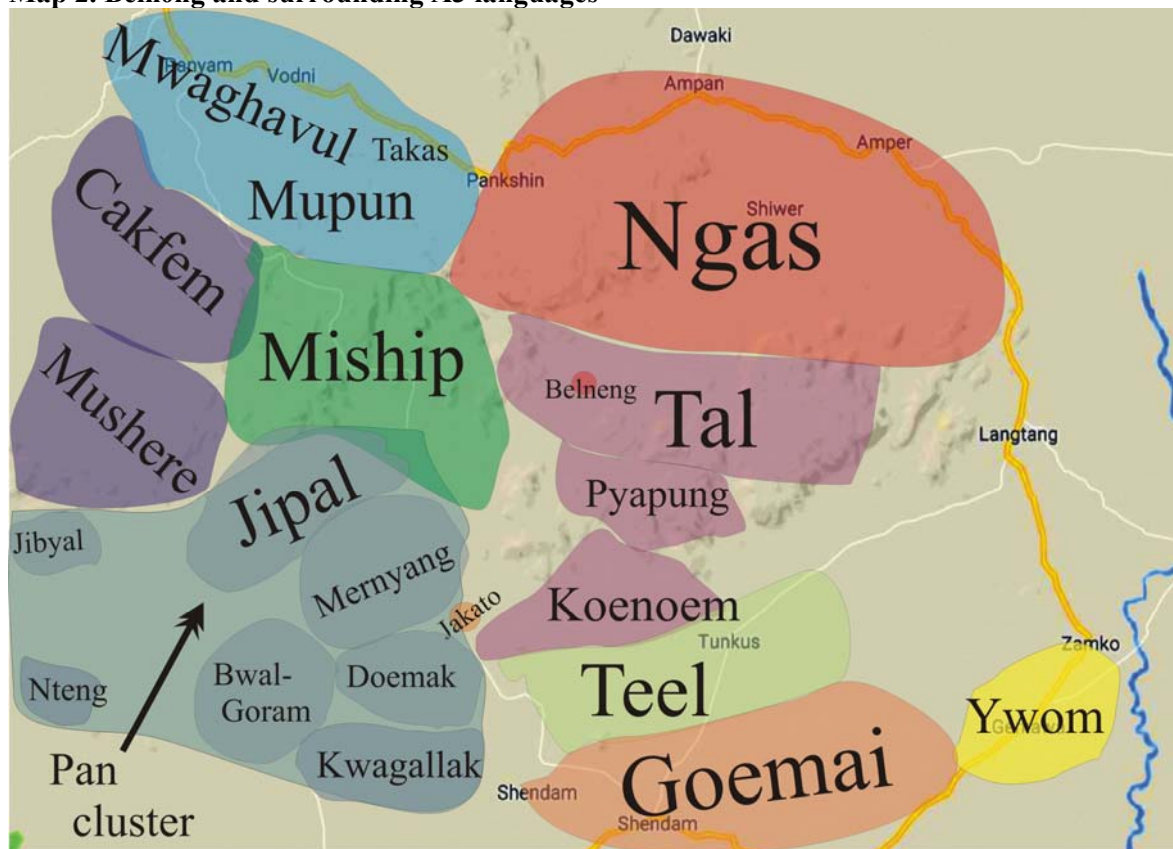
2.2 Location and settlements

Belnəng is spoken in a single village, Langung, which is a small market centre, between the main Panyam-Shendam road and Balong, the centre of the Tal people. Map 1 shows the approximate relationship of Belnəng to neighbouring languages.

Source: Author photo

Map 1. Belnəng and surrounding languages



Map 2. Belnəng and surrounding A3 languages

2.3 Language status

Belnəng language is apparently flourishing and it was easy to hear children speaking the language. Although a simplified Hausa is used for communication in the area, many Belnəng also speak and understand neighbouring languages such as Tal and Miship. However, since it is confined to a single market town, it is highly unlikely there are more than 500 speakers. It should therefore be regarded threatened, as a minimum. As this paper apparently presents the first data ever recorded on Belnəng, there has clearly been no attempt to develop an orthography.

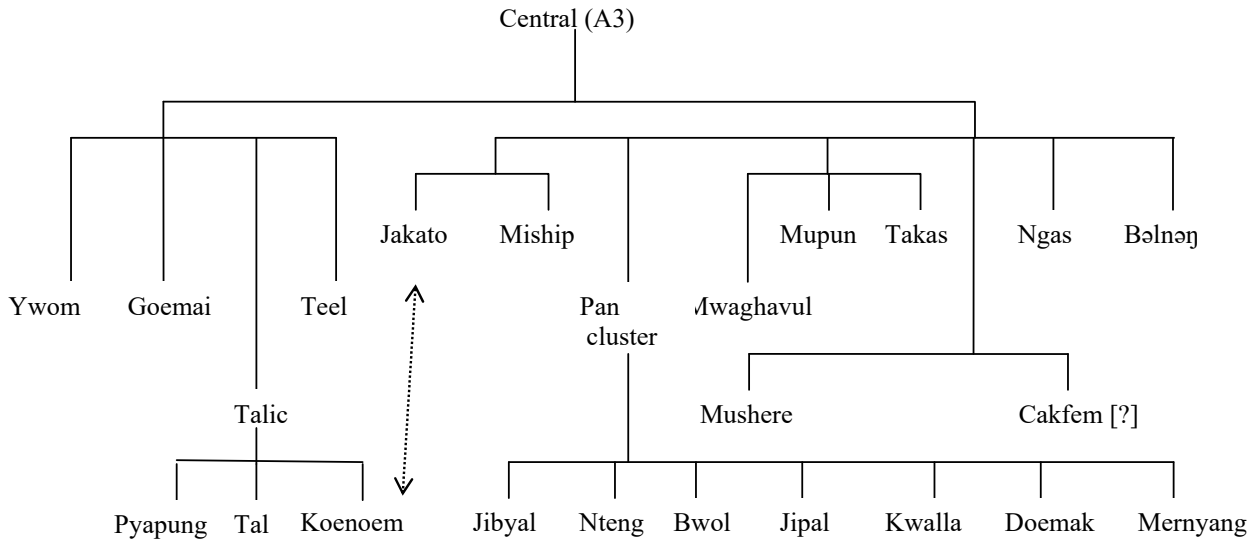
2.4 Belnəng culture and history

Belnəng traditions say that they originally migrated from the Ngas-speaking area. However, the linguistic evidence for this is not persuasive. The identification of lexemes which are distinct to Belnəng (§6.) raises the possibility that the language is a remnant of former languages spoken in the area, now overtaken by the expansion of Tal and Miship. Alternatively, they are indeed migrants to the area but not from Ngas.

2.5 The classification of Belnəng

Belnəng is part of West Chadic, which includes Hausa, the Ron languages, Bole-Tangale and the Mwaghavul-Goemai group (Newman 1977). This is listed as ‘Angas proper’ in the Ethnologue and as ‘Unclassified Goemaic’ in the Glottolog. The first author to put together this group of languages was Carl Hoffmann (1975) who named it ‘Angas-Goemai’. It appears as a distinct West Chadic subgroup in Jungraithmayr & Ibrizimow (1994). Takács (2004a) has published an etymological dictionary of ‘Angas-Sura’, combining some modern evidence with very old sources. This group is listed as ‘A3’ in online sources, which is a practical, if unaesthetic terminology. There are increasing difficulties in naming linguistic families for individual languages, and I propose to drop the ‘Ngas’ label in favour of West Chadic: Central. The current internal classification of A3 is highly unsatisfactory and Figure 1 shows an improved proposal based on fresh data. This is far from final, as the data varies from one language to another, but it represents the state of knowledge at present.

Figure 1. The Central West Chadic languages



See §6 for a more detailed consideration of the place of Belnəŋ.

3. Phonology

The phonology of Belnəŋ should be regarded as tentative.

3.1 Vowels

Belnəŋ has six phonemic vowels like other members of the A3 group;

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i	i	u
Close-Mid	e		o
Open		a	

These have clear long/short distinctions. The following are examples of minimal or near-minimal pairs to demonstrate the contrast.

/a/ ~ /aː/

sàr ten lá to receive
 sáár arm làà to give birth

/e/ ~ /eː/

nēn hunger sē to eat
 nēēr vagina sēēt to go

/ə/ ~ /əː/

ər thorn kən buffalo
 ēē goat kēēr to fear

/i/ ~ /iː/

īs bone
 īs sand

/o/ ~ /o:/'

tók neck
tòòm blood

/u/ ~ /u:/'

kúr tortoise
kūūr lake

There are no diphthongs.

3.2 Consonants

Belnəng consonants are as follows:

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d			k g		
Implosive	ɓ		ɗ					
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ				h
Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
Nasal	m		n			ŋ		
Trill			[r]					
Lateral			l					
Approximant					y	ɥ	w	

The velar approximant only occurs in the pronoun /ɥà/, you sg. m., so can be considered a marginal phoneme.

Belnəng permits (rare) palatalisation and labialisation. Palatalised consonants are rare in the data and only occur before mid-front and central vowels. In the case of C^ye- sequences, this could be purely phonetic and therefore the contrastive status of palatalisation is in doubt. Table 1 shows the examples of palatalised consonants so far identified.

Table 1. Belnəng palatalised consonants

C ^y	Belnəng	Gloss
ɓ ^y	ɓ'ák	to spit
p ^y	p'ēn	to smash
ɗ ^y	ɗ'ēl	smoke
k ^y	pək'yēēn	forehead
f ^y	f'āl	to boil

Labialised consonants are more common (Table 2);

Table 2. Belnəng labialised consonants

C ^w	Belnəng	Gloss
ɸ ^w	ɸ ^w ā:r	yam
f ^w	f ^w ān	rain
v ^w	ŋv ^w àr	lion
k ^w	k ^w èè	chicken
g ^w	ng ^w às	pig
m ^w	ləm ^w ét	frog
ŋ ^w	ŋ ^w òòn	snake
ʃ ^w	ʃ ^w òm	guinea-fowl

Belnəng has homorganic prenasalisation, with m- preceding bilabials, n- before dentals, ŋ- before labiodental fricatives and ɲ- before velars. In the proposed orthography these are represented as follows;

m-	bilabials	m
n-	dentals	n
ŋ-	labiodental fricatives	m
ɲ-	velars	ng

3.3 Tones

Belnəng is a tone language with three level tones, low, middle and high. There are few glide tones. The following is a near-minimal triplet.

sáár	arm
ʃāār	friend
sàr	ten

Other pairs include;

góŋ	nose
gòŋ	shoulder
pāār	night
pààr	vein

4. Morphology

4.1 Nouns

Belnəng nouns have no morphological plurals, except in the case of some nouns for persons. These include

nlàà	child	džép	children
màt	woman	mát má	women

All other words have the generalised plural marker *mu*.

5. Belnəng dictionary

Belneng English Dictionary

A a

aak [à:k] <i>n.</i> ground squirrel	an [án] <i>pron.</i> I
aar [á:r] <i>n.</i> road; track; trail; path	ap [àp] <i>v.n.</i> yawning
aas [à:s] <i>n.</i> egg	as [ās] <i>n.</i> dog
ám [ám] <i>v.</i> to curve	at [āt] <i>v.</i> to bite
àm [àm] <i>n.</i> water	

B b

bet [bèt] <i>v.</i> to open	bəjim [bèʒím] <i>a.</i> big; huge; large; vast; great
bəbar [bèbār] <i>n.</i> house bat <i>Scotophilus spp.</i>	bəzəng [bèzəŋ] <i>n.</i> horse
bəder [bèdēr] <i>n.</i> buttocks; arse	

B b

baam [bā:m] <i>v.</i> to throw	book [bò:k] <i>n.</i> mud
bəəl [bē:l] <i>v.</i> to swell up; to inflate	but [būt] <i>n.</i> stomach
bələm [bəlēm] <i>v.</i> to lick	but lə [būt lə] <i>n.</i> wall
biis [bí:s] <i>n.</i> charcoal	but pee [būt pē:] <i>n.</i> mountain
biip [bíp] <i>n.</i> grasscutter <i>Thryonomys swinderianus</i>	bwaar [bʷā:r] <i>n.</i> yam <i>Dioscorea spp.</i>
bong [bóŋ] <i>v.</i> to look for	
byak [b'ák] <i>v.</i> to spit	

C c

cək [tʃək] <i>v.</i> to pound	cicik [tʃitʃik] <i>n.</i> body
-------------------------------	--------------------------------

D d

daa [dà:] <i>n.</i> father	del kwee [dèl kʷè:] <i>n.</i> cock
dafwan [dàfʷān] <i>n.</i> rabbit; hare	dəkashi [dəkəʃi] <i>n.</i> vulture
dang [dāŋ] <i>n.</i> tail	dəl [dəl] <i>v.</i> to pull
dangkong [dàŋkɔŋ] <i>n.</i> back	dəp [dəp] <i>n.</i> penis
dashim [dàʃim] <i>n.</i> monitor lizard <i>Varanus exanthematicus</i>	dit [dít] <i>s.v.</i> to be small
dat [dàt] <i>v.</i> to scatter; to spread	dondon [dōndòn] <i>adv.</i> yesterday

D d

dál ₁ [dāl] <i>v.</i> to enter; to go in	dədəar [dédəár] <i>adv.</i> tomorrow
dál ₂ [dāl] <i>v.</i> to surpass; to be more than	dən təŋ [dèn təŋ] <i>n.</i> bush
dál [dál] <i>v.</i> to swallow	dən yil ₁ [dèn jíl] <i>n.</i> world
dám [dām] <i>v.</i> to want s.t.	dən yil ₂ [dèn jíl] <i>n.</i> town; village; settlement
dāng [dāŋ] <i>v.</i> to beg	diiin [dī:n] <i>n.</i> fruit bat <i>Rousettus aegyptiacus</i>
dári [dārī] <i>num.</i> hundred	dík [dík] <i>v.</i> to build; to construct
dən [dèn] <i>v.</i> to drop	dóor [dō:r] <i>n.</i> scorpion
də [də] <i>v.</i> to smell	dyaar [d'ā:r] <i>n.</i> granary

dʏel [dʰɛl] *n.* smoke

E e

en [ɛn] *n.* medicine

excreta

es [ɛs] *n.* faeces; manure; excrement; dung; shit;

Ə ə

əə [ə:] *n.* goat

ər [ər] *n.* thorn

F f

feer [fɛ:r] *num.* four

fipkaa [fɪpká:] *n.* hair

fet [fét] *v.* to sweep

fuut [fú:t] *v.* to vomit; to retch; to barf

fəlök [fəlɔk] *n.* liver

fwan [fʷān] *n.* rain

fəp [fəp] *n.* rubbish dump

fwat [fʷāt] *n.* ashes

fii1 [fi:] *v.* to dry up; to evaporate

fwem [fʷém] *n.* African fish eagle *Haliaetus vocifer*

fii2 [fi:] *v.* to blow

fwen [fʷɛn] *v.* to untie; to loosen

fiiip [fi:p] *n.* whistle

fyal [fʰal] *v.* to boil

fip [fɪp] *n.* feather

G g

gak [gàk] *n.* roof

goməs [góməs] *n.* man

gam [gām] *v.* to fill s.t.

góng [gónŋ] *n.* nose

gap [gàp] *v.* to cut down; to fell

gòng [gòŋ] *n.* shoulder

gəjet [gəʒét] *n.* grandparent

goot [gò:t] *n.* cave

gəkwat [gəkwāt] *n.* hunter

gurum [gùrùm] *n.* person

gən [gón] *n.* cheek

gurum mu [gùrùm mú] *n.* people

gha [ɥà] *pron.* you (m)

gwak [gʷàk] *v.* to rub; to wipe

goktaa [góktá:] *n.* black and white cobra *Naja melanoleuca subfulva*

gwan [gʷàn] *n.* cocoyam; taro *Colocasia esculenta*

I i

iis1 [i:s] *n.* sand

is [is] *n.* bone

iis2 [i:s] *v.* to grind; to crush

is tuur [is tú:r] *n.* rib

J j

jaal [ʒá:l] *n.* hill

ji [ʒì] *v.* to arrive

jep [ʒép] *n.* children

jom [ʒóm] *n.* chin

jəər [ʒə:r] *v.* to quarrel

K k

kaa [kā:] *v.* to fold

kam [kám] *v.* to tell

káá [ká:] *n.* head

kang [kāŋ] *v.* to gather

kàà [kà:] *v.* to climb; to ascend; to mount

kasuwa [kàsūwā] *n.* market (< <Hausa)

kaap [kā:p] *n.* baboon *Papio anubis*

kat [kàt] *v.* **1**) to get; to have **2**) to find; to discover

kəər [kə:r] <i>v.</i> to fear	kul fiip [kúl fi:p] <i>v.</i> to whistle
kəət [kə:t] <i>v.</i> to finish; to end; to complete	kum [kúm] <i>n.</i> corpse; carcass; cadaver
kələŋ [kələŋ] <i>v.</i> to hear; to listen	kur [kúr] <i>n.</i> tortoise
kəm ₁ [kəm] <i>n.</i> song	kurum [kūrūm] <i>v.</i> to kneel down
kəm ₂ [kəm] <i>v.</i> to sing	kut [kút] <i>n.</i> crocodile <i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>
kən [kən] <i>n.</i> buffalo; bush cow <i>Syncerus caffer</i>	kuur [kūr] <i>n.</i> lake
kəp [kəp] <i>a.</i> short	kwak [k ^w ák] <i>v.</i> to pour
kom [kōm] <i>n.</i> ear	kwalm [k ^w ālm] <i>n.</i> blacksmith
kong [kōŋ] <i>n.</i> river; stream; brook; rivulet	kwat [k ^w ət] <i>n.</i> hunting
koo [kō:] <i>v.</i> 1) to share; to divide 2) to cut	kwee [k ^w è:] <i>n.</i> chicken; hen; fowl
koom [kō:m] <i>n.</i> wind; breeze	kyek [k ^j ék] <i>n.</i> porcupine <i>Hystrix cristata</i>
kop [kóp] <i>v.</i> to plant	

K k

ƙom təŋ [kōm təŋ] <i>n.</i> leaf	ƙungƙung [kúŋkúŋ] <i>n.</i> sweet potato <i>Ipomoea batatas</i>
ƙum [kúm] <i>n.</i> navel	
ƙun [kún] <i>num.</i> three	

L l

la [lá] <i>v.</i> to receive; to collect	ləmwat [ləm ^w ét] <i>n.</i> frog
laa [là:] <i>v.</i> to give birth	ləshim [ləʃim] <i>n.</i> leopard <i>Panthera pardus</i>
ladalang [lədālāŋ] <i>n.</i> heart	liis [lí:s] <i>n.</i> tongue
lanəŋ [lənəŋ] <i>n.</i> calf	lit [lìt] <i>n.</i> forest
lap [láp] <i>v.</i> to send	lok [lɔk] <i>v.</i> to plait
lap mat [láp màt] <i>v.</i> to marry	loom [lò:m] <i>v.</i> to lose
lasaar [ləsá:r] <i>n.</i> finger	lop [(l)lɔp?] <i>v.</i> to put on; to wear
lashak [ləʃàk] <i>v.</i> to resemble	lun [lún] <i>n.</i> dry season
lek [lèk] <i>n.</i> 1) war; fight; combat; struggle 2) to fight	lung [lúŋ] <i>v.</i> to swim
leng [lēŋ] <i>v.</i> to remember; to recall	lututut [lútútút] <i>n.</i> Senegal coucal <i>Centropus senegalensis</i>
lə ₁ [lə] <i>n.</i> house	luwa [lūwā] <i>n.</i> meat
lə ₂ [lə] <i>v.</i> to say; to speak	luwa dəm [lùwà dəm] <i>n.</i> wild animal
lə nyar [lə ɲàr] <i>n.</i> nest	

M m

maar [má:r] <i>n.</i> farm	mbilaa [m ^b ilá:] <i>n.</i> sickness; disease; illness; malady
man [mān] <i>v.</i> to know	mbit [m ^b ìt] <i>adv.</i> morning
mang [màŋ] <i>v.</i> to carry	mendong [méndòŋ] <i>num.</i> one
mat [màt] <i>n.</i> woman	mer [mēr] <i>n.</i> rock python <i>Python sebae</i>
mat ma [mát má] <i>n.</i> women	məzəp [məzèp] <i>n.</i> guest; stranger
mbəcang [m ^b ətʃàŋ] <i>n.</i> intestine	mfət [mfèt] <i>n.</i> mosquito <i>Anopheles spp.</i>

mfwan [ɱf ^w àn] <i>n.</i> slave	muut [mū:t] <i>n.</i> death
mpep [m ^p ɛp] <i>n.</i> beard	mùt [mù:t] <i>v.</i> to die
mpəlɸəl [m ^p əlɸəl] <i>n.</i> butterfly	mvoor [ɱvɔ:r] <i>n.</i> bee sp.
mpoo [m ^p ɔ:] <i>v.</i> to add	mvwar [ɱv ^w àr] <i>n.</i> lion <i>Panthera leo</i>
mposən [m ^p ɔsən] <i>adv.</i> evening	mwa [m ^w á] <i>pron.</i> they
mpus [m ^p ūs] <i>adv.</i> afternoon	mwan [m ^w ān] <i>v.</i> to walk
mun [mún] <i>pron.</i> we	mwan tom [m ^w ān tōm] <i>v.p.</i> to continue; to persist
mura [mùrǎ] <i>n.</i> jackal <i>Canis adustus</i>	mwat [m ^w ət] <i>v.</i> to beat
mus [mús] <i>n.</i> cat	myoor [m ^y ɔ:r] <i>v.</i> to twist; to plait; to braid

N n

náá [nà:] <i>v.</i> to see	ngolong [ŋgɔlɔŋ] <i>n.</i> chief; king; ruler
nàà [nà:] <i>n.</i> mother	ngomi [ŋgɔmì] <i>n.</i> relation
naan [nā:n] <i>n.</i> spider	ngopaa [ŋgɔpá:] <i>n.</i> traditional doctor; herbalist
Naan [nā:n] <i>n.</i> God	ngwanglang [ŋg ^w àŋlàn] <i>n.</i> millipede <i>Iule spp.</i>
nakwom [nàk ^w ɔm] <i>n.</i> francolin; bush-fowl <i>Francolinus spp.</i>	ngwas [ŋg ^w às] <i>n.</i> pig
nang [nāŋ] <i>v.</i> to give	ngwoo [ŋwɔ:] <i>n.</i> snake
nat [nət] <i>s.v.</i> to be red	nii [ní:] <i>n.</i> elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i>
ncam [n ⁿ ɕám] <i>n.</i> louse <i>louse, generic Pediculus spp.</i>	njaki [n ⁿ ɕákí] <i>n.</i> donkey
ncol wus [n ⁿ ɕɔl wūs] <i>n.</i> firefly <i>Lampyridae</i>	nji [n ⁿ ɕjì] <i>v.</i> to come
ndangrop [n ⁿ dàŋrɔp] <i>n.</i> chameleon	njolong [n ⁿ ɕɔlɔŋ] <i>n.</i> mason wasp <i>Belenogaster griseus</i>
ndangtis [n ⁿ dàŋtìs] <i>n.</i> story; folktale	nkaan bi [n ⁿ kà:n bi] <i>n.</i> seed
ndəbai [n ⁿ dəbàj] <i>n.</i> cockroach <i>Periplaneta americana</i>	nkaləŋ [n ⁿ kàlɔŋ] <i>n.</i> pied crow <i>Corvus albus</i>
ndəgung [n ⁿ dəgúŋ] <i>n.</i> he-goat	nkamu [n ⁿ kàmù] <i>n.</i> hyena <i>Hyaena hyaena</i>
ndəs [n ⁿ dəs] <i>n.</i> giant cricket	nkiikii [n ⁿ kī:kí:] <i>n.</i> praying mantis <i>Sphodromantis phyllocrana</i>
ndəzum [n ⁿ dəzùm] <i>n.</i> ant	nkus nəŋ [n ⁿ kùs nəŋ] <i>n.</i> bull
ndipip [n ⁿ dìpíp] <i>n.</i> flying termite; flying ant	nkongkong [n ⁿ kɔŋkɔŋ] <i>n.</i> bark of tree
nduu [n ⁿ dū:] <i>n.</i> skink	nlaa [n ⁿ là:] <i>n.</i> child; baby
neer [nē:r] <i>n.</i> vagina	nlang [n ⁿ lāŋ] <i>n.</i> lizard <i>Agama agama</i>
nen [nēn] <i>n.</i> hunger	nluu [n ⁿ lù:] <i>n.</i> cloud
nəŋ [nəŋ] <i>n.</i> cow	nook [nɔ:k] <i>n.</i> breath
ngaan [ŋà:n] <i>n.</i> spitting cobra <i>Naja nigricollis nigricollis</i>	nop [nɔp] <i>n.</i> armpit
ngəzəm [ŋgəzəm] <i>n.</i> rat	nshii1 [n ⁿ ʃi:] <i>n.</i> bee
ngəzəŋ [ŋgəzəŋ] <i>n.</i> urine	nshii2 [n ⁿ ʃi:] <i>n.</i> housefly
nggaam [ŋgà:m] <i>n.</i> ram	nshon [n ⁿ ʃɔn] <i>n.</i> finger nail
nggwangwang [ŋg ^w àŋg ^w àŋ] <i>n.</i> throat	nshwarang [n ⁿ ʃ ^w ārāŋ] <i>n.</i> termite
ngok [ŋgɔk] <i>n.</i> grasshopper	ntangkwoł [n ⁿ tàŋk ^w ɔł] <i>n.</i> crab
	nwup [n ⁿ wūp] <i>n.</i> giant rat; pouched rat <i>Cricetomys</i>

<i>gambianus</i>	nzar [ˈnʒàr] <i>n.</i> star
nyar [ɲjàr] <i>n.</i> bird	nzeel [ˈnʒɛ:l] <i>n.</i> saliva
nyet [ɲjèt] <i>n.</i> insect	nzemen [ˈnʒɛmɛn] <i>n.</i> earthworm; worm
nyiyi [ɲjijì] <i>n.</i> owl	

O o

ok [ɔk] <i>v.</i> to dig	os [ɔs] <i>n.</i> tooth
orong [ɔrɔŋ] <i>n.</i> dust	

P p

paap [pà:p] <i>n.</i> red-flanked duiker <i>Cephalophus rufilatus</i>	poo movəl [pò: mɔvəl] <i>num.</i> twelve
paar [pā:r] <i>adv.</i> night	poo mundong [pò: múndɔŋ] <i>num.</i> eleven
pààr [pà:r] <i>n.</i> vein	poofar [pò:fár] <i>num.</i> nine
paat [pà:t] <i>num.</i> five	pookun [pò:kún] <i>num.</i> eight
pal təŋ [pəl tɛŋ] <i>n.</i> flower of tree	poor [pɔ:r] <i>v.</i> to dry out; to dessicate
pang [pánŋ] <i>n.</i> stone	poovəl [pò:vəl] <i>num.</i> seven
pas [pās] <i>n.</i> rainy season	pukaam [pùkā:m] <i>n.</i> grandchild
pee [pē:] <i>n.</i> place	pukong [pùkɔŋ] <i>n.</i> bank of river
peeme [pē:mé] <i>num.</i> six	pupur [púpūr] <i>n.</i> hedgehog <i>Atelerix albiventris</i>
pəkyeen [pəkjē:n] <i>n.</i> forehead	puruk [púrúk] <i>n.</i> mushroom; fungus
piiwong [pi:wɔŋ] <i>n.</i> sweat; perspiration	pus [pūs] <i>n.</i> sun
pit [pìt] <i>n.</i> patas monkey <i>Erythrocebus patas</i>	pùs ₁ [pùs] <i>v.</i> to pierce
piya [píjáj] <i>s.v.</i> to be white	pùs ₂ [pùs] <i>v.</i> to shoot; to fire
polgul [pólɣùl] <i>n.</i> knee	put [pūt] <i>v.</i> 1) to come out 2) to go out; to exit
poo [pò:] <i>n.</i> mouth	pyen [pʲɛn] <i>v.</i> to smash; to split; to break
póó [pó:] <i>a.</i> new	

R r

raa [rá:] <i>v.</i> to weave	rin [rín] <i>n.</i> shadow; shade
riija [rí:ɕǣ] <i>n.</i> well (< H.)	

S s

saar [sá:r] <i>n.</i> arm; hand	sə [sə] <i>v.</i> to run
sak mar [sāk mār] <i>v.p.</i> to farm; to till; to cultivate	səəm [sə:m] <i>v.</i> to cough
sam [sám] <i>v.</i> to sharpen	səər [sə:r] <i>n.</i> dew
sar [sàr] <i>num.</i> ten	səm [səm] <i>n.</i> name
se [sɛ] <i>v.</i> to eat	sər [sér] <i>a.</i> all
seen təŋ [sɛ:n tɛŋ] <i>n.</i> root of tree	shaan [ʃā:n] <i>v.</i> to burn
seet ₁ [sé:t] <i>v.</i> to buy	shaar [ʃā:r] <i>n.</i> friend
seet ₂ [sé:t] <i>v.</i> to sell	sham [ʃām] <i>v.</i> to flow
set [sɛt] <i>v.</i> to go	shangkən [ʃáŋkən] <i>n.</i> wall gecko <i>Gekkonidae</i>

shedər [ʃɛdər] <i>v.</i> to forget	shorop [ʃɔrɔp] <i>n.</i> fish
sheshe [ʃɛʃɛ] <i>v.</i> to begin; to start; to commence	shwa [ʃwā] <i>v.</i> to drink
shii ₁ [ʃi:] <i>n.</i> leg; thigh	shwa wur [ʃwā wūr] <i>v.</i> to suck breast
shii ₂ [ʃi:] <i>v.</i> to refuse; to reject	shwar ₁ [ʃwār] <i>v.</i> to laugh
shimshik [ʃimʃik] <i>n.</i> skin	shwar ₂ [ʃwār] <i>v.n.</i> laughter; mirth
shin [ʃin] <i>v.</i> to do; to make	shwishwen [ʃwɪʃwɛn] <i>n.</i> aerial yam <i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>
shin nen [ʃin nɛn] <i>v.</i> to play	shwom [ʃwɔm] <i>n.</i> guinea-fowl <i>Numida meleagris</i>
shinshin [ʃinʃin] <i>adv.</i> today	song təŋ [sɔŋ tɛŋ] <i>n.</i> branch of tree
shishin [ʃiʃin] <i>n.</i> work	soom [sɔ:m] <i>n.</i> horn
shit ₁ [ʃit] <i>n.</i> grass	soon [sɔ:n] <i>s.v.</i> to be tall
shit ₂ [ʃit] <i>v.</i> to learn	soot [sɔ:t] <i>n.</i> witch
shol ₁ [ʃɔl] <i>n.</i> jaw	suun [sū:n] <i>v.</i> to dream
shol ₂ [ʃɔn] <i>n.</i> money	suur [sū:r] <i>v.</i> to fry
shomgot [ʃɔmgɔt] <i>n.</i> dassie; rock rabbit; rock hyrax <i>Procavia capensis</i>	swap [sʷāp] <i>n.</i> wing

T t

taa [tá:] <i>v.</i> to fall	down; to repose
taan [tā:n] <i>v.</i> to sew	tə [tɛ] <i>v.</i> 1) to kill 2) to extinguish; to quench
tal [tāl] <i>v.</i> to ask	təm [tɛm] <i>n.</i> sheep
tam [tām] <i>v.</i> to dance	təŋ ₁ [tɛŋ] <i>n.</i> tree
tang [təŋ] <i>v.</i> to count	təŋ ₂ [tɛŋ] <i>n.</i> sky
tanglap [təŋlɔp] <i>n.</i> nightjar <i>Caprimulgus spp.</i>	təp [tɛp] <i>s.v.</i> to be black
tap [tāp] <i>v.</i> to break; to smash	tir [tɪr] <i>v.</i> to ride; to drive
tar [tár] <i>n.</i> moon	tis [tɪs] <i>n.</i> snail
tee [tē:] <i>v.</i> to tear; to rip	tok [tɔk] <i>n.</i> neck
tek feer [tɛk fé:r] <i>num.</i> forty	tol [tɔl] <i>v.</i> to chew
tek kun [tɛk kún] <i>num.</i> thirty	toom [tɔ:m] <i>n.</i> blood
tek paat [tɛk pà:t] <i>num.</i> fifty	tun [tūn] <i>n.</i> grave; hole
tek peeme [tɛk pē:mé] <i>num.</i> sixty	tung ₁ [tún] <i>v.</i> to stir
tek poofar [tɛk pò:fár] <i>num.</i> ninety	tung ₂ [tún] <i>v.</i> to touch
tek pookun [tɛk pò:kún] <i>num.</i> eighty	tung ₃ [tún] <i>v.</i> to wipe
tek poovəl [tɛk pò:vəl] <i>num.</i> seventy	tus [tús] <i>v.</i> to push
tek vəl [tɛk vəl] <i>num.</i> twenty	tuur [tú:r] <i>n.</i> chest
ter [tɛr] <i>v.</i> 1) to sleep; to spend night 2) to lie	

V v

vəl [vəl] <i>num.</i> two	vwang [vʷāŋ] <i>v.</i> to wash
vivit [vɪvít] <i>n.</i> whirlwind	

W w

waa ji [wā: ɕʝi] <i>v.p.</i> to return	wuk [wúk] <i>v.</i> to bark
waap [wá:p] <i>n.</i> harmattan	wum [wūm] <i>v.</i> 1) to bury 2) to close; to shut
wal [wál] <i>v.</i> to weep; to cry	wun [wún] <i>pron.</i> you (pl.)
wan [wān] <i>n.</i> clay	wur ₁ [wūr] <i>n.</i> breast
war [wār] <i>pron.</i> she	wur ₂ [wūr] <i>pron.</i> he
warang [wáráŋ] <i>v.</i> to grow	wus [wūs] <i>n.</i> fire
wat ₁ [wát] <i>n.</i> thief	wùs [wùs] <i>v.</i> to roast; to grill
wat ₂ [wát] <i>v.</i> to steal; to rob; to burgle; to pilfer	

Y y

yaa [jà:] <i>v.</i> to catch	yol ₁ [jɔ̃l] <i>v.</i> to wake; to awaken
yə [jə] <i>pron.</i> you (f)	yol ₂ [jɔ̃l] <i>v.</i> to fly
yii [jí:] <i>n.</i> year	yol ₃ [jɔ̃l] <i>v.</i> to stand up
yil [jíl] <i>n.</i> ground	yol kətəŋ [jɔ̃l kətəŋ] <i>v.</i> to jump
yit [jīt] <i>n.</i> eye; face	yong [jɔ̃ŋ] <i>v.</i> to call
yok [jòk] <i>v.</i> to shake	

Z z

zaak [zà:k] *v.* to choose; to select

A a

add, to *v.* **mpoo**

aerial yam *n.* **shwishwen**

African fish eagle *n.* **fwem**

afternoon *adv.* **mpus**

all *a.* **sər**

ant *n.* **ndəzum**

arm *n.* **saar**

armpit *n.* **nop**

arrive, to *v.* **ji**

arse *n.* **bəder**

ascend, to *v.* **kàà**

ashes *n.* **fwat**

ask, to *v.* **tal**

awaken, to *v.* **yol₁**

B b

baboon *n.* **kaap**

baby *n.* **nlaa**

back *n.* **dangkong**

bank of river *n.* **pukong**

barf, to *v.* **fuut**

bark of tree *n.* **nkongkong**

bark, to *v.* **wuk**

be more than, to *v.* **dal₂**

beard *n.* **mpep**

beat, to *v.* **mwat**

bee *n.* **nshii₁**

bee sp. *n.* **mvoor**

beg, to *v.* **ɗang**

begin, to *v.* **sheshe**

big *a.* **bəjim**

bird *n.* **nyar**

bite, to *v.* **at**

black and white cobra *n.* **goktaa**

black, to be *s.v.* **təp**

blacksmith *n.* **kwalm**

blood *n.* **toom**

blow, to *v.* **fii₂**

body *n.* **cicik**

boil, to *v.* **fyal**

bone *n.* **is**

braid, to *v.* **myoor**

branch of tree *n.* **song təŋ**

break, to *v.* **pyen**; *v.* **tap**

breast *n.* **wur₁**

breath *n.* **nook**

breeze *n.* **koom**

brook *n.* **kong**

buffalo *n.* **kən**

build, to v. ɸik	bury, to v. wum 1	butterfly <i>n.</i> mpəlpəl
bull <i>n.</i> nkus nəŋ	bush <i>n.</i> ɸən təŋ	buttocks <i>n.</i> bəder
burgle, to v. wat2	bush cow <i>n.</i> kən	buy, to v. seet1
burn, to v. shaan	bush-fowl <i>n.</i> nakwom	
C c		
cadaver <i>n.</i> kum	children <i>n.</i> jep	construct, to v. ɸik
calf <i>n.</i> lanəŋ	chin <i>n.</i> jom	continue, to <i>v.p.</i> mwan tom
call, to v. yong	choose, to v. zaak	corpse <i>n.</i> kum
carcass <i>n.</i> kum	clay <i>n.</i> wan	cough, to v. səəm
carry, to v. mang	climb, to v. kàà	count, to v. tang
cat <i>n.</i> mus	close, to v. wum 2	cow <i>n.</i> nəŋ
catch, to v. yaa	cloud <i>n.</i> nluu	crab <i>n.</i> ntangkwoł
cave <i>n.</i> goot	cock <i>n.</i> ɸel kwee	crocodile <i>n.</i> kut
chameleon <i>n.</i> ndangrop	cockroach <i>n.</i> ndəbai	crush, to v. iis2
charcoal <i>n.</i> fiis	cocoyam <i>n.</i> gwan	cry, to v. wal
cheek <i>n.</i> gən	collect, to v. la	cultivate, to <i>v.p.</i> sak mar
chest <i>n.</i> tuur	combat <i>n.</i> lek 1	curve, to v. ám
chew, to v. tol	come out, to v. put 1	cut down, to v. gap
chicken <i>n.</i> kwee	come, to v. nji	cut, to v. koo 2
chief <i>n.</i> ngolong	commence, to v. sheshe	
child <i>n.</i> nlaa	complete, to v. kəət	
D d		
dance, to v. tam	disease <i>n.</i> mbilaa	drop, to v. ɸen
dassie <i>n.</i> shomgot	divide, to v. koo 1	dry out, to v. poor
death <i>n.</i> muut	do, to v. shin	dry season <i>n.</i> lun
desiccate, to v. poor	dog <i>n.</i> as	dry up, to v. fii1
dew <i>n.</i> səər	donkey <i>n.</i> njaki	dung <i>n.</i> es
die, to v. mùùt	dream, to v. suun	dust <i>n.</i> orong
dig, to v. ok	drink, to v. shwa	
discover, to v. kat 2	drive, to v. tir	
E e		
ear <i>n.</i> kom	elephant <i>n.</i> nii	excrement <i>n.</i> es
earthworm <i>n.</i> nzemen	eleven <i>num.</i> poo mundong	excreta <i>n.</i> es
eat, to v. se	end, to v. kəət	exit, to v. put 2
egg <i>n.</i> aas	enter, to v. ɸal1	extinguish, to v. tə 2
eight <i>num.</i> pookun	evaporate, to v. fii1	eye <i>n.</i> yit
eighty <i>num.</i> tek pookun	evening <i>adv.</i> mposən	
F f		

face <i>n.</i> yit	finger <i>n.</i> lasaar	folktale <i>n.</i> ndangtis
faeces <i>n.</i> es	finger nail <i>n.</i> nshon	forehead <i>n.</i> pəkyeen
fall, to <i>v.</i> taa	finish, to <i>v.</i> kəət	forest <i>n.</i> lit
farm <i>n.</i> maar	fire <i>n.</i> wus	forget, to <i>v.</i> shedər
farm, to <i>v.p.</i> sak mar	fire, to <i>v.</i> pùs2	forty <i>num.</i> tek feer
father <i>n.</i> daa	firefly <i>n.</i> ncol wus	four <i>num.</i> feer
fear, to <i>v.</i> kəər	fish <i>n.</i> shorop	fowl <i>n.</i> kwee
feather <i>n.</i> fip	five <i>num.</i> paat	francolin <i>n.</i> nakwom
fell, to <i>v.</i> gap	flow, to <i>v.</i> sham	friend <i>n.</i> shaar
fifty <i>num.</i> tek paat	flower of tree <i>n.</i> pal təng	frog <i>n.</i> ləmwat
fight <i>n.</i> lek 1	fly, to <i>v.</i> yol2	fruit bat <i>n.</i> diin
fight, to <i>n.</i> lek 2	flying ant <i>n.</i> ndipip	fry, to <i>v.</i> suur
fill s.t., to <i>v.</i> gam	flying termite <i>n.</i> ndipip	fungus <i>n.</i> puruk
find, to <i>v.</i> kat 2	fold, to <i>v.</i> kaa	
G g		
gather, to <i>v.</i> kang	goat <i>n.</i> əə	great <i>a.</i> bəjim
get, to <i>v.</i> kat 1	God <i>n.</i> Naan	grill, to <i>v.</i> wùs
giant cricket <i>n.</i> ndəs	granary <i>n.</i> dyaar	grind, to <i>v.</i> iis2
giant rat <i>n.</i> nwup	grandchild <i>n.</i> pukaam	ground <i>n.</i> yil
give birth, to <i>v.</i> laa	grandparent <i>n.</i> gəjet	ground squirrel <i>n.</i> aak
give, to <i>v.</i> nang	grass <i>n.</i> shit1	grow, to <i>v.</i> warang
go in, to <i>v.</i> dal1	grasscutter <i>n.</i> ɸip	guest <i>n.</i> məzep
go out, to <i>v.</i> put 2	grasshopper <i>n.</i> ngok	guinea-fowl <i>n.</i> shwom
go, to <i>v.</i> set	grave <i>n.</i> tun	
H h		
hair <i>n.</i> fipkaa	hedgehog <i>n.</i> pupur	house bat <i>n.</i> bəbar
hand <i>n.</i> saar	he-goat <i>n.</i> ndəgung	housefly <i>n.</i> nshii2
hare <i>n.</i> dafwan	hen <i>n.</i> kwee	huge <i>a.</i> bəjim
harmattan <i>n.</i> waap	herbalist <i>n.</i> ngopaa	hundred <i>num.</i> ɸari
have, to <i>v.</i> kat 1	hill <i>n.</i> jaal	hunger <i>n.</i> nen
he <i>pron.</i> wur2	hole <i>n.</i> tun	hunter <i>n.</i> gəkwat
head <i>n.</i> káá	horn <i>n.</i> soom	hunting <i>n.</i> kwat
hear, to <i>v.</i> kələng	horse <i>n.</i> bəzəng	hyena <i>n.</i> nkamu
heart <i>n.</i> ladalang	house <i>n.</i> lə1	
I i		
I <i>pron.</i> an	inflate, to <i>v.</i> ɸəəl	intestine <i>n.</i> mbəcang
illness <i>n.</i> mbilaa	insect <i>n.</i> nyet	
J j		

jackal <i>n.</i> mura	jaw <i>n.</i> shol1	jump, to <i>v.</i> yol kətəng
K k		
kill, to <i>v.</i> tə 1 king <i>n.</i> ngolong	knee <i>n.</i> polgul kneel down, to <i>v.</i> kurum	know, to <i>v.</i> man
L l		
lake <i>n.</i> kuur large <i>a.</i> bəjim laugh, to <i>v.</i> shwar1 laughter <i>v.n.</i> shwar2 leaf <i>n.</i> kom təng learn, to <i>v.</i> shit2	leg <i>n.</i> shii1 leopard <i>n.</i> ləshim lick, to <i>v.</i> ʃələm lie down, to <i>v.</i> ter 2 lion <i>n.</i> mɔwar listen, to <i>v.</i> kələng liver <i>n.</i> fəlök	lizard <i>n.</i> nlang look for, to <i>v.</i> ʃong loosen, to <i>v.</i> fwen lose, to <i>v.</i> loom louse <i>n.</i> ncam
M m		
make, to <i>v.</i> shin malady <i>n.</i> mbilaa man <i>n.</i> goməs manure <i>n.</i> es market <i>n.</i> kasuwa marry, to <i>v.</i> lap mat mason wasp <i>n.</i> njolong meat <i>n.</i> luwa	medicine <i>n.</i> en millipede <i>n.</i> ngwanglang money <i>n.</i> shol2 monitor lizard <i>n.</i> dashim moon <i>n.</i> tar morning <i>adv.</i> mbit mosquito <i>n.</i> mfət	mother <i>n.</i> nàà mount, to <i>v.</i> kàà mountain <i>n.</i> but pee mouth <i>n.</i> po mud <i>n.</i> ʃook mushroom <i>n.</i> puruk
N n		
name <i>n.</i> səm navel <i>n.</i> kum neck <i>n.</i> tok nest <i>n.</i> lə nyar	new <i>a.</i> póó night <i>adv.</i> paar nightjar <i>n.</i> tanglap nine <i>num.</i> poofar	ninety <i>num.</i> tek poofar nose <i>n.</i> góng
O o		
one <i>num.</i> mendong	open, to <i>v.</i> bet	owl <i>n.</i> nyiyi
P p		
patas monkey <i>n.</i> pit path <i>n.</i> aar penis <i>n.</i> dəp people <i>n.</i> gurum mu persist, to <i>v.p.</i> mwan tom person <i>n.</i> gurum perspiration <i>n.</i> piiwong pied crow <i>n.</i> nkaləng	pierce, to <i>v.</i> pùs1 pig <i>n.</i> ngwas pilfer, to <i>v.</i> wat2 place <i>n.</i> pee plait, to <i>v.</i> lok ; <i>v.</i> myoor plant, to <i>v.</i> kop play, to <i>v.</i> shin nen porcupine <i>n.</i> kyek	pouched rat <i>n.</i> nwup pound, to <i>v.</i> cək pour, to <i>v.</i> kwak praying mantis <i>n.</i> nkiikii pull, to <i>v.</i> dəl push, to <i>v.</i> tus put on, to <i>v.</i> lop
Q q		
quarrel, to <i>v.</i> jəər	quench, to <i>v.</i> tə 2	

R r

rabbit <i>n.</i> dafwan	remember, to <i>v.</i> leng	rob, to <i>v.</i> wat2
rain <i>n.</i> fwan	repose, to <i>v.</i> ter 2	rock hyrax <i>n.</i> shomgot
rainy season <i>n.</i> pas	resemble, to <i>v.</i> lashak	rock python <i>n.</i> mer
ram <i>n.</i> nggaam	retch, to <i>v.</i> fuut	rock rabbit <i>n.</i> shomgot
rat <i>n.</i> ngəzəm	return, to <i>v.p.</i> waa ji	roof <i>n.</i> gak
recall, to <i>v.</i> leng	rib <i>n.</i> is tuur	root of tree <i>n.</i> seen təng
recieve, to <i>v.</i> la	ride, to <i>v.</i> tir	rub, to <i>v.</i> gwak
red, to be <i>s.v.</i> nat	rip, to <i>v.</i> tee	rubbish dump <i>n.</i> fəp
red-flanked duiker <i>n.</i> paap	river <i>n.</i> kong	ruler <i>n.</i> ngolong
refuse, to <i>v.</i> shii2	rivulet <i>n.</i> kong	run, to <i>v.</i> sə
reject, to <i>v.</i> shii2	road <i>n.</i> aar	
relation <i>n.</i> ngomi	roast, to <i>v.</i> wùs	

S s

saliva <i>n.</i> nzeel	short <i>a.</i> kəp	split, to <i>v.</i> pyen
sand <i>n.</i> iis1	shoulder <i>n.</i> gəng	spread, to <i>v.</i> dat
say, to <i>v.</i> lə2	shut, to <i>v.</i> wum 2	stand up, to <i>v.</i> yol3
scatter, to <i>v.</i> dat	sickness <i>n.</i> mbilaa	star <i>n.</i> nzar
scorpion <i>n.</i> door	sing, to <i>v.</i> kəm2	start, to <i>v.</i> sheshe
see, to <i>v.</i> náá	six <i>num.</i> peeme	steal, to <i>v.</i> wat2
seed <i>n.</i> nkaan bi	sixty <i>num.</i> tek peeme	stir, to <i>v.</i> tung1
select, to <i>v.</i> zaak	skin <i>n.</i> shimshik	stomach <i>n.</i> but
sell, to <i>v.</i> seet2	skink <i>n.</i> nduu	stone <i>n.</i> pang
send, to <i>v.</i> lap	sky <i>n.</i> təng2	story <i>n.</i> ndangtis
Senegal coucal <i>n.</i> lututut	slave <i>n.</i> mfwan	stranger <i>n.</i> məzep
settlement <i>n.</i> dən yil2	sleep, to <i>v.</i> ter 1	stream <i>n.</i> kong
seven <i>num.</i> poovəl	small, to be <i>s.v.</i> dit	struggle <i>n.</i> lek 1
seventy <i>num.</i> tek poovəl	smash, to <i>v.</i> pyen ; <i>v.</i> tap	suck breast, to <i>v.</i> shwa wur
sew, to <i>v.</i> taan	smell, to <i>v.</i> də	sun <i>n.</i> pus
shade <i>n.</i> rin	smoke <i>n.</i> dyel	surpass, to <i>v.</i> dəl2
shadow <i>n.</i> rin	snail <i>n.</i> tis	swallow, to <i>v.</i> dál
shake, to <i>v.</i> yok	snake <i>n.</i> ngwoo	sweat <i>n.</i> piiwong
share, to <i>v.</i> koo 1	song <i>n.</i> kəm1	sweep, to <i>v.</i> fet
sharpen, to <i>v.</i> sam	speak, to <i>v.</i> lə2	sweet potato <i>n.</i> kungfung
she <i>pron.</i> war	spend night, to <i>v.</i> ter 1	swell up, to <i>v.</i> bəəl
sheep <i>n.</i> təm	spider <i>n.</i> naan	swim, to <i>v.</i> lung
shit <i>n.</i> es	spit, to <i>v.</i> byak	
shoot, to <i>v.</i> pùs2	spitting cobra <i>n.</i> ngaan	

T t

tail <i>n.</i> dang	thorn <i>n.</i> ər	town <i>n.</i> ɗən yil₂
tall, to be <i>s.v.</i> soon	three <i>num.</i> kun	track <i>n.</i> aar
taro <i>n.</i> gwan	throat <i>n.</i> nggwangwang	traditional doctor <i>n.</i> ngopaa
tear, to <i>v.</i> tee	throw, to <i>v.</i> ɓaam	trail <i>n.</i> aar
tell, to <i>v.</i> kam	till, to <i>v.p.</i> sak mar	tree <i>n.</i> təng₁
ten <i>num.</i> sar	today <i>adv.</i> shinshin	twelve <i>num.</i> poo movəl
termite <i>n.</i> nshwarang	tomorrow <i>adv.</i> ɗəɗar	twenty <i>num.</i> tek vəl
they <i>pron.</i> mwa	tongue <i>n.</i> liis	twist, to <i>v.</i> myoor
thief <i>n.</i> wat₁	tooth <i>n.</i> os	two <i>num.</i> vəl
thigh <i>n.</i> shii₁	tortoise <i>n.</i> kur	
thirty <i>num.</i> tek kun	touch, to <i>v.</i> tung₂	

U u

untie, to <i>v.</i> fwen	urine <i>n.</i> ngəzəng
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V v

vagina <i>n.</i> neer	village <i>n.</i> ɗən yil₂	vulture <i>n.</i> ɗəkashi
vast <i>a.</i> bəjim	vomit, to <i>v.</i> fuut	
vein <i>n.</i> pààr		

W w

wake, to <i>v.</i> yol₁	weave, to <i>v.</i> raa	wipe, to <i>v.</i> gwak ; <i>v.</i> tung₃
walk, to <i>v.</i> mwan	weep, to <i>v.</i> wal	witch <i>n.</i> soot
wall <i>n.</i> ɓut lə	well <i>n.</i> riija	woman <i>n.</i> mat
wall gecko <i>n.</i> shangkən	whirlwind <i>n.</i> vivit	women <i>n.</i> mat ma
want s.t., to <i>v.</i> ɗam	whistle <i>n.</i> fiip	work <i>n.</i> shishin
war <i>n.</i> lek 1	whistle, to <i>v.</i> kul fiip	world <i>n.</i> ɗən yil₁
wash, to <i>v.</i> vwang	white, to be <i>s.v.</i> piya	worm <i>n.</i> nzemen
water <i>n.</i> àm	wild animal <i>n.</i> luwa ɗəm	
we <i>pron.</i> mun	wind <i>n.</i> koom	
wear, to <i>v.</i> lop	wing <i>n.</i> swap	

Y y

yam <i>n.</i> ɓwaar
yawning <i>v.n.</i> ap
year <i>n.</i> yii
yesterday <i>adv.</i> dondon
you (f) <i>pron.</i> yə
you (m) <i>pron.</i> gha
you (pl.) <i>pron.</i> wun

6. Lexical comparison and the classification of Belnəŋ

6.1 How should Belnəŋ be classified?

Phonologically speaking, Belnəŋ aligns with Northern languages such as Mwaghavul, since it shares none of the complex onsets of Tal. However, neither does it show the idiosyncratic consonant shifts characteristic of Ngas, such as the development of /dʒ/. All A3 languages are relatively close to one another and share numerous common forms. However, there are some cases where Belnəŋ has a distinct lexeme. The following short tables compare Belnəŋ words with Ngas and Tal, the most plausible candidates for an affiliation and show that it is quite distinct.

knee

Language	Form
Ngas	fùrùm
Bəlnəŋ	fürgùl
Tal	pifíim

armpit

Language	Form
Ngas	dʒok, lunap
Bəlnəŋ	nòp
Tal	làhoop

throat

Language	Form
Ngas	pəʃʃók
Bəlnəŋ	gwāŋgwāŋ
Tal	kúkwāār

heart

Language	Form
Ngas	dúúr
Bəlnəŋ	là délúŋ
Tal	bōlōŋ, làpááy

bark of tree

Language	Form
Ngas	kòŋkòŋ
Bəlnəŋ	nkòŋkòŋ
Tal	kòŋ

There are a number of cases where Belnəŋ has an individual form not shared with any other A3 languages.

Language	Mushroom
Ngas	tás
Bəlnəŋ	trūk
Tal	wéyéŋ

Language	Seed
Ngas	hèè
Bəlnəŋ	kāndī
Tal	kyèèm

Language	Bush
Ngas	kíí
Bəlnəŋ	dəntəŋ
Tal	kìŋ

6.2 Is Belnəŋ a distinct language?

There is every reason to regard Belnəŋ as a distinct language. They live as an isolated population among the Tal, but have not adopted Tal phonology or lexicon. Although their traditions link them with the Ngas, this has no particular support from the phonology and lexicon. Indeed it is possible that Belnəŋ is a remnant of former languages spoke in this area prior to the expansion of Tal and Miship. I therefore propose Belnəŋ is assigned its own ISO code.

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