

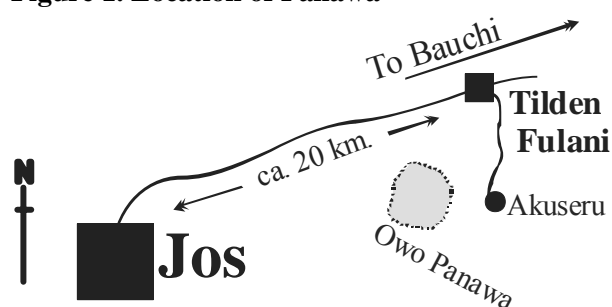
Notes on the Panawa (Bujiyel) people and language

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The Panawa (Bujiyel) language forms part of the 'Jere cluster' and is in turn part of the Northern Jos group of the East Kainji languages spoken north of Jos town in Central Nigeria. There is no reference to this language other than as a dialect of Sanga (=Gusu), which is inaccurate. There are passing references in the ethnographic literature, such as Temple (1922:84) who refers to them as the 'Bugel' and Gunn (1953:12) as the 'Bujiyel'. All subsequent references repeat the same information. This note makes further information available on the status of the language. The survey was conducted on 19th December 2003 and we were guided by Mr. Yakubu Amadu, a former student of John Nengel. Mr. Amadu also kindly assisted us to complete a wordlist of his language. The son of the former chief of Akuseru kindly answered our questions, as well as allowing the photographing of a variety of traditional objects.

The Panawa live south of the Jos-Bauchi road which runs east of Jos, in Toro Local government area, Bauchi State. Their villages are reached by a road that runs some 5km. south of the town of Tilden Fulani, which is about 20 km. east of Jos. Figure 1 is a sketch map of the location of the Panawa;

Figure 1. Location of Panawa



The correct name for one Panawa person is unuPanawa and for the people anaPanawa. The name of the language is iPanawa. IPanawa has no recognised dialects. The origin of the name Bujiyel is unknown, but presumably has some link with the nearby Buji people. They live in five villages;

No.	Original name	Modern name	Etymology
1	Akuseru	Fadan Bujiyel	seat of chief priest
2	Zabaŋa	—	name of founder
3	Adizəŋə	—	down on the plain
4	Akayzoro	—	?
5	Kaŋkay	—	in charge of ritual

The Panawa originally lived on a large hill, Owo Panawa, just behind their present settlements. The villages on the plain today were the same five villages situated on the hill, and they moved, wholesale, to the plain in 1948. These villages are also exogamous clans. Clans 1,4 and 5 could not marry among themselves but had to marry clans 2 and 3.

The closest language to iPanawa is εBoze (Buji); indeed, lexically it is very close and would conventionally be described as a dialect. However, the tone system is markedly different, making it a different language in an important sense. English is little spoken but Hausa is widespread. Because of marriage between the Panawa and neighbouring tribes, Izere, Iguta and Fulfulde are commonly spoken second languages.

The population of the district is about 20,000 but the great majority of these are settlers along the road. There are probably no more than 3-4000 Panawa. The dispersed nature of their settlements makes such estimations very difficult. The main threat to iPanawa, as elsewhere in this region, is Hausa, which is spoken in schools and between young people. However, children were observed to be speaking their mother tongue, so the threat to the language is present, but not yet extreme.

References

- Gunn, H.D. 1953. *Peoples of the Plateau Area of Northern Nigeria*. IAI, London.
Temple, Olive 1922. *Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria*. Argus Printing and Publishing Co. Capetown.