

The Fyem language
of
Central Nigeria and its affinities

**[DRAFT CIRCULATED FOR COMMENT -NOT FOR CITATION WITHOUT REFERENCE TO
THE AUTHOR**

Roger Blench
Kay Williamson Educational Foundation
8, Guest Road
Cambridge CB1 2AL
United Kingdom
Voice/Ans 0044-(0)1223-560687
Mobile worldwide (00-44)-(0)7967-696804
E-mail rogerblench@yahoo.co.uk
<http://www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm>

This printout: August 29, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. LOCATION, HISTORY AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC SITUATION	1
2.1 Nomenclature	1
2.2 Location and settlements	1
2.3 Language status	1
2.4 Fyem culture and history	1
2.4.1 History	1
2.4.2 Culture	2
3. PHONOLOGY	5
3.1 Vowels	5
3.2 Consonants	5
3.3 Tones	6
4. MORPHOLOGY	6
4.1 Nouns	6
5. LEXICAL COMPARISON AND THE CLASSIFICATION OF FYEM	8
6. FYEM WORDLIST	9
REFERENCES	30

TABLES

1. Introduction

This is an annotated wordlist of the Fyem language, spoken in Pumbush [Kasuwan Ali] village in Plateau State, Nigeria. The wordlist was collected by Roger Blench with the assistance of Selbut Longtau from Garba and Hassan Sati and Mallam Fyem, all over sixty, in Pumbush on the 11th of March 2000. The wordlist was collected as a ‘one-shot’ exercise and the transcription must therefore be regarded as preliminary. This analysis was prepared by Roger Blench, who added the comparative observations. This document is being circulated to scholars for comment.

2. Location, history and sociolinguistic situation

2.1 Nomenclature

The Fyem are also referred to as Pyem, Pyam or Fiem in the literature. A single person is *fyem*, the people *bāfyem*, the language *dīfyem* and the area *pya fyem*. The name Pyam is said to come from the word ‘Pya’ meaning ‘land’. In this interpretation, the name Pyam would therefore denote the people of the land (*Ba-Pyam*). The Fyem people live on the south-eastern escarpment of the Jos Plateau. The Mwaghavul live to the south and west of them. To the east their immediate neighbours are the Kadung (in the Mangu area), and the Sayawa of Bauchi State. To the north are the Berom of Barkin Ladi.

2.2 Location and settlements

The main settlement of the Fyem is Gindiri which is the seat of the Sum Pyem. The other villages of the Fyem are shown in Table 1;

Table 1. Fyem settlements

Fyem	Hausa/Administrative	Fyem	Hausa/Administrative
Dañ Hausa		Kondugonça	
Dicanso		Kuṅsoṅ	
Furshi		Kweradu	
Fyemdere		Langei	
Gesen		Nagwak	
Gindirij	Gindiri	Pipanlaṅ	
Gyemwak		Pumbush	Kasuwan Ali
Jeneret		Toṅzoṅ	
Kadono		Uṅgudum	

Today in the Gindiri area, Pyam people are found in the following villages and towns: Gindiri, Kasuwa-Ali, Zandur, Batni, Langai, Chanso, Dalan, Ungwar-Baraya, Sharka, Kayarda, Bulh, Mangar, Kongorong, Nagwak, Kweradu, Banda and Keras. Others, are Gobel, Sabon-furshi, Dukli, Jigi, Gimti, Pyamgiji, Mungi and Kopai etc.

2.3 Language status

Fyem is widely considered to be a dying language. The Bapyam Azonici Association is making efforts to restore Fyem cultural practices.

2.4 Fyem culture and history

2.4.1 History

The Fyem people say they came from the Middle East through Gobir, in Sokoto State. Tradition has it that they left Gobir during the reign of King Bawa Gobir at the onset of Uthman dan Fodio's Jihad. Having left Gobir, they journeyed through Bauchi State. Before reaching their present location, they first settled in places such as Tulai (north of Boto), Weseli, through Kandim, to Pyamgiji. They were all at Pyamgiji and the Gerten hills, where they found a natural defense from the increasing tribal wars. When the wars reduced,

some Fyem people went to found Langai and from Langai other settlements like Gindiri, Mangu and Chanso were founded.

The Fyem people have the same origin as the Ron people in the Bokkos area of Plateau State and they still have a joking relationship. Traditionally, Fyem elders used to speak, sing and communicate effectively in Ron. But the Ron people cannot now understand or speak Fyem. The Ron people left the Fyem at Fier and went to the Lankan area before the founding of their present settlement. This separation did not in any way affect their relationship. Their relationship was strengthened as they participated together in initiation ceremonies and the slave trade. They used to invite one another to their religious ceremonies or feasts. Ron people were free to participate in the Fyem fetish cults, a privilege not given to other neighbours like the Mwaghavul, with whom they were in constant conflict.

Also the Kadun people are in a good relationship with the Fyem. It is said that the Kadung people can understand and speak the Fyem language but Fyem people do not understand Kadung. They intermarry with one another. In the Gindiri area, the Rumada, were slaves of the Fulani, who have today settled down as farmers in villages such as Banda, Lugere, Rumada, Langai etc. It is a small group of about 4,500 people. They do not understand Fyem or their original language, only Fulani. They are all Muslims.

2.4.2 Culture

Birth

When a child is born, the mother and child remain in the room for seven days. On the seventh day, corn is prepared and "Kunu" is made for the rite of naming the child. On the naming day the honourable elders take the child to a place called "Hutan na bubashi" (a place where all the ancestors rest). The seer is called upon to find out, by performing certain rites, who among the ancestors has returned to earth so that the right name will be given to the child. Sometimes names are given according to events or circumstances that surround the birth of the child. In former days, when twins were born into a Fyem community, one or both of the children were killed or thrown into the bush or sometimes given to the Fulani.

Circumcision/initiation

Among Fyem people, there was not much ceremony attached to circumcision. But in most cases the boys were circumcised before initiation. Some boys are circumcised during initiation itself. Circumcision and initiation were done every seven years. Each village does the initiation ceremony at a different time so that other villages can be invited. When it is time, the boys are told to get ready. Every boy must give a dog as a fee before the initiation process begins. The initiation exercise sometimes takes more than three months, during which the Fyem boys are taken to Bokkos to do initiation with the Ron boys. The Fyem women are told that the fetish dodo has swallowed their children. At this time the boys are initiated into the *Jakawa* and *Gashikiri* dodo cults.

The boys spend about three months at Bokkos. Before they go back to Gindiri, their colleagues in Bokkos are given a dog or goat and other things, for keeping them. The boys are welcomed back to the Gindiri area by the chief priest together with his assistants. They camp again for two weeks in a place called Kparshanbuah, beside a river. At this time the Fyem women are informed that the dodo has now vomited the boys. In order to convince the women that the boys are just from the mouth of the dodo, the boys take a bath daily (unlike normally when some might go three days without bathing) and they are well fed. As a result, when the boys return home their bodies are sleek because of the good food and constant care. This does not mean that the boys are not disciplined. They pass through various rigours and endurance tests to make the cult achieve its goal.

Before the boys are released to go home, *Shadi* is done. All the men, starting from the elders, converge in one place and beat one another with sticks. If one of the boys dies during the process of initiation, it is kept secret until after the initiation. The father of the boy is informed but he is not supposed to tell his wife until the dodo announces it himself. If the father tells, he must pay a fine of a cow that is seven years old.

Finally the exercise is rounded up with a ceremony, for which food and local beer is prepared in excess for the initiates. At this time, when the boys come from the forest they hold in their hands two decorated small sticks and one traditionally made plate (*wuciciri*). The traditional priest (*wuciri*) takes the lead in the performance of the rituals. The boys are given a lot of gifts by relations or well wishers, and the boys give them gifts too.

Marriage:

Traditionally, no man was allowed to marry without passing through circumcision and initiation. Anyone who tried it had his house burnt down some night by the fetish dodo, or he had to pay a fine of a cow. Marriage was only done in the month of August. In Fyem communities, before August young ladies who were about to marry went for *nyati*, the tattooing of tribal and decorative marks. Traditionally, parents arranged marriage for their children without the knowledge of the children. However, there were also cases when a young man approached the girl of his choice for marriage and later informed the parents.

In whatever case, when the marriage engagement was established food items were sent to the girl's people, including two sacks of acha and guinea corn each year until the girl was old enough to marry. Then the suitor brought her to his house where she had the designs tattooed on her body (belly) after which she stayed in his house for two weeks before being sent back to her parents. She went with two locally made mats and about five jars or bottles of oil as a gift to her for her parents. Apart from gifts, the suitor was then asked to bring the bride price which included eight (8) goats, clothes and other things. If at this point the betrothed girl eloped with another man, the new husband paid the intended husband all that he had spent on the girl, or a horse. One year after marriage, beer was prepared for both families to come and make a farm and harvest it for the new couple in order to establish their home (*Nharang*). Also some gifts were given to the couple. However, among Fyem today, marriages are done according to either Islamic or Christian custom. Polygamy and divorce are common but adultery is punishable by fine.

Burial

News of a death is sent to all the relations while women are weeping and wailing. When all the relations expected arrive, especially the elders, the place to dig the grave is pointed out for the youth to start digging. The grave is made some feet into the ground without any tunnel to the side. The corpse is buried in a sitting position. After burial the widow remains in mourning until beer is brewed for the last mourning feast. The last mourning feast (*pimpim*) is a seven-day ceremony when ancestors are consulted and appeased. During this feast the fetish (dodo) come out and take charge of the ceremony. Meanwhile, after some time, the grave is opened and the skull of the deceased is brought out for examination by experts to find out whether or not the deceased was a witch. If he was, the skull is thrown away with contempt but if not, the skull is washed, put in a pot and kept sacred in the forest for worship. Sometimes also when there is a problem of rain, the priest and some honourable elders go round the graves of those who have recently died. The graves are opened and checked. Any corpse that has not decomposed is believed to be responsible for the drought. Therefore special rites are performed and sometimes the corpse is brought out of the grave by the dodo and burnt. Traditionally, the deceased's possessions are inherited by the brothers or the children.

Chieftaincy:

In Fyem villages there are village heads. Traditionally a community head also served as the religious priest. But when the Fyem submitted themselves to the leadership of the Emir of Bauchi, Yakubu, the Gadai clan were appointed to be responsible for tax collection while others were to be responsible for the religious administration of the people. At this time the traditional leaders were more honoured than any civil leader. However, gradually the civil leaders were entrusted with greater power, especially when Yakubu, the Emir of Bauchi, decided to install Bakwa as the first government political chief (*Rit*) of the Fyem people. The ritual authority was still rested with the *Bwalbwang* and the traditional priests who had titles like

Gyartagere, Wuciciri, Jer, Rit Fyem, Tikam and Sunzam. They were responsible to direct the affairs of every Fyem community.

Today all village heads are subject to the central leader at Gindiri. The Gadai lineage in Gindiri has provided both the Rit and the District Head. The title *Sum Pyam* (chief of all Fyem) is now used for the District Head, who is also the traditional ruler of the Gindiri chiefdom. He holds a third class staff of office.

Religion:

Fyem believe in the Supreme God who is the creator of all things, rewarder of good works and punisher of all wicked people, especially witches. Their name for God is *Wudididi* or *Wudde*. However, God is far away from the people, and is felt to have no personal interest in their daily affairs. Therefore, to get needs met, certain objects are kept as gods for worship. Among the Fyem, there are various cults kept for different functions or purposes. These cults include *Gumpali, Randa, Kaafor, Yobui* and *Gashikiri*.

The Gumpali cult is physically represented by special leaves and herbs kept on a groundnut farm to ward off theft. Anyone who trespasses on a farm protected by this cult is afflicted with a sickness until he confesses, and a fine of a he-goat must also be given to appease the god.

The Yobui cult is a god of fertility which is represented by an arrow planted at the entrance of the room. It is believed to have power to heal barrenness. Sacrifices of chickens are made to this cult. Gashikiri is a cult that women are not allowed to participate in. The cult is found among the Gadai clan. It is believed to be capable of healing and protecting people from sicknesses or any misfortune. Other similar cults that serve as a means of worship to God are Hunrat, Kafaafor and Ranga.

Ranga cult is a big cult of which only wealthy people can be members. The initiation feast requires a lot of beer, many goats and great quantities of food. The fetish dodo masquerades always come out during *Furshi Diji* festival celebrated in August. The chief priest and his lieutenant administer all the rites.

The festivals that were geared towards the worship of gods included *Thumtum, Kulung, Hugwet, Hunyat* and *Nharang*. The *Thumtum* festival was celebrated in August. It was the period when young people were free to get married. *Hunyat* and *Nharang* are feasts organised for farming work for the in-laws and for the new couple respectively. *Hugwet* was celebrated in appreciation to the gods, during which animal horns were blown and special songs sung. The Humat masquerade was not allowed to be seen by women or children. For this purpose the *Gashikiri* masquerade is directly in charge during the *Fushidiji* festival.

More than three-quarters of the Fyem people are Muslims. Islam came to the area before Christianity, when the Fyem submitted to Yakubu, the first Emir of Bauchi. This generally held to be the reason that people are forgetting their language and switching to Hausa, although the three informants responsible for the present data were all Muslims.

Christianity

The first missionaries to come to the Gindiri area were W.M. Bristow and H.C. Farrant who arrived in Gindiri in 1934. They came to establish schools and to evangelise the area. Other people who came with them included Mr. Iliya Allahkyauta from Ibi, M. Shetur from Langtang as teachers and M. Musa and M. Sule as carpenters from Ibi. They all came under the umbrella of the S.U.M. (Sudan United Mission). The missionaries established the mission station in Gindiri during the reign of Rit M. Idi who gave them the land of the present Bible College and College of Education. Because the place was across a river, Mr. Bristow (an engineer) built a bridge to link the area with the town.

3. Phonology

The phonology of Fyem is based on rapid observations and should therefore be regarded as tentative at this stage.

3.1 Vowels

Fyem probably has six phonemic vowels;

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

/ə/ is often heard as the higher central vowel /ɨ/ but there is unlikely to be more than a single phoneme.

3.2 Consonants

Fyem consonants are as follows:

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Alveopalata	Palata	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d		c j	k g		
Nasal	m		n		ɲ	ŋ		
Trill			[r]					
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ		ɣ		h
Approximant					y		w	
Lateral Approximant			l					
Implosive	ɓ		ɗ					

The /y/ is released extremely softly and can be mistaken for /h/ unless care is taken, although external cognates suggest its existence very strongly.

3.3 Tones

Nettle (1998) suggests that Fyem has two tones and no glide tones. Although this is true for the majority of words, a high tone appears to be realised in some items. These are marked as heard in the data; a convincing explanation of this and the ultimate phonemic analysis remains in suspension.

4. Morphology

4.1 Nouns

Fyem nouns show a number of ‘classic’ patterns characteristic of Plateau languages as well as some idiosyncratic features, not recorded from elsewhere.

- a. Prefix addition (in both singular and plural)
- b. Prefix alternation
- c. Tone-raising
- d. Initial stem-syllable reduplication (with optional devoicing in new syllable)
- e. -i suffix addition
- f. Suppletive

As is usually the case elsewhere, many of these options can be combined with each other.

- a. Prefix addition (in both singular and plural) where prefix is not a reduplication

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Tree (generic)	kon⁺	bàkòn
Root	liŋ	bàliŋ
Man	rom	bàrom
Horn	ɗilyan	lyan

- b. Prefix alternation

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Day	nànáwi	bàwi
Large River	ɗibar	àbar
Granary	hù-mwè	a-mwe
Woman	mbya	babyà
Corpse	ɗi-cir	à-cir
Armpit	yà-yap	à-yap
Name	ɗi-sà	a-sa
Grave	ɗù-gùn	a-gun
Hole	ɗù-fu	a-fu
Divination (types)	ɗù-bòn	bà- ɓwon
Ear	hù-toŋ	à-toŋ

cf. Horom gigyelek , Rukul geget , Also Chadic: Daffo gigyâl

- c. Tone-raising

	Gloss	sg.	pl.
Castrated sheep	n-zàna		ṅ-zanà

d. Initial stem-syllable reduplication (with optional devoicing in new syllable)

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Cloud	arè	àrè-rè
Penis	bùr	bù-bùr
Seed/stone/pip	beer	bàbèèr
Wing	càp	ci-càp
River-bank	cəm	cícəm
Head	ci	bà-cici
Room	dō	đu-dō
Bull	dūr	đu-dūr
Grasscutter ¹	dyèp	dī-dyèp
Rain	fùn	fu-fùn
Ashes	fùt	fu-fùt
Dog	yàs	yə-yàs
Thorn	kà	kə-kà
Stream	kwèèr	kù-kwèèr
Swamp/wetland	làù	li-làù
Black kite ²	lyàŋ	li-lyàŋ
Mushroom	mbwi	mbú-mbwi
*Cat	mus	mu-mùs
Mouth	nùŋ	nu-nùŋ
Forehead	nyèn	ni-nyèn
Farm	ràm	ri-ràm
Heart	riyà	ri-riyà
Thigh	tìŋ	ti-tìŋ
Castrated goat	wòt	wu-wòt
Wind	wùl	wu-wùl
Hunger	yòŋ	yi-yòŋ

cf. Horom **gigyelek**, Rukul **geget**, Also Chadic: Daffo **gigyâl**

Smoke

kàkàs

kəkəs

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Harmattan	vun	fúvùn
Tail	dùm	tudùm
Animal (Bush)	dō	tu-dō

¹ (*Thryonomys Swinderianus*)

² (*Milvus migrans*)

e. –i suffix addition

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Witch	tyè nàkàt	nakàt-i
Slave	fuyen	bà-fuyen-i

f. Suppletive

Gloss	sg.	pl.
Child (male)	wun	bàshi nà romà
Child (female)	kasà yàmà	bàshì nà yamà
Bundle	jìt-i	jìt-seyà
Thing	áhà	arékwe ^(k)

n.b. Rukul also has a suppletive plural for ‘thing’ although not apparently cognate

5. Lexical comparison and the classification of Fyem

Fyem has usually been classified as Plateau 6 (Greenberg) or SE Plateau in a group together with Horom and Mabo-Barkul (now rechristened Bo-Rukul). Nettle (1999?) has challenged the existence of SE Plateau, claiming on grounds of lexicostatistics that Bo-Rukul should be excluded. Authors such as Gerhardt (xx) and Nettle (1998) have pointed to etymological relations with Chadic in languages of this group. It is therefore appropriate to compare Fyem with Plateau in general as well as to neighbouring Chadic languages, notably the Ron group, since Fyem traditions suggest a close relationship with Bokkos people.

6. Fyem wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
1.	Tree (generic)	kon⁺	bàkòn	
2.	Leaf	fùwàŋ	fuwaŋ	cf. Horom wáŋ , Pe áwáŋ
3.	Root	liŋ	bàliŋ	cf. Horom ù-liŋ , Cara liŋga , Berom rwinís , Tarok aliŋ , Pe liŋ pl. a-liŋ . An old root given by Westermann and reconstructible to Proto-Volta-Congo
4.	Branch	fàŋgàr	fàŋgár	
5.	Bark (of tree)	dàrà̀m	daram	
6.	Thorn	kà	kəkà	
7.	Grass (generic)	fìgyà	fìgya	
8.	Vine (generic)	rək	bàrək	
9.	Mushroom	mbwi	mbúmbwi	
10.	Algae	tələ̀kən	tələ̀kən	
11.	Seed/stone/pip	beer	ɓàbèèr	
12.	Charcoal	tùhwà̀l	tuhwal	may be a weakened form of more widespread #halaŋ in Plateau, e.g. also Aten hwel
13.	Dust	ɓwúrà	ɓabwurà	cf. Rukul pururu , Horom uful , but relates to widespread #furu roots.
14.	Ashes	fùt	fufùt	cf. Rukul rufut ‘rubbish-heap’,
15.	Rubbish-heap	gə̀rə̀ŋ	bàgə̀rə̀ŋ	
16.	Mud	rrə̀p	bàrrə̀p	
17.	Clay	tityèm		
18.	Dew	ɓàfifil		
19.	Stone	ɗicaŋ	acaŋ	cf. Horom ɗi-feŋ , but also Pe i-tsam , Kenyi ca-a and Tyap cluster #faŋ roots, all reflexes of the ancient Niger-Congo root #ta- .
20.	Sand	kàmfi		
21.	Smoke	kəkəs	kəkəs	
22.	Fire	la	bàlā	cf. Rukul u-ra . #ra is an extremely widespread root for ‘fire’
23.	Water	wini	bàwini	
24.	Rain	fùn	fufùn	
25.	Cloud	arè	àrèrè	
26.	Lightning	mèlèp		cf. Rukul mililyu ,
27.	Rainy Season	ɗùkòs		
28.	Dry season	ɓwàhà		
29.	Harmattan	vun	fúvùn	
30.	Year	hòsi		cf. Rukul ru-hwoi ,
31.	Today	nə̀ŋgàl		
32.	Yesterday	nə̀fe		
33.	Tomorrow	fə̀ŋ		cf. Horom viŋ , Rukul fə̀n ,
34.	Morning	nàfuŋ		
35.	Evening	hàler		
36.	Dawn	hanùŋfòri		
37.	Day	nà̀nà̀wi	bà̀wi	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
38.	Night	hàtuk	—	-tuk is found throughout BC. cf. Berom túrūk , but also tūk ‘day of 24 hours’. Also Izere kâ-túk , Cara kituk , CB #- túkù
39.	Moon/month	fyel	bàfyèl	cf. Rukul u-fye , Horom u-fel , Bo fye , but a Niger-Congo root. Also Ron, Sha, Kulere #fen though probably a loan into Chadic.
40.	Sun	wi	bàwì	cf. Horom uwi , Bo wéi , Cara we , Berom gwei . Perhaps Ron forms such as Bokkos fwè represent weakening if proto-form was #gbwe
41.	Star(s)	ḍídyàr	ḍídyar	
42.	Wind	wùl	wuwùl	cf. Rukul uwol , Berom gul , ? Aten bwíl , Shall wu , Cara wul ,
43.	God	wudè		
44.	Sky	tìdyè		
45.	Ground	tíbyel		
46.	Large River	ḍíbar	àbar	
47.	Stream	kwèèr	kùkwèèr	
48.	Lake, pond			
49.	Forest	ḍuyòr		cf. Horom kòrò , Berom rèhwòt , Cara i-kòt , scattered root in Benue-Congo. cf. Yoruba oko and Gokana kòl , perhaps also Hausa kurmii
50.	Mountain	farùm	járùm	
51.	Hillside	tùfùni		
52.	Knoll	dòḡwər		
53.	Bush	hai		cf. Rukul a-hai , Berom hēi but also a widespread Plateau root #hai (BCCW, 42) and BC chapter. This word may have been borrowed in this form.
54.	Farm	ram	ríràm	cf. Horom rámá , Tarok iràm , Yanƙam, Sur, Pe ram and other languages in this area. Ngas has màr which looks like metathesis
55.	Field	dàmàl	damal	
56.	Market*	dèmwanlani		‘meeting place’
57.	Compound	kùkwara		
58.	Room	ḍo	ḍuḍò	cf. Berom dùk , Izere kú-tù pl. átù
59.	Wall (of room)	mwar ḍo		
60.	Thatch roof	figyà	figya	
61.	Granary	hù-mwè	a-mwe	
62.	Well	ḍùyurùḡ	—	
63.	Road	yà	yi-yà	
64.	Path			
65.	Village/settlement			
66.	River-bank	cəm	cícəm	
67.	Swamp/wetland	làù	lilàù	
68.	Place	ḍere	bàḍere	
69.	Person/people	ḡèt bərə	baḡèt bərə	
70.	Man	rom	bàrom	cf. Rukul a--nəɾəm , Horom rom , but this is a very widespread Benue-Congo root for ‘man/male’, ‘person’ (see discussion in BCCW 59)
71.	Woman	mbya	babyà	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
72.	Child (male)	wun	bàshi nà romà	
73.	Child (female)	kasà yàmà	bàshi nà yamà	
74.	Husband	rom mbya		
75.	Wife	mbya	babyà	
76.	Widow	humà		
77.	Young man			
78.	Young girl			
79.	Old person			
80.	Father	atì		
81.	Mother	ayìn		
82.	Barren woman	hûr		
83.	Relations			
84.	Ancestors			
85.	Grandparents			
86.	Grandchild			
87.	Brother			
88.	Sister			
89.	Friend	yyenaŋ	bà-yyènàŋ	cf. Rukul a-hanaŋ
90.	Guest/stranger	yyen	ba-yyèn	
91.	King/chief/ruler	rit	bà-rit	
92.	Hunter	téfufwar	bà-téfufwár-i	The fwar element is a widespread root for 'to hunt'
93.	Thief	gɔs	ba-gɔs	
94.	Doctor	foon	ba-foon	
95.	Witch	tyè nakàt	nakàt-i	
96.	Corpse	dī-cir	à-cir	
97.	Blacksmith	lan	bà-lan	cf. Ninzo nìlà , Bu ɛla , Ningye nɛrak
98.	Slave	fuyen	bà-fuyen-i	
99.	Masquerade I	gàŋkiri	gàŋkírí	
100.	Masquerade II	hùmàt	humat	
101.	Prophesy			
102.	Shame			
103.	Fear/fright			
104.	Bravery/courage			
105.	Laughter			
106.	Wisdom			
107.	Guilt			
108.	Anger			
109.	Race/running			
110.	Suffering			
111.	Death	hwi		
112.	Name	dī-sà	a-sa	cf. Kuturmi utwa , Kenta tim , Rukul tam . The #sa -element is widespread in Plateau and Kainji given as #-tak in BCCW, II, 63. Also Edoid, Igboid. Also Chadic: Daffo-Butura and others súm
113.	Grave	dû-gùn	a-gun	
114.	Song	syem	bà-syem	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
115.	Proverb			
116.	Word, story			see 'mouth' ()
117.	Lie			
118.	News			
119.	Hunger	yòŋ	yiỳòŋ	cf. Sur yyəŋ , Tarok ayáŋ , Also Chadic: Mangar yuŋ and Hausa yunwa .
120.	Horn	dfilyan	lyan	
121.	Tail	dùm	tudùm	cf. Rukul i-tum , Berom rum ⁺ ,
122.	Egg	d̄hi	ahi	cf. Bo di-hye Horom hyè . Also in Chadic: Fyer hyés , Goemai haas . These are probably weakened from a Niger-Congo root #- gyi also found in Kordofanian
123.	Wing	càp	ci-càp	
124.	Nest	do yere		
125.	Feather			
126.	Gum/glue	ndèbyèn		
127.	Ant-hill	kwenyes	bà-kwènyes	
128.	Hole	d̄u-fu	a-fu	
129.	Smell	vèti		
130.	Poison	d̄i-yyal	a-yyal	
131.	Load			
132.	Bundle	j̄it-i	j̄it-seyà	
133.	Firewood	kònlà		
134.	Stick			
135.	Yam-heap	sàl	bàsàl	cf. Cara i-zal ,
136.	War	dàl		
137.	Work	randàn	bà-ràndan	
138.	Divination (types)	d̄u-bòn	bà-bwon	
139.	Medicine (generic)	d̄i-hyal	a-hyal	cf. Rukul a-hal , Berom hwal ⁺ , Aten hwál ,
140.	Money/metal	gyàm		
141.	Cowry	gàrbwi		
142.	Shadow	f̄if̄i	bà-f̄if̄i	
143.	Thing	áhà	arékwe^(k)	n.b. Rukul also has a suppletive plural for 'thing' although not apparently cognate
144.	Strength			
145.	Length			
146.	Land/country			
147.	Sleep	gwòli		
148.	Disease(generic)	d̄u-hu	à-hu	
149.	Smallpox			
150.	Diarrhoea	sùticaka		
151.	Eczema			
152.	Goitre			
153.	Boil			
154.	Sore/wound	cèl	bà-cèl	cf. Horom u-cel pl. ba-cel-e . Also Chadic: Ngas cil
155.	Leprosy	d̄iŋgèteri		
156.	Head	ci	bà-cici	
157.	Eye	d̄i-dif	à-dif	cf. Mundat àdirì

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
158.	Cheek	đi-tamèn	à-tamèn	
159.	Forehead	nyèn	ni-nyèn	
160.	Temple	n-jàm	ń-jàm	
161.	Nose	đũ-wol	à-wol	cf. Horom wəl pl. awəl , Bo awol , Pe ti-yol , Berom wōl pl. bāwōl , Cara iḡwul , Ndoro ḡwunà
162.	Ear	hù-toḡ	à-toḡ	cf. Ningye tḡ , Horom toḡ , Bo utó also throughout Tarokoid, but a PVC root #tuN- . Also Chadic: Sha 'a-tôn
163.	Mouth	nùḡ	nu-nùḡ	cf. Horom anu , Rukul inu , but a Niger-Congo root
164.	Tooth	đi-yin	à-yin	a Niger-Saharan root (Blench 1996)
165.	Tongue	đi-lyes	à-lyes	cf. Ron group e.g. Monguna ales ,
166.	Throat	mwèr	bà-mwer	
167.	Gullet	sàgòrò		#goro forms are found throughout Africa (Blench 1996)
168.	Neck	mwer nàmwarka		
169.	Jaw	lèk ngèrè		
170.	Chin	tityèn	tityen	? cf. Rukul a-syèt ,
171.	Shoulder	kùgòḡ		
172.	Armpit	ḡà-ḡap	à-ḡap	cf. Horom gigyelek , Rukul geget , Also Chadic: Daffo gigyâl
173.	Fist	kùpi hobo	kùpse abo	
174.	Arm	pibyàḡ	pibyaḡ	
175.	Forearm	dàmci	damci	
176.	Hand			
177.	Leg	đũ-fòr	a-fòr	cf. 'foot' Horom u-fol , Rukul i-fwəl , Bo fol , Ayu ihol , ? Doka o-fere . See discussion in BCCW, 55. perhaps cf. Njerep fólò 'thigh'. Also in Chadic: Daffo fùr , Fyer furù for 'leg' but more commonly, throughout Ron for 'thigh'
178.	Thigh	tìḡ	ti-tìḡ	
179.	Knee	đũ-rum	à-rum	cf. Horom durum pl. arúm , Bo rurum , Yaḡkam ruḡ , Tarok iriḡ . Reconstructed as #-rúḡù in East Benue-Congo in Blench (ms.) Also in Chadic: 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. Hence the d/d/r correspondences.
180.	Nail (Finger/toe)	càrin	carin	
181.	Female breast	moma	bà-mòma	cf. Horom màmà , also Vute maà and related forms in Mambiloid. Also in Chadic: Hausa mààmáá and Zaar mààma
182.	Stomach	filà	fila	#la element is a Niger-Congo root, originally meaning 'intestine'. However, its retention does seem to mark SE Plateau in the region (see BCCW). Cf. Yaḡkam lwak although also Bokkos đáár
183.	Chest	cèn	cicèn	
184.	Navel	đũ-mòtɔ	à-mòtɔ	cf. Ron group: Bokkos mutó ,
185.	Back	hù-mwar	à-mwar	Cf. Bokkos más ,

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
186.	Buttocks (side)	ngwèrtè	bà- ngwertè	
187.	Buttocks (back)	tus divì	tus àvì	
188.	Penis	bùr	bù-bùr	? cognate with words for 'vagina' e.g. cf. Horom póré , Sur fwɔn , Nizaa fūr
189.	Vagina	ḏù-kur	à-kur	
190.	Skin	hù-gwèḡ	a-gwèḡ	
191.	Bone	hu-hup	a-hup	cf. Horom húp pl. á-húp , probably weakened from the more widespread #kup . Cf. Rukul ukúp , Pe ukup , Tarok akúp and Yanƙam kup and PB #-kubi
192.	Rib	ʃikùmbèr	ʃikumber	cf. Chadic: Karfa ʃimbiky ,
193.	Vein	cijè	bà-cije	
194.	Blood	bàyi	ɓayi	
195.	Breath	ḏùmùli		
196.	Tear	ʃifil	bà-ʃifil	
197.	Saliva			
198.	Sweat	bàsèreni		
199.	Urine	bùfàr	bufar	cf. Daffo-Butura sar ,
200.	Faeces	caka	bà-càka	cf. Ce àká ,
201.	Hair	ʃiken	bà-ʃiken	
202.	Beard			'hair of chin'
203.	Liver	ḏù-zò	à-zò	
204.	Heart	riya	rí-riya	cf. Izere riyé ,
205.	Intestines	ʃilà	ʃilà	
206.	Body	hùtòm	hutom	cf. Horom tòm , PB #timba
207.	Meat	ḏùbùt	ḏubut	
208.	Animal (Bush)	ḏò	tu-ḏò	
209.	Cow	rundɔŋ	rundɔŋ	the #rondɔŋ root is widespread in both Plateau and adjacent Chadic languages.
210.	Bull	ḏùr	ḏu-ḏùr	
211.	Goat	ɓwòl	ɓwol	cf. Horom ɓòl , Rukul i-bwol , Tarok ibil , Pe ibwel but an old Niger-Congo root
212.	He-goat	ngwàkàn	ngwakan	
213.	Castrated goat	wòt	wu-wòt	
214.	Sheep	tamá	támá	cf. Rukul tɔmbɔ , Ningye wantam , Tarok itam , Pe itamu , Yanƙam tam but also widespread in West Africa
215.	Ram	ngùrza	ngurzà	
216.	Castrated sheep	n-zàna	ṅ-zanà	
217.	Dog	yàs	yə-yàs	
218.	*Cat	mus	mu-mùs	cf. Ngas mus . A common term in this region originally derived from Hausa
219.	*Pig	as Hausa		
220.	*Horse	zàri	zəri	
221.	*Donkey	jàkɛ	jakɛ	<Hausa
222.	Elephant	yan	yi-yàn	
223.	Hippo			

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
224.	Buffalo	yèt	yi-yèt	cf. Horom yat , Cara ì-yàt pl. yat , Yanjam yyet , Nupe eya PB #-jàti reflecting a more widespread root #-yati in East Benue-Congo. See also Daffo yàt
225.	Lion			
226.	Leopard	kwè	ku-kwè	cf. Horom kyè , Fyem kwe , Hasha ehwe , Jari ì-kwì , Tesu kwi related to old Niger-Congo root #-gbe , -kpe
227.	Hyena ³	nyàùwì	nyauwi	
228.	Civet cat ⁴			
229.	Genet cat ⁵			
230.	Jackal ⁶			
231.	Wart-hog ⁷			
232.	Bush-pig ⁸	rifi	bà-rifi	Benue-Congo root. cf. Eggon èdzi , Umon ísí , Igara eshi , Degema è-sí
233.	Duiker antelope ⁹			
234.	Kob antelope ¹⁰			
235.	Roan antelope ¹¹			
236.	Porcupine ¹²			
237.	Giant pangolin ¹³			
238.	Monkey(generic)			
239.	Baboon	gwòm	gwom	cf. Nupe gbogi , Lopa gbàdagi , Berom bōgòm ,
240.	Patas monkey ¹⁴	kàrjwèna	karjwena	
241.	Vervet monkey ¹⁵			
242.	Colobus monkey ¹⁶			
243.	Squirrel (ground)			
244.	Squirrel (tree)			
245.	Rat (generic)	kwi	ku-kwì	cf. Horom kí , Fyem kwi , Alumu ì-kwì , Ningye ci , Pe ikuu , Tarok ipi
246.	Bush-rat I			
247.	Bush-rat II			
248.	Bush-rat III			
249.	Bush-rat IV			
250.	Giant rat ¹⁷	gyèrtèl	gyertel	
251.	Fat mouse			
252.	Pygmy mouse			

³ (*Crocuta crocuta*)⁴ (*Viverra civetta*)⁵ (*Genetta genetta*)⁶ (*Canis aureus*)⁷ (*Phacochoerus aethiopus*)⁸ (*Potamochoerus Porcus*)⁹ (*Cephalophus* spp.)¹⁰ (*Kobus kob*)¹¹ (*Hippotragus equinus*)¹² (*Hystrix cristata*)¹³ (*Manis giganteus*)¹⁴ (*Erythrocebus patas*)¹⁵ (*Cercopithecus aethiops*)¹⁶ (*Colobus polykomos*)¹⁷ (*Cretomyces* sp.)

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
253.	Grasscutter ¹⁸	ɖyèp	ɖi-ɖyèp	
254.	Hedgehog ¹⁹	ɖù-huhur	a-huhur	cf. Fyer hohosu ,
255.	Hare ²⁰	ɟambor	ɟambor	cf. Karfa sumbóór ,
256.	House-bat	yèreyèn	yereyèn	cf. Mundat yêr ,
257.	Fruit-bat			
258.	Nile crocodile	hàrùm	harum	cf. Daffo hàrà̀m ,
259.	Chameleon	kàlagum	kàlagùm	cf. Rukul u-kwaṅan , Horom karangun Daffo kàlà
260.	Agama lizard	ṅgàzhò	ṅgazho	
261.	Skink	ndùrùn	ndurun	cf. Daffo ndukúl ,
262.	Gecko			
263.	Monitor lizard (<i>damo</i>)			
264.	Monitor lizard (<i>xx</i>)			
265.	Toad	pòròn	pərən	
266.	Frog	nzhàrmùt	nzhàrmut	cf. Fyer nzàrkon ,
267.	Tortoise	kuruṅwà	bà-kuruṅwà	
268.	Snake (Generic)	sò	susò	cf. Jili sǎ , Kambari ṅṅ'súsò , Legbo zə , Yamba soŋ , Also in Chadic: Mangar sô ,
269.	Spitting cobra			
270.	Python			
271.	Turtle			
272.	Crab	kwàntibèl	kwantibèl	
273.	River molluscs			
274.	Fish (generic)	gwàfi	gwafì	
275.	Tilapia (spp.)			
276.	Puffer fish ²¹			
277.	Catfish (spp.) ²²			
278.	Nile Perch ²³			
279.	Electric fish ²⁴			
280.	Bird (generic)	yère	yere	cf. Mundat yedèd , Richa yídí ,
281.	Chicken	kàrkò	karko	cf. Bu ukə , Mada kòkò , Kahugu akoro and is probably a shortening of the t-k-r roots found in this group and outside BC. See BCCW, 43 and Williamson (in press). Also in Chadic: Kulere kòd , Geji kwòl
282.	Cock	kàrəm	kərəm	cf. Bokkos kòron ,
283.	*Duck (Domestic)			
284.	Pigeon (Domestic)			
285.	Guinea-fowl	zhəm	zhóm	
286.	Hooded Vulture ²⁵			

¹⁸ (*Thryonomys Swinderianus*)¹⁹ (*Atelerix albiventris*)²⁰ (*Lepus Crawshayi*)²¹ (*Tetraodon fahaka*)²² (*Synodontis* spp.)²³ (*Lates niloticus*)²⁴ (*Malapterurus electricus*)

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
287.	Village Weaver ²⁶			
288.	Cattle-egret ²⁷			
289.	Black kite ²⁸	lyàŋ	li-lyàŋ	
290.	Standard-wing Night-jar			
291.	Owl (various spp.)			
292.	Grey Parrot ²⁹			
293.	Senegal Coucal ³⁰			
294.	Bush- fowl/partridge			
295.	Swallow			
296.	*Pied crow ³¹			
297.	Woodpecker			
298.	Insect (Generic)			
299.	Scorpion			
300.	Butterfly			
301.	Dragon-fly			
302.	Mosquito			
303.	Spider ³²			
304.	Mason wasp ³³			
305.	Bee			
306.	Sweat-fly			
307.	Sandfly			
308.	Housefly			
309.	Ant (Generic)			
310.	Louse (Human)			
311.	Millipede			
312.	Cockroach			
313.	Termite			
314.	Flying-ant			
315.	Grasshopper			
316.	Praying mantis			
317.	Firefly			
318.	Giant Cricket			
319.	Earthworm			
320.	Giant Snail			
321.	Soap (Traditional)			
322.	Oil			
323.	Fat/grease			

²⁵ (*Neophron monachus*)

²⁶ (*Ploceus cucullatus*)

²⁷ (*Ardeola ibis*)

²⁸ (*Milvus migrans*)

²⁹ (*Poicephalus senegalus*)

³⁰ (*Centropus* spp.)

³¹ (*Corvus albus*)

³² (*Acarina* spp.)

³³ (*Belenogaster* spp.)

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
324.	Salt			
325.	Soup/stew			
326.	Porridge			
327.	Sorghum-beer			
328.	Palm-wine			
329.	Peelings			
330.	Filter			
331.	Rag			
332.	Floor-beater			
333.	Handle (of tool)			
334.	Sickle			
335.	Cutlass			
336.	Iron			
337.	Axe			
338.	Adze			
339.	Hoe I			
340.	Hoe II			
341.	Hoe III			
342.	Hammer			
343.	Knife			
344.	Comb			
345.	Broom			
346.	Bag			
347.	Sack			
348.	Fireplace			
349.	Shoe			
350.	Cloth			
351.	Grindstone (top)			
352.	Grindstone (lower)			
353.	Mortar (wood)			
354.	Pestle			
355.	Pot (generic)			
356.	Pot I			
357.	Pot II			
358.	Pot III			
359.	Pot IV			
360.	Head-pad			
361.	Basket (generic)			
362.	Basket I			
363.	Basket II			
364.	Winnowing tray			
365.	Mat (generic)			
366.	Mat I			
367.	Needle			
368.	Spear			
369.	Bow			
370.	Arrow			

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
371.	Quiver			
372.	Chain			
373.	Rope			
374.	Stool			
375.	Wooden door			
376.	Fence			
377.	Bridge			
378.	Ladder			
379.	Canoe			
380.	Paddle			
381.	Bee-hive			
382.	Fish-Net			
383.	Fish-trap I			
384.	Fish-trap II			
385.	Fish-trap III			
386.	Snare			
387.	One	kəŋ		
388.	Two	por		cf. Fyem pór , Tarok ùpàríŋ . Also in Chadic: Daffo ful , Fyer poo . These are forms of the widespread Niger-Congo #ba root, usually realised as #fa in Plateau. Discussed by Hoffmann (1968) as an early loan into Chadic but widespread in Africa (see Blench 1995).
389.	Three	tat		A Proto-Niger-Congo root also found in other African language phyla
390.	Four	nas		
391.	Five	tɔɔŋ		A Niger-Congo root found in this form in Plateau languages of the region. (BCCW 107)
392.	Six	tarəŋ		
393.	Seven	tamɔr		
394.	Eight	cinit		
395.	Nine	tɛrɛs		cf. Horom táras 'nine'. However, apparently related forms found elsewhere in East Benue-Congo, e.g. Kpan ítafa , Chawai atarba , Kwanka tarba , Rindre atamba . See BCCW 109
396.	Ten	dukut		
397.	Eleven	abuli kɛn		
398.	Twelve	abuli for		
399.	Twenty	kuta por		
400.	Twenty-four			
401.	Forty	kuta nas		
402.	Sixty			
403.	Eighty			
404.	Hundred	kuta dukut		
405.	Black			
406.	White			
407.	Red			
408.	Sweet			
409.	Bitter			

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
410.	Half			
411.	Hot			
412.	Cold			
413.	Old			
414.	New			
415.	Wet			
416.	Dry			
417.	Smooth			

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
418.	Abuse	duŋsa				
419.	Accompany	dik				
420.	Add to	daŋkà	nanìnkà	nasən	nasən	
421.	Arrive	be	byen	bes	besen	see commentary under 'come'
422.	Ask question	we	won	wonas	wonas	cf. Horom mwε , Bu myε also # mbe forms found in Jukunoid and Cross River
423.	Ask/beg for something	kət	kətin	kətini	kətini	
424.	Awaken (s.o.)	yila				cf. Horom yana , Rukul yala , and ? Sur yem
425.	Bark (dog)	guk				
426.	Be bent	ngar				
427.	Be heavy	rumbəs				
428.	Be on (s.t.)					
429.	Be short	gunduŋ				
430.	Beat (drum)	je				
431.	Beat (s.o.)	fur				
432.	Become dry	huhwət				
433.	Begin	tibyən				
434.	Bite	ɗot				cf. Horom ɗyət . Although not recognised in BCCW, this forms a set with Berom rot and Rigwe ryo and possibly Akpet ro . All may ultimately derive from the loss of the final nasal on forms related to PB # -dum- which appears as # -rom- in some Plateau languages
435.	Blow (flute etc.)	wer				cf. Horom wil , Sur wuri , Yaŋkam wurok , Berom wolom ⁺
436.	Boil	ful				
437.	Build (house etc.)	lo				cf. Horom lo , Berom lɔk , Kwanka lok and Irigwe nò . Also Chadic: Fyer làt , Kulere làs

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
438.	Burn (fire burns)	fuf				cf. Horom fwasa , Berom fwúf ‘burn food’, . Also Chadic: Fyer fwaf . Probably a loan into Fyer as the root is isolated.
439.	Bury	buk				
440.	Buy	rɛp				cf. Horom rap , Bu rɛ , Cara rɛp , Ningye rɛp but widespread in BC and reconstructed as #-rɛp- in Blench (ms.). Discussed in Gerhardt (1983) and also found in some neighbouring Chadic languages.
441.	Call (to someone)	yise				
442.	Carry	fal				cf. Horom fal ,
443.	Carve (wood etc.)	sep				cf. Horom sep , but widespread in Plateau, e.g. Kulu, Nindem, Kwanka sep and Jju fab , Cara fɪpal , Ningye, Bu ʃɛ , Pe ʃap , Hasha sɛp
444.	Catch	wum				cf. Horom wum ,
445.	Chew	taŋgal				
446.	Choose	fal				
447.	Climb	fuŋ				cf. Horom fɔm , Yaŋkam fwɔm , Yeskwa fó , Hyam fó-r , and Ce hu
448.	Close	don				
449.	Come	be	byen	bes	besen	also ‘arrive’. cf. Horom be , Tarok ba , Rukul ba , Yaŋkam bi , but a widespread root reconstructible at least to Proto-Atlantic-Congo. Also Chadic: Yiwom bɛl , Kulere bo
450.	Come out (of room)	du				
451.	Continue (to do s.t.)	mara				
452.	Cook	das				
453.	Cough	hor				
454.	Count	kor				cf. Horom kor , Tarok kúŋ , Kwanka kor , Abuan -kɔl and Rindre -kla . All these are versions of a root #-kaLa widespread in Niger-Congo. Also in Chadic: Kofyar kún , general North Bauchi kɛn- , Zaar kunaan

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
455.	Cover	don				
456.	Cut down (tree)	hyada				? cf. Mangar háy ,
457.	Cut in two	kar				cf. Horom can . Also Chadic: Ngas, Mwaghavul can
458.	Cut off (head etc.)	hyada				
459.	Dance	syem				
460.	Die	hwi				
461.	Dig (earth etc.)	cin				See also 'uproot'. Horom sim , Yaŋkam suŋ , Sur fiŋ Təsu fumu , Kulu cem , Berom cīŋ
462.	Divide/share					
463.	Do/make	mara				
464.	Drag	faŋ				
465.	Draw water	faŋ				cf. Daffo-Butura zan ,
466.	Dream					
467.	Drink	so				A common root shared by both Chadic and Plateau, probably originally Chadic (cf. Gerhardt 1983) cf. Fyer fo , Ninzo so .
468.	Drop	wara				
469.	Dry in sun	tana				cf. Berom tənè , also Lungu térá and Nindem tér
470.	Eat	dye				cf. Horom dyé , Bo ré , linked to the widespread -ri , -di roots found in Niger-Congo
471.	Enter	dyel				
472.	Extinguish	wolda				
473.	Fall (rain)	hwo				cf. Horom, Toro hwa , Fyem hó , Aten hwò , Berom hwò ('fall on top of s.t.), Yashi hu
474.	Fall over	hwo				
475.	Fear	fi				
476.	Feel (cold etc.)	wo				cf. Nupe wo ,
477.	Fight (in war)	durom				
478.	Fill					
479.	Finish (a task)	kwal				
480.	Float					
481.	Flog	fur				
482.	Flow (water etc.)	kyel				
483.	Fly (birds)	yila				cf. Horom yala , Pe, Sur yel , Tarok yel + 'float'

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
484.	Fold (cloth etc.)	ngar				cf. Horom gili ,
485.	Follow	for				
486.	Forget	ran				
487.	Fry (in oil)	halaŋ				cf. Horom, Aten halaŋ , Bu kla and Yala hà . These are widespread weakenings of the Niger-Congo root #ka(la) and have occurred independently. #ka- is also found in the North Bauchi languages
488.	Gather/collect	mwɔn				
489.	Get	ta				cf. Horom tar ,
490.	Give	tawa				
491.	Give birth	mwi				cf. Horom mwi , presumably local forms of a widespread Niger-Congo #ma- root
492.	Go	so				
493.	Go out/exit	ɗu				cf. Horom ɗú , Yanƙam turuk , and Ekoid M ɗúù but also Chadic: Bokkos ɗu , Fyer ɗoo
494.	Grind	mo				
495.	Grow (plants)	hɔp				cf. Horom hɔp ,
496.	Hatch (egg)	pumbwa				cf. Horom mbu ,
497.	Have					
498.	Hear	wo				cf. Fyem wo . Reconstructed to Proto-Benue-Congo as #gbó in Blench (ms.) but regularly reduced to wó . Discussed in Williamson (1992)
499.	Hoe	go				
500.	Hunt	fufwar				cf. Horom fár , Hasha far , Tesu fla , Tarok fár 'to be a good marksman'. Also in Chadic: cf. Bokkos faar , Tangale para (n.), Ngizim bárâ and Hausa fàráwtàà
501.	Jump	dursa				
502.	Kill	wɔl				cf. Horom wɔl , Sur wɔl , Pe wel , Che wul , Kwanka won , Olulomo wùló although as #wu this is widespread in Niger-Congo
503.	Kneel	laŋ				
504.	Know	yi				
505.	Laugh	nyes				
506.	Learn	ɗukum				

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
507.	Lick	ryam				
508.	Lie down	gol				
509.	Listen	wo				see 'hear'
510.	Lose s.t.	do				cf. Horom dusu ,
511.	Marry	gwar				
512.	Mix	vəla				cf. Horom vili ,
513.	Mould (pot)	kyingera				
514.	Open	bukul				
515.	Pierce/stab	tot				cf. Horom tət ,
516.	Plait (hair)	lo				Found in both Niger-Congo and Chadic. cf. Ngas lok but also Tarok lòk
517.	Plant (crop etc.)	tup				cf. Horom təkə ,
518.	Play	ɲare				
519.	Pluck (fruit)					
520.	Pound (in mortar)	rɔ				
521.	Pour (liquid)	sut				
522.	Pull	shaŋ				
523.	Push	tup				
524.	Put on (clothes)	dir				
525.	Receive	ta				see 'get'
526.	Refuse	hau				cf. Horom hai but both are likely to be weakenings of more general #ka roots in Plateau
527.	'Remain'	ɲa				
528.	Remember	byen				
529.	Resemble	tarhan				
530.	Return	kataka				
531.	Ride (horse etc.)	fuŋ				see 'climb'
532.	Roast on coals	fush				Williamson (1989:259) sets out #fa- roots such as Proto-Idomoid *fá and Proto-Jukunoid *fwaP . Given in BCCW as #-pap- . Also Daffo fâf , probably a loan from BC languages.
533.	Rot	bol				
534.	Rub	vəla				
535.	Run	kəl				
536.	Say/speak	lak				
537.	Scatter					
538.	See	wun				
539.	Seek	caŋa				

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
540.	Sell	ryep				cf. Horom rap , Bu rɛ , Cara rɛp , Ningye rɛp but widespread in BC and reconstructed as #-rɛp- in Blench (ms.). Discussed in Gerhardt (1983) and also found in some neighbouring Chadic languages.
541.	Send	tup				
542.	Set trap	tapən				
543.	Sew	tol				widespread but scattered in Plateau. cf. Berom tolo and Fyem twol , but probably also Jarawan Bantu #soro . Also in Chadic: Daffo, Bokkos toor , Fyer sool .
544.	Shake	cica				cf. Horom ci , Rukul ʃi , Pe ci ,
545.	Sharpen	la				cf. Rukul lu , Berom lɔ̃ , Tarok lwà
546.	Shoot (arrow, gun)	ta				cf. Horom tar , Tarok, Sur tat ⁺ . An ancient Niger-Congo root found as #-ta ‘bow’ in Congo-Kordofanian
547.	Sing	syɛm				
548.	Sit down	saka				
549.	Slaughter (animal)	hya				
550.	Sleep	gəl				
551.	Smash	vwat				
552.	Smell	vət				
553.	Snap in two	bwaha				
554.	Sow seeds	tup				
555.	Spit	nzyet				
556.	Split	kar				Common in both Chadic and Benue-Congo. cf. common Ron #kar . Plateau #kap , Tarok kak ⁺ ‘smash’
557.	Stand	ɖar				
558.	Steal	gos				cf. Horom gɔs ,
559.	Stir (soup)	cica				see ‘shake’
560.	Suck (breast etc.)	shaŋ				
561.	Surpass	ɖu				

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

	Gloss	One person	Many people	One person many times	Many people many times	
562.	Swallow	murya				cf. Horom mara , Yaŋkam mər , Sur mərək , Tarok məkən ⁺ , Toro mara , Ekoid mèl , Mambila mènà . Connected with a widespread root for ‘throat’ reconstructed for PBC as #- mərən in Blench (ms.)
563.	Sweep	tut				cf. Horom tut ,
564.	Swell	mwāl				cf. Horom mwāl , but also Tarok, Ngas mwāl ⁺ ‘to be fat’
565.	Swim					
566.	Take	fal				
567.	Tear (cloth etc.)	harta				
568.	Tell	lak				
569.	Throw	wara				
570.	Tie	jit				cf. Horom jet ,
571.	Touch	mwəksa				
572.	Twist (rope etc.)	wər tita				
573.	Untie	fusha				cf. Horom fuji ,
574.	Uproot (tuber)	shaŋ				
575.	Vomit	tuhəs				cf. Horom həs ,
576.	Walk	hana				
577.	Want/need	d̥yara				
578.	Wash	wən				
579.	Wear	dək				
580.	Weave	warzhi				
581.	Weed	kul				
582.	Weep	tut				
583.	Wipe					
584.	Work	randan				
585.	Yawn	kaŋwani				
586.	Above	tidyel				
587.	I	mi				
588.	You	we				
589.	He/she/it	me				
590.	we	moti				
591.	you pl.	we				
592.	They	mbe				
593.	Who?	wear				
594.	Which?	d̥yar				
595.	What?	nayar				
596.	When?					
597.	Where?	nande yar				

Edible and Useful Plants

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
598.	Guinea-yam ³⁴	ɗyàm	ti-ɗyàm	cf. Bokkos adim ,
599.	Aerial yam ³⁵	dàmwe	bà-dàmwe	
600.	Red yam ³⁶	ɗyàmɗyam	ti-ɗyàmɗyam	
601.	Water-yam ³⁷	kùlùlùl	kululul	
602.	Taro (Old cocoyam) ³⁸	kabùŋ	kàbuŋ	cf. Bokkos kambôŋ ,
603.	New cocoyam ^{39*}	as Hausa		
604.	Cassava ^{*40}	as Hausa		
605.	Sweet potato ^{*41}	làwur	lawur	< Hausa
606.	Rizga ⁴²	vù	fu-vù	
607.	Tumuku ⁴³	mbwàlà	bà-mbwàlà	
608.	Sorghum ⁴⁴	yùk	yu-yùk	
609.	Bulrush millet ⁴⁵ (<i>gero</i>)	yuk afyèm		
610.	Finger-millet ^{*46}	mbàrak	mbarak	
611.	Fonio (H. <i>acca</i>) ⁴⁷	ɗà	bàɗà	
612.	Iburu (H. <i>iburu</i>) ⁴⁸	tyèrèp	tyerèp	cf. Horom tèlè
613.	Maize ^{*49}	bwàrà̀m	bwarà̀m	
614.	Rice ^{*50}	shinkapa	shìnkàpa	< Hausa
615.	Cowpea ⁵¹	kyèk	ki-kyèk	
616.	Spiral cowpea			
617.	Lima bean ^{52*}			
618.	Other beans I			
619.	Other beans II			
620.	Other beans III			
621.	Bambara groundnut ⁵³	bwem kòko		

³⁴ (*Dioscorea guineensis*)³⁵ (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)³⁶ (*Dioscorea cayenensis*)³⁷ (*Dioscorea alata*)³⁸ (*Colocasia esculenta*)³⁹ (*Xanthosoma mafaffa*) (H. *wali*)⁴⁰ (*Manihot esculenta*)⁴¹ (*Ipomoea batatas*)⁴² (*Solenostemon rotundifolius*)⁴³ (*Plectranthus esculentus*)⁴⁴ (*Sorghum bicolor*)⁴⁵ (*Pennisetum* spp.)⁴⁶ (H. *tamba*) (*Eleusine coracana*)⁴⁷ (*Digitaria exilis*)⁴⁸ (*Digitaria iburua*)⁴⁹ (*Zea mays*)⁵⁰ (*Oryza sativa/ glaberrima*)⁵¹ (*Vigna unguiculata*)⁵² (*Phaseolus lunatus*)

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
622.	Groundnut (Peanut) ⁵⁴	bwem bwem		
623.	Tiger-nut ⁵⁵	fwake		
624.	Garden egg ⁵⁶	fwàr	fufwàr	cf. Fyer ifwet ,
625.	Okra ⁵⁷	golkwàk		
626.	Chili pepper* (large) ⁵⁸	mbàkò		
627.	Birdseye chili* ⁵⁹	mbàkò titalà		
628.	Onion (<i>Allium cepa</i>)			
629.	Garlic ⁶⁰			
630.	Tomato ⁶¹			
631.	Egusi melon ⁶²			
632.	Melon (other) ⁶³			
633.	Edible squash ⁶⁴	mwàlà	mwala	cf. Bokkos mbwalaŋ ,
634.	Sorrel/roselle ⁶⁵	berè kata		
635.	Jews' mallow ⁶⁶			
636.	Kenaf ⁶⁷	màs	məmàs	
637.	Sesame seeds ⁶⁸	fwàŋ	fu-fwàŋ	
638.	Black sesame ⁶⁹			
639.	Sesame leaves ⁷⁰	golèŋ		
640.	Bitterleaf ⁷¹	mànan		
641.	Waterleaf* ⁷²			
642.	Plantain (<i>Musa AAB</i>)			
643.	Banana (<i>Musa AAA</i>)			
644.	Orange* ⁷³			
645.	Bamboo			

⁵³ (*Vigna subterranea*)⁵⁴ (*Arachis hypogaea*)⁵⁵ (*Cyperus esculentus*)⁵⁶ (*Solanum melongena*)⁵⁷ (*Abelmoschus esculentus*)⁵⁸ (*Capsicum frutescens*)⁵⁹ (*Capsicum annuum*)⁶⁰ (*Allium sativum*)⁶¹ (*Lycopersicon esculentum*)⁶² (*Citrullus lanatus*)⁶³ (*Cucumis* spp)⁶⁴ (*Cucurbita pepo*)⁶⁵ (*H. yakuwa*) (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*)⁶⁶ (*H. lalo*) (*Corchorus olitorius*)⁶⁷ (*H. rama*) (*Hibiscus cannabinus*)⁶⁸ (*H. Ridii*) (*Sesamum indicum*)⁶⁹ (*Sesamum radiatum*)⁷⁰ (*H. karkashi*)⁷¹ (*Vernonia amygdalina*)⁷² (*Amaranthus* spp)⁷³ (*Citrus sinensis*)

Roger Blench: Fyem Wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
646.	Pineapple* ⁷⁴			
647.	Coconut* ⁷⁵			
648.	Pawpaw* ⁷⁶			
649.	Gourd (Generic)			
650.	Gourd-bottle ⁷⁷			
651.	Gourd (spherical) ⁷⁸			
652.	Other gourds			
653.	Cotton			
654.	Tobacco*			
655.	Sugar-cane*			
656.	Loofah ⁷⁹ (H. <i>soso</i>)			
657.	Cola			
658.	Oil-palm ⁸⁰			
659.	Palm-fruit			
660.	Palm-oil			
661.	Palm kernel			
662.	Raphia/ bamboo palm ⁸¹			
663.	Fan-palm ⁸²	gòro	goro	# kolo/golo roots for ‘oil-palm’ are quite common in East Benue-Congo (BCCW,II, 65)
664.	Monkey-guava ⁸³			
665.	Canarium tree ⁸⁴	fāt	fə-fāt	This name, usually pat , is found throughout this region, in Tarok, Ngas and Mwaghavul
666.	Custard apple ⁸⁵	dūbwāt	dubwat	
667.	Wild date-palm ⁸⁶	sali	sali	
668.	Baobab ⁸⁷	dùglà	—	
669.	Silk-cotton tree ⁸⁸	kùm	ku-kùm	
670.	Shea tree ⁸⁹	kerge		
671.	Shea-fruit			
672.	Locust tree ⁹⁰	vyer	vi-vyèr	? cognate with Horom ‘tree’, vyèrè in compounds.
673.	Locust fruit			
674.	Locust-bean cakes			
675.	Tamarind ⁹¹			

⁷⁴ (*Ananas comosus*)

⁷⁵ (*Cocos nucifera*)

⁷⁶ (*Carica papaya*)

⁷⁷ (*Lagenaria siceraria*)

⁷⁸ (*Cucurbita maxima*)

⁷⁹ (*Luffa cylindrica*)

⁸⁰ (*Elaeis guineensis*)

⁸¹ (*Raphia* spp.)

⁸² (*Borassus aethiopum*)

⁸³ (*Diospyros mespiliformis*)

⁸⁴ (*Canarium schweinfurthii*)

⁸⁵ (*Annona senegalensis*)

⁸⁶ (*Phoenix reclinata*)

⁸⁷ (*Adansonia digitata*)

⁸⁸ (*Ceiba pentandra*)

⁸⁹ (*Vitellaria paradoxa*)

⁹⁰ (*Parkia biglobosa*)

⁹¹ (*Tamarindus indica*)

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
676.	Sodom apple ⁹²	njamì	bà-njàmi	
677.	<i>Terminalia</i> sp. ⁹³			
678.	Black plum ⁹⁴	byer	pi-byèr	cf. Horom mber ,

References

- Abraham, R.C. 1962. *Dictionary of the Hausa language*. London: University of London Press.
- Bendor-Samuel, J. ed. 1989. *The Niger-Congo languages*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Blench, R.M. 1996. Is Niger-Congo simply a branch of Nilo-Saharan? In: *Proceedings of the Fifth Nilo-Saharan Linguistics Colloquium, Nice, 1992*. ed. R. Nicolai and F. Rottland. 68-118. Kilm: Rudiger Kippe.
- CAPRO ined. *An ethnic survey of Plateau State*. Jos: CAPRO Research Office.
- 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.
- Diche, G.A. ed. 1991. *Gindiri: A Study of The Town And Its Environs*. Dept. of Geography, College of Education, Gindiri.
- Gerhardt, L. 1983. *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Sprachen des Nigerianischen Plateaus*. Glückstadt: Verlag J.J. Augustin.
- Machunga, A. W. n.d. *Pyam - Gindiri Tarihi*. Jos.
- Machunga, A. W. n.d. *Tarihin Ekklesiyar Yesu Almasihu da Yaduwarsa a Kasar Gindiri Chieftdom, 1934 - 1981*.
- Mukarovsky, H. 1976-1977. *A study of Western Nigritic*. 2 vols. Wien: Institut für Ägyptologie und Afrikanistik, Universität Wien.
- Newman, R.M. 1997. *An English-Hausa dictionary*. Lagos: Longman.
- Shimizu, K. 1975. A lexicostatistical study of Plateau languages and Jukun. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 17:413-418.
- Temple, Olive 1922. *Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria*. Argus Printing and Publishing Co. Capetown.
- Westermann, D. 1927. *Die Westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Williamson, K., and K. Shimizu. 1968. *Benue-Congo comparative wordlist, Vol. 1*. Ibadan: West African Linguistic Society.
- Williamson, Kay 1971. The Benue-Congo languages & Ijo. In *Current trends in Linguistics 7* (ed.) T. Sebeok 245-306. The Hague: Mouton.
- Williamson, Kay 1973. *Benue-Congo comparative wordlist: Vol.2*. Ibadan: West African Linguistic Society.

⁹² (*Calotropis procera* H. tumfafiya)

⁹³ (H. *baushe*)

⁹⁴ (*Vitex doniana*)