

The Yangkam language
of
Central Nigeria and its affinities

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This printout: April 25, 2006

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1. Introduction

This is an annotated wordlist of the Yangkam [Bashar] language, spoken in Tukur-Yangkam village in Plateau State, Nigeria. The wordlist was collected by Roger Blench with the assistance of Selbut Longtau from a group of villagers in Tukur on the 30th of March 1998. The wordlist was collected as a ‘one-shot’ exercise and the transcription must therefore be regarded as very preliminary. In general, tones are not marked, although the data was taped and they will be added when time permits. This analysis was prepared by Roger Blench, who added the comparative observations¹. This document is being circulated to scholars for comment.

Yuli	19/5/96	Salihu Mohammadu, Amadu Kondon Yuli
Tukur	22/5/96	Abubakar Sulaimanu, Ibrahim Sale, Yushau and Idi Zuberu

2. Location, history and sociolinguistic situation

2.1 Nomenclature

The Yangkam (Yaŋkam) people have been called ‘Bashar’ or ‘Basherawa’ (the Hausaised name for the people) in almost all the literature (Greenberg 1963; Williamson 1971; Benue-Congo Comparative Wordlist; Hansford *et al.* 1976; Gerhardt 1989; Crozier & Blench 1992). The correct name of the Bashar language and people is Yaŋkàm, plural aYaŋkam⁺. Although Yangkam has nearly disappeared as a language, the populations who formerly spoke it are likely to retain Basherawa and Basheranci as their name for the people and language as long as they retain a separate identity.

2.2 Location and settlements

The Yangkam live in a region west of Bashar town, 25 km north from Jarne on the Amper-Bashar road, Kanam LGA, in Plateau State. Yangkam is spoken in some four villages, Tukur, Bayar, Pyaksam and Kiram [CAPRO also mentions Gambam and Kwakkwani, but this was not confirmed]. There are many hamlets around Bashar town in Wase local Government whose populations are ethnically Yangkam but who no longer speak the language.

In the two main cartographic sources, Hansford *et al.* (1976) and Blench and Crozier (1992) it is located quite inaccurately. Section gives its correct location, and it should appear in a map correctly sited in the Millennium edition of the Ethnologue (Grimes, forthcoming).

2.3 Language status

Crozier and Blench (1992) give a figure of 20,000 speakers of the language located in and around Bashar town, some 50 km east of Amper on the Muri road. This estimate turned out to be entirely erroneous. The Bashar people seem to have been heavily affected by nineteenth century slave raids, perhaps by the Jukun as well as the Hausa. They were converted to Islam and a relatively powerful centre was established at Bashar. At the same time they began to switch to speaking Hausa, while still retaining their Bashar identity.

In the region of Bashar town today, there are just two old men who remain reasonably fluent in the language, in the village of Yuli, some 15 km northwest of Bashar. However, it turns out that at the time of the raids, the population split into two and another group sought refuge in Tukur. However, even here Yangkam is only spoken by people over fifty and all the young people speak Hausa. The local estimate of the number of fluent speakers is 100, and falling every year. There seems to be no likelihood that Yangkam will be maintained as speakers are quite content with the switch to Hausa, while remaining proud of their historical identity. Wordlists were taken from the two groups and only exhibited minor lexical differences. Rescue linguistics therefore remains a high priority.

¹ I am grateful to Selbut Longtau, Kay Williamson (†) and Bruce Connell who have assisted me with external parallels and other comments.

2.4 Yangkam history

The earliest account of Yangkam history is in Ames (1934:). A Hausa history of 'Bashar' is in circulation in Bashar town but this has so far not been translated. CAPRO (ined.) contains a recent version of the Bashar narrative. Yangkam say they are descendants of the Badar who migrated from the east (Saudi Arabia?) fleeing forcible conversion. The Badar passed through the Sudan where they met with the Kanuri and together they moved to Birni Gazargamu. When the Gazargamu kingdom fell, the people moved to Borno where they settled with the Kanuri, Bolewa, Bade, and Bura in the present Borno State. The Kanuri went to settle at Dikwa, the Bolewa went to Fika, the Bura went to Biu and the Bade to the Gashua area. The Yangkam and Jukun people decided to move away from Borno. The Jukun went to establish Kwararafa, but the Yangkam people went to the Kaltungo area of the present Bauchi State. When they moved away from the Kaltungo area they went to settle at Kwakwani and later to the foot of Wase rock in Plateau State. They were there until they made peace with the Emir of Bauchi, Yakubu, during the reign of Tartar. When Tartar made peace, Yakubu Bauchi asked Madaki Hassan to stay in the Wase area with the Yangkam people. Soon after Hassan got to Wase, the Yangkam were faced with many conflicts. It is said that though the Yangkam gave Madaki Hassan and his people a place to stay, and room to farm, he did not respect them and sold their children as slaves. So the Yangkam people moved away from Wase rock to Ganuwa.

Shortly after reaching Ganuwa, Tartar, the chief of Yangkam, died. A message about his death was sent to Bauchi to inform Emir Yakubu, who sent his condolences to the Yangkam and urged them to appoint the son to succeed the father. He said the son should come to Bauchi for the turbaning. When the Yangkam people were preparing for the installation of the new chief, they agreed among themselves that when they reached Bauchi they should accept Islam as their religion. When the turbaning ceremony was over, the people told Emir Yakubu about their interest in becoming Muslims. Yakubu was very happy and gave them an Islamic flag, the sword and other symbols of Islam for them to take back home. This is the genesis of Islam among the Yangkam people, and today it is difficult to find a Yangkam man identifying with any other religion than Islam. In fact, Bashar town is known in its neighbourhood as an Islamic town. Bashar and Wase towns have produced many prominent Islamic scholars.

The son of Tartar was recognised by the Yangkam people as the first chief to be turbaned by the Fulani. His name was Karo and he was succeeded by Yamusa. But during the reign of Abubakar the people left Ganuwa to settle in Gwaram, south of the present Yangkam town, because of wars (*yakin Kalumbu*). After ten years Abubakar founded the present Bashar town, in the area that they are still occupying. Abubakar was succeeded by Muhammadu Lamam, then followed a series of short reigns. At present Usman Idris, also known as Hakimin Bashar, rules, subject to the king of Wase. The chief among the Yangkam is known as the *Rekna Bashar*. The Yangkam ruling clan is known as Argando while the kingmakers include the Madakin Bashar, Kuyanbaba Bashar, Mansu Bashar and the Imam (Islamic religious leader) of Bashar.

2.5 Yangkam culture

Before the Yangkam people embraced Islam, their traditional customs and religion were closely related to those of the Boghom people. Before marriage, the suitor had to serve the in-laws in the farm, give a hand-woven white cloth (*alikyala*), do building and roofing and give animals as bride-price.

Yangkam burial rites were like those of the Boghom. They used to remove the skull of the deceased for observation after three months. Naming and circumcision rites were formerly similar with those of the Boghom, although today all these rites are performed according to Islamic laws.

The Yangkam have the same name as the Boghom for the Supreme Being, *Bappi*, as well as formerly having masquerades and shrines. But today these have fallen into disuse since conversion to Islam. Although Christianity was brought to Yangkam in 1968, by Mr. Bala Abdu, a COCIN evangelist, they rejected it. When some non-Yangkam residents accepted the gospel, the chief was reluctant to give them land to build a place of worship.

2.6 Classification

Published material on the Yangkam language is confined to some lexical items cited in the BCCW, many of them quite inaccurate. Yangkam was known to Greenberg (1963), who placed it in Plateau 7, together with Tarok. Williamson (1971) also classified it with Plateau 7 and it is similarly listed in the BCCW. In Hansford *et al.* (1976) Tarok and Yangkam are classified together as one of the five primary branches of the Benue group, together with Jukunoid, Arum-Chessu, Eloyi and Hasha [=Yashi]. It is interesting to note that Pe, now thought to be Tarokoid, was then not even classified as part of Benue. In Gerhardt (1989) Benue is reduced to only two primary divisions, Tarokoid and Jukunoid. Tarokoid is said to consist of Tarok, Bashar [=Yangkam], Turkwam and Arum-Chessu, a classification reprised in Blench and Crozier (1992) which, however, placed Pe within Tarokoid. However, in no case has any justification been published for these classifications. Section 7. considers the correct classification of Yangkam based on the data given in the paper.

3. Phonology

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

3.1 Vowels

Yangkam probably has seven phonemic vowels;

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

The status of the /ə/ is highly uncertain, and it is probably a centralised allophone of /i/. For the present it is transcribed as heard.

3.2 Consonants

Yangkam consonants are as follows:

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

3.3 Tones

The tone system of Yangkam is quite restricted, with only two tones. The majority of words appear all low tone. No cases of glide tones seem to occur.

4. Morphology

4.1 Nouns

A few Yangkam nouns were recorded with plurals in rapid elicitation. Although the system is clearly disappearing, more in-depth enquiry among older men could probably produce more such plurals. The examples seem to have little pattern apart from the following;

Head	pi	apipi
Eye	wi	awiwi

The stem is reduplicated and an a- prefix added. The other examples are;

Village/settlement	yin-rə	səyin
Neck	mwak	sumwak
Shoulder	ndar	bəndar

Some singular nouns that contain a plural idea are reduplications;

Dust	kutkut
Millipede	lamalama
Comb	paspas

Generally speaking, Yangkam has deleted the vowel-prefixes found elsewhere in Tarokoid.

Table 1. Examples where Yangkam deletes Tarokoid V- prefixes

Child	vun	cf. Tarok ován ‘children’
Mother	nan	cf. Tarok ùnàna , Pe u-na , Sur naa although this reconstructs to PMC level.
Hunger	mwər	cf. Pe i-mwat ,
War	gum	cf. Tarok ikùm , Sur gwəm , Pe ikom . A weakening of the common Niger-Congo root #-kwan (see BCCW,99).
Ear	toŋ	cf. Tarok acwáŋ , Pe u-toŋ , Sur koto . The PVC root -tu
Mouth	noŋ	cf. Tarok anùŋ , Sur kunu , Yangkam noŋ .

In these cases, Yangkam retains the a- and i- prefixes;

Snake (Generic)	awak	cf. Tarok awù , but #wa- is a Niger-Congo root
Sorghum-beer	iyam	cf. Sur yya ,

Nasal prefixes are similarly ambivalent;

In the case of 'land' it has clearly been deleted.

Land/country	pimi	cf. Tarok m̀bìn ,
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However, elsewhere it has been retained;

River crab	ngala	cf. Tarok ̀nkàm'gwàli , Pe i-gwal , Sur tikaŋkalaŋ . Niger-Congo #kala
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In the following cases, Yangkam has retained a t- prefix, found in residual form throughout Tarokoid although not necessarily on these examples;

Rag	tərak	cf. Tarok aryákryák
Shoe	taxap	? < H. but see Tarok akwàp , Sur tukwa , Pe kap

The following example is unexplained, since there is otherwise no clear evidence for an s- prefix in Tarokoid;

Forest **sepip** Also ‘bush’. cf. Pe **upip** ‘forest, bush’, Sur **pik** ‘grass’, Tarok **ipipà** ‘grass’. Westerman (310) cites #-**pi** as a PWS root, but his evidence is restricted to Benue-Kwa languages.

4.2 Verbs

In contrast to the other Tarokoid languages, no apparent traces of a verbal extension system were detected in Yangkam.

5. Lexical comparison and the classification of Yangkam

The wordlist given below and the etymological commentary are intended to throw some light on the classification of Yangkam. Yangkam has been compared with a wide variety of neighbouring languages for potential cognates.

6. Yangkam wordlist

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
1.	Tree (generic)	koon	cf. Pe kón , Sur kon , Tarok akún ‘firewood’. This root is widespread in Niger-Congo, often meaning ‘firewood’.
2.	Leaf	kaŋ	cf. Tarok agwál , Yangkam kaŋ , Sur yyaŋ , Shall yaŋ . Reconstructed as *(g)yaNa for EBC in Blench (ms). Also in Chadic e.g. Ngas yəm
3.	Root	zam	
4.	Branch	ɓyala	cf. Sur baya ,
5.	Grass (generic)	yak	
6.	Seed/stone/pip	biir	cf. Tarok apìr ,
7.	Bark (of tree)	gwaŋ	cf. Tarok akòkci , Pe u-kaŋguk , Sur gwok . PLC *í-kpók ,
8.	Thorn	wu	cf. Sur wu ,
9.	Charcoal	kai	cf. Tarok, Pe akál , Bu ikóla . The -kal element goes back to Niger-Saharan.
10.	Dust	kutkut	
11.	Ashes	twak	cf. Kurama útwá , Aten tswòŋ , Tarok, Kamanton ɛcwaŋ and thence to the widespread Niger-Congo root #toN- , although the final -k remains puzzling. See BCCW
12.	Rubbish-heap	gurum	
13.	Mud	bwaar	cf. Tarok aɓer⁺ , Pe a-bwatibe
14.	Dew	myaŋ	cf. Tarok imìmyàŋ , Sur myaŋ , Pe inyaŋ Reflex of a Niger-Congo root #me-
15.	Stone	gyam	
16.	Sand	ɟyar	cf. Tarok ashíshirí , Pe aɟifei , Yangkam ɟyar , Sur ɟɟal , Vute sasé , Kwanja Ndung sǎ , Jangani ɟu , Gaa aɟemɟemta
17.	Smoke	woo	
18.	Fire	bət	cf. Tarok apər⁺ , Pe upet ,
19.	Water	woxɟi	Nnakenyare wóok
20.	Rain	bər	cf. Tarok ivər , Pe bwit ,
21.	Cloud	minimini	
22.	Lightning	milum	cf. Tarok amɟlám ,
23.	Rainy Season	ɟyok	
24.	Harmattan	dasa	See ‘wind’ (37.)
25.	Year	loon	
26.	Today	layan	
27.	Yesterday	bari	
28.	Tomorrow	pibari	
29.	Morning	suk pənə	
30.	Evening	dərɔɔ	
31.	Dawn	suŋoŋ pənə	cf. Tarok anuŋ ipin ,

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
32.	Day	loom	cf. Tarok alum ⁺ , Pe ulom ,
33.	Night	yeyom	
34.	Moon/month	bee	cf. Tarok apé , Sur pyam ,
35.	Sun	loom	cf. Tarok alum ⁺ , Pe u-lom , Sur lem ,
36.	Star(s)	ngangəraŋ	
37.	Wind	dasa	See ‘harmattan’ (24.)
38.	God	bəkaram	This term is in conflict with the term <i>Bappi</i> taken from CAPRO (ined.)
39.	Sky	nuŋtiyoŋ	
40.	Earth	mi	cf. Tarok m̀bin , Eggon ubin ,
41.	Large River	koŋkoŋ	cf. Tarok akòŋkòŋ ‘river-bank’,
42.	Forest	sepip	Also ‘bush’ (Error! Reference source not found.) cf. Pe upip ‘forest, bush’, Sur pik ‘grass’, Tarok ipipà ‘grass’. Westermann (310) cites #- pi as a PWS root, but his evidence is restricted to Benue-Kwa languages.
43.	Hill	yuŋ	
44.	Bush	pip	cf. ‘forest’ (Error! Reference source not found.)
45.	Farm	ram	cf. Fyem rám , Horom rama , Sur ram , Tarok, Pe iràm . Ngas has màr which looks like metathesis
46.	Compound	rə	cf. Pe ire ,
47.	Room	loŋ	cf. Tarok ̀̀kàlàn ‘family, lineage’, Pe ikalaŋ , Sur galon . Also Chadic: Ngas lu
48.	Wall (of room)	goŋsoŋ	cf. Tarok agúŋ ,
49.	Thatch roof	takpəran	
50.	Road	wugi	
51.	Village/settlement	yin-rə	pl. səyin (Y.)
52.	River-bank	gəroŋtoŋ	
53.	Swamp/wetland	lugur	
54.	Place	duk	cf. Tarok atàk ,
55.	Person/people	ndar nyit	cf. Nindem nesit , Pe u-nsit , Horom nèsit , Yeskwa unet , Gana net . Roots for ‘person’ with initial n- can be reconstructed to PMC
56.	Man	nyirum	cf. Sur nukurum , Fyem róm pl. barom . The #-rom- element is a very widespread Benue-Congo root for ‘man/male’, ‘person’ (see discussion in BCCW 59). #-nyi- for ‘person’ is found in the Nupoid languages.
57.	Woman	ker	cf. Tarok ̀̀càr , Sur fer , Doka o-sal , Lungu ku-tsar , Eggon à-̀̀lé
58.	Child	vun	cf. Tarok ován ‘children’
59.	Children	munda	cf. Tesu amere , Tikar mwãë , Jaku mín , Bapi mwén , Degema ómó . Also Chadic: Wangday min , Geji mil ,
60.	Old person	nyiguŋar	
61.	Father	ba	cf. Sur ba though this is a worldwide root
62.	Mother	nan	cf. Tarok ̀̀nàna , Pe u-na , Sur naa although this reconstructs to PMC level.
63.	Relations	marəŋam	
64.	In-laws	kayam	
65.	Ancestors	kayam	
66.	Sibling (same father)	marəŋam	
67.	Friend	bər	cf. Sur be , but also Mambiloid mbi
68.	King/chief/ruler	ryaŋna	
69.	Hunter	bə taxwot	
70.	Thief	bəlaŋ	cf. Sur laŋ ,
71.	Doctor	bə kizep	
72.	Witch	byak	
73.	Corpse	ku	cf. Tarok akúm , Sur tukum . The #-kum element is widespread in Benue-Congo. Also Chadic: Mwaghavul kúm ,
74.	Blacksmith	bəlak bela	la- element may be cognate with Tarok la ⁺ ‘to smith’

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
75.	Death	ku	cf. Tarok ikú , Sur ku , . Niger-Congo root #ku
76.	Name	rum	
77.	Grave	woop	cf. Tarok awap ⁺ , Pe ti-wap ,
78.	Song	ɓəm	cf. Igboid
79.	Riddle	wornu	
80.	Story	zɛp	
81.	Word	wornu	
82.	Lie	mbwat	
83.	News	wornu	Also ‘word’ (81.)
84.	Hunger	mwər	cf. Pe i-mwat ,
85.	Egg	gyo	cf. Tarok aci , Pe ti-ci pl. a-ci , Sur zi Common in Plateau in this form, but reflects a Niger-Congo root with g- initial (W. 214).
86.	Horn	bəs	cf. Tarok agbɪfi ,
87.	Tail	ŋgela	cf. Tarok ŋgəl ‘tail of scorpion’,
88.	Wing (of bird)	múndàr	
89.	Beak (of bird)	nuŋ guŋga	‘mouth of x’
90.	Nest (of bird)	rə ru not	‘house of bird’
91.	Gum/glue	kidí	cf. Pe n-tsidiŋ ,
92.	Ant-hill	daan	cf. Tarok ñzhí-inantan ⁺ , Pe i-katan ,
93.	Hole in ground	yoor	cf. Pe uru uyoy ,
94.	Smell	nuŋ	cf. Tarok nniŋ , Sur nuŋfi ‘to smell’, cf. Tarok niŋ ⁺ , Yangkam nuŋ , CB #- nũŋk (C.S. 1386) reconstructing back at least to Proto-Benue-Congo
95.	Poison	ɓuram	
96.	Firewood	koon	cf. ‘tree’ ()
97.	War	gum	cf. Tarok ikùm , Sur gwəm , Pe ikom . A weakening of the common Niger-Congo root #- kwan (see BCCW,99).
98.	Work	ɓina	
99.	Medicine (generic)	guram	
100.	Money	binyuk	
101.	Shadow	wurok	
102.	Thing	byem	The b- in Yangkam is probably an old frozen prefix, since this is almost certainly related to PB #- yúmà . Cf. Tarok iyám .
103.	Land/country	pimi	cf. Tarok m̀bìn ,
104.	Sleep	yina	cf. Tarok ndá , Sur na , Wapan na , Hasha na , Lamnso náá-rí
105.	Disease(generic)	nyit bunɔ	
106.	Smallpox	baŋburat	
107.	Diarrhoea	nənak	
108.	Goitre	ɓwak ɓəlak	
109.	Sore/wound	nnot	cf. Pe u-nat , Sur kinyet , Tarok anúnur
110.	Head	pi	pl. apipi (Y.) cf. Takaya pwe , Kadara epe , Kuda ukpai
111.	Eye	wi	pl. awiwi (Y.) cf. Tarok iwú ,
112.	Face	suwi	cf. Tarok asal-awú , Igboid
113.	Skull	gyem pi	
114.	Cheek	dumtuŋ	
115.	Forehead	noŋsuwi	cf. Tarok isú ,
116.	Nose	viram	cf. Sur gəvərum ,
117.	Ear	toŋ	cf. Tarok acwáŋ , Pe u-toŋ , Sur koto . The PVC root – tu
118.	Mouth	noŋ	cf. Tarok anùŋ , Sur kunu , Yangkam noŋ .
119.	Tooth	baŋ	cf. Tarok ibáŋ ‘molar’ see also BCCW
120.	Tongue	rem	cf. Tarok aɓilim ⁺ , Pe ti-lem , Bo de-rem , cLela d-rémé , ultimately PNC #- lima
121.	Throat	dum mwak	dum + ‘neck’
122.	Neck	mwak	pl. sumwak . cf. Sur mwak

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
123.	Jaw	ɲa	
124.	Chin	dum toyom	
125.	Shoulder	ndar	pl. bəndar
126.	Fist	dum ndar	
127.	Arm/hand	ɓwok	cf. Sur bak , Pe u-ɓok , Tarok awó . An old Niger-Congo root, usually #bok-
128.	Leg	kwi	? cf. Sur tukwaki , Nungu ù-kprì
129.	Female breast	mi	cf. Sur mifi ,
130.	Stomach	lwak	cf. Sur ryak , Tarok alèr ‘small intestine’, more generally related to widespread #la- for ‘intestines’ cf. PB #dà-
131.	Navel	kum	cf. Tarok igum , Pe igum , Sur kumbul , Horom kom . Also Mambiloid (Cambap) kúmbūn , PB #kóbù
132.	Thigh	tak	Widespread #ta- roots in BC often apply to ‘leg’ (BCCW,55). cf. Kenyi ɗak , Sholyo taak , Ekoid N è-tâ , Bafia ń-‘tág
133.	Knee	ruŋ	cf. Yangkam ruŋ , Sur tukurum , Pe i-yuŋ , Tarok irɪŋ but cf. Fyem ɗurúm pl. arúm , Mabo rurum . Reconstructed as #-rúŋù in East Benue-Congo in Blench (ms.) Also in Chadic: Kulere ’arôm , Tangale purum and Mupun fūrùm .
134.	Nail(Finger/toe)	zoot	
135.	Back	pinzə	cf. Tarok asəm , Sur zim , PLC *è-dèm . Both this and ‘waist’ are reconstructed to Proto-Benue-Congo as #-jim (Blench ms.). Also Chadic: cf. Ngas zəm
136.	Buttocks	piŋin	cf. Tarok ijili ,
137.	Penis	gur	cf. Sur gur , Somie ngōrō ‘vagina’ and ɲwàr ‘penis’
138.	Vagina	fyel	cf. Sur fwən , Horom póré , Nizaa fūr
139.	Skin	kpa	cf. Sur tùkwá though #kwa is an ancient PMC root. Tarok awá may be a weakened form
140.	Bone	kup	cf. Tarok akúp , Pe ukup , Sur tukubi but a widespread BC root for ‘bone’
141.	Rib	zaya	cf. Tarok ɲzàkín
142.	Vein	kyuŋər	
143.	Blood	gyir	cf. Tarok ɲcər , Pe ntsii , Sur zəl .
144.	Breath	piyai	
145.	Tear	yilə^(k)	cf. Tarok yíŋ ‘to cry’, Pe anyul , Sur iyil .
146.	Faeces	ɓiyon	cf. Sur byiŋ . #biN- is a widespread PAC root
147.	Hair	mbap	cf. Tarok apyáp ‘male pubic hair’,
148.	Beard	zar	? cf. Tarok izwál ‘grey hair’,
149.	Liver	le	
150.	Heart	nrwoŋ	cf. Sur turum , Pe nteneŋ . Blench (ms.) reconstructs #-duN- for Proto-Benue-Congo which may well be related. Also Chadic: Ngas ɗur
151.	Body	yit	cf. Sur yii , Mambila Kb. yeli , PB #yótu
152.	Meat	vi	? cf. Tesu wi , Hasha i-vwe , widespread in Jukunoid as wi , suggesting a regional root -#vwi See BCCW,1 where this is treated as a weakening of #-bi .
153.	Animal (Bush)	vi esuwe	
154.	Cow	nak	cf. Sur nak , Pe inak , Tarok inà although widespread in Niger-Congo. Some forms may be borrowed from Fulfulde nagge
155.	Bull	nyi nak	‘male cow’
156.	Goat	be	cf. Tarok iɓil , Pe iɓwel , Fyem bʷol . A Niger-Congo root #bodi-
157.	He-goat	ngunŋuŋ	
158.	Sheep	tam	cf. Tarok itam , Pe itam , Yangkam tam but also widespread in West Africa
159.	Dog	gba	cf. Pe iɓwa , Tarok iva , Sur wwa . A Niger-Congo root
160.	*Horse	toyo^(k)	cf. Su too but related to widespread West African soo
161.	*Donkey	ludon	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
162.	Elephant	nyi	cf. Tesu, Mada nyi , Yala inyi . A Niger-Congo root.
163.	Hippo	nyi suwaxjin	'elephant of water'
164.	Buffalo	iyet	cf. Sur yyet , Nupe eya . A root # yadi- reconstructed for Benue-Congo.
165.	Lion	yim	
166.	Leopard	zoɣar	
167.	Hyena ²		
168.	Wart-hog ³		
169.	Bush-pig ⁴		
170.	Duiker antelope ⁵		
171.	Porcupine ⁶		
172.	Giant rat ⁷		
173.	Baboon	ka	cf. Tarok ika , Pe i-kaa
174.	Patas monkey ⁸	kim	? cf. Tarok isəm ,
175.	Squirrels(generic)	pəlaŋ	cf. Sur paləŋ ,
176.	Rat (generic)	pi	cf. Tarok ipi , Sur bi , Igbo Etiti ɔ-pà , Esimbi è-fĩmbĩ
177.	Grasscutter ⁹	gbə^(k)	cf. Tarok ibɣap , Horom bèbè , Kpan i-byú , Ekparabong é-bèb , reconstructible for Proto-Benue-Congo
178.	Hare ¹⁰	wum	cf. Tarok izum , Pe i-som , Cara izum but a root widespread and virtually identical throughout Plateau, probably the source of the Hausa zómóó . Hare is an important figure in folktales which may account for this.
179.	Nile crocodile	gaan	cf. Ndoro ŋ-gana , Mambila ŋ-gàà , Jar gan , PB #- gandu . The absence of this root in any neighbouring language suggests the possibility that it is a Bantoid innovation, carried back to Central Nigeria by Jarawan Bantu and then loaned back into Yangkam who are near neighbours.
180.	Agama lizard	njakywoi	
181.	Skink	mululu	cf. Tarok amólíkĩkĩ
182.	Toad	mbi yaktarak	
183.	Snake (Generic)	awak	cf. Tarok awù , but # wa- is a Niger-Congo root. Se BCCW
184.	River crab	ngala	cf. Tarok ŋkàm'gwàli , Pe i-gwal , Sur tikaŋkalaŋ . Niger-Congo # kala
185.	Fish (generic)	vyak	cf. Sur ywak . Connell (1991) reconstructs * é-ɟák /i- for PLC.
186.	Bird (generic)	noi	cf. Tarok inyil , Pe i-nol , Sur nyəl
187.	Chicken	gwoŋa	cf. Horom koŋgo , Yangkam gwoŋa , Berom coŋo
188.	Pigeon	noi bərə	'bird' + x
189.	Guinea-fowl	gyok	cf. Tarok irusòk , Sur ŋsyòk , Eggon i-sugu , Kamanton ɟok . Widespread Plateau # wok forms are probably weakened versions of an initial # ŋɟòk
190.	Scorpion	naŋ	cf. Tarok inyinyàŋ , Pe i-naŋ , Sur naŋ . This root is found scattered through BC and reconstructs back as far as PVC
191.	Butterfly	pilipili	cf. Ngas purpul , Sur pərpəl ,
192.	Mosquito	bo	cf. Sur buŋ , LC -bəŋ but a PWN root
193.	Spider ¹¹	lileta	
194.	Mason wasp ¹²	minjinjogoi	

² (*Crocuta crocuta*)³ (*Phacochoerus aethiopus*)⁴ (*Potamochoerus Porcus*)⁵ (*Cephalophus* spp.)⁶ (*Hystrix cristata*)⁷ (*Cretomyces* sp.)⁸ (*Erythrocebus patas*)⁹ (*Thryonomys Swinderianus*)¹⁰ (*Lepus Crawshayi*)¹¹ (*Acarina* spp.)¹² (*Belenogaster* spp.)

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
195.	Bee	vyak	cf. Sur yyək , Rukul a-yə^(k) , PB #- yúki
196.	Housefly	gyoŋ	cf. cLela gyu-mu ,
197.	Ant (Generic)	fyoŋ	
198.	Louse (Human)	gyiskər	
199.	Millipede	lamalama	
200.	Cockroach	puguruk	cf. Pe njurukum ,
201.	Termite	bas	
202.	Flying-ant	bas	
203.	Praying mantis	ngaamagaam a	
204.	Earthworm	gus	
205.	Oil	maŋsɔ	cf. Tarok m̀m̀i , Tesu amene , Berom nóí , Aten noi , Gure mani , Central Kambari m̀ǹi^{ɛ̃} and ultimately Hausa mai .
206.	Fat/grease	mbyep	cf. Tarok m̀p̀p̀ ‘animal fat’, Sur mbip . East Benue-Congo #mbyep in Blench (ms.)
207.	Salt	man	cf. Fyem ma , Rukul mmək , Alumu mma , Tarok m̀m̀ǹ , Takum Jukun manà , but also Fulfulde manda
208.	Soup/stew	kuru	cf. Tarok ak̀ri , Sur kuri
209.	Porridge	kpoŋ	cf. Tarok ̀nk̀p̀ǹ , Pe nkwa ,
210.	Sorghum-beer	iyam	cf. Sur yya ,
211.	Peelings	gwaŋ	cf. Tarok ak̀ẁǹk̀ẁǹ , Pe u-konkon , Sur gwaŋmi
212.	Filter	paipai	? Fulfulde fefe ,
213.	Rag	tərak	cf. Tarok aryákryák
214.	Handle (of tool)	pəp	cf. Pe u-pomni , Cara pop , Nupe efú , Mambila fù , PB #- péni . Reconstructed to PBC as #- fú[pu] in Blench (ms.)
215.	Sickle	ga	cf. Tarok ikà , Pe ngap ,
216.	Cutlass	ada	< H.
217.	Iron	gyim	? cf. Tarok ac̀m̀ , Sur gizam ,
218.	Axe	gi	
219.	Adze	pikas	
220.	Hoe	gimu	
221.	Hammer	luktur	
222.	Knife	nzom	
223.	Comb	paspas	
224.	Broom	zidi	
225.	Sack	mbuyutpa	? Hausa bufu + ?
226.	Fireplace	kyaktar	
227.	Shoe	taxap	? < H. but see Tarok ak̀ẁp̀ , Sur tukwa , Pe kap
228.	Cloth	payit	
229.	Upper grinding-stone	gyamgwan	cf. Sur dugwa ,
230.	Mortar (wood)	byuŋu	
231.	Pestle	vun byuŋ	‘child of the mortar’
232.	Pot (clay)	ɟayara	cf. Sur biɟar ,
233.	Other pots I	toon	
234.	Other pots II	gyoo	
235.	Head-pad	kəda	cf. Pe, Sur ti-kat , Tarok ak̀r̀ , reflexes of #kata A Proto-Benue-Kwa root (PWN 199)
236.	Basket (generic)	nnap	cf. Tarok aǹp̀ ,
237.	Mat (generic)	ziduŋ	
238.	Spear	gəs	cf. Tarok ̀ng̀aɟiɟi , Sur gafi
239.	Bow	tàá	Niger-Congo #-ta-
240.	Arrow	wət	cf. Tarok iẁr̀ , Ninzo à-wyírr , Buji ù-virà , Takaya o-warra ,
241.	Quiver	kwori	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
242.	Rope	rook	cf. Tarok arík , Pe irik ,
243.	Stool	toyom	cf. Tarok itòk ,
244.	Wooden door	nongpyaŋ	cf. Sur pinpin ,
245.	Fence	taxar	
246.	Ladder	foon	
247.	One	jinuŋ	? cf. Rukul janak and perhaps more broadly related to Moroa apuŋ . Also Chadic: Geji num , Tule nyì mí
248.	Two	bara	cf. Fyem pór , Tarok ùpàrím . Also in Chadic: Fyer poò . 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).
249.	Three	taat	a PNC root
250.	Four	nyi	A Proto-Niger-Congo root more usually in the form #na- . Initial ɲ- is quite rare, but found also in Eggon àní , Rukul jin , plus scattered citations in Jukunoid and Cross River
251.	Five	sooŋ	cf. Sur ŋyŋ , Pe coŋ . Weakened form of the more common #tan roots, occurring as toon in Dakoid and tsoon in Jukunoid (BCCW 107)
252.	Six	mbavaŋ	? 5 + 1
253.	Seven	mbabaan	? 5 + 2
254.	Eight	baanbaan	
255.	Nine	zopi	For 'ten' ? cf. cf. Sur zup , Kona dup , Anaang dùòp
256.	Ten	woro	cf. Kwanka wori , Rindre àwo , Ninzam wúr , Hasha awuk , ? Berom kūrū
257.	Black	ndaar	
258.	White	mbarta	
259.	Red	mbii	
260.	Sweet I	ŋaŋ	cf. Tarok càŋ . cf. Igboid
261.	Sweet II	bem	
262.	Bitter	mii	
263.	Half	gaa soyo	
264.	Hot	doyozu	cf. Sur lɔyɔ ,
265.	Cold	kwop	
266.	Old, to be	gwar	cf. Tarok gbak ⁺
267.	New	pyaŋ	cf. Tarok pipe , Pe mpe , Sur pi . Niger-Congo #pi- . Also Chadic: Ngas pwi .
268.	Wet	fiduk	
269.	Dry	mwom	cf. Tarok wom , Pe nwoom , Sur womi , Takum Jukun wom ⁺ .
270.	Add to	wi	
271.	Answer (question)	yit	
272.	Ask a question	bip	cf. Sur bip , Tarok ɓip , Pe gigyip but a Niger-Congo root, cf. PLC *bíp , Gbari byibe , Ijò ɓí , Reshe bípà
273.	Ask/beg for something	doŋ	
274.	Awaken (s.o.)	yirak	cf. Pe yemsel , Tarok yendəl ⁺ , Sur yem
275.	Bark (dog)	mi	
276.	Be bent	goŋ	cf. Tarok gèn , Pe ngonmen
277.	Be heavy	noxay	
278.	Be on (s.t.)	keen	
279.	Be rotten	noŋ	
280.	beat (drum etc.)	wi	
281.	Begin	sedem	
282.	Bite	nwaŋ	cf. Tesu nyuŋwa
283.	Blow (flute etc.)	wurok	cf. Sur wuri , Horom wil , Berom wōlóm
284.	Build (house etc.)	biwut	ɗok (Y.)

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
285.	Burn (fire burns)	nyan	vyaŋ (Y.)
286.	Buy	yep	cf. Tarok yáp ,
287.	Call (to someone)	woo	cf. Tarok wór ,
288.	Carve (wood etc.)	ɓilak	
289.	Catch	kən	cf. Tarok kpán , Sur kakyi , Pe kom
290.	Chew	yi	
291.	Choose	saŋ	? cf. Pe ʃel ,
292.	Climb	fwom	A scattered root in Plateau, cf. Sur fwəŋ , Tarok fiŋ (pl. of 'climb down'), Fyem fùŋ , Yeskwa fó , Hyam fó-r , and Che hu
293.	Come	ɓi	cf. Tarok ɓá , Fyem, Horom ɓé , Pe ben , but a widespread root reconstructible at least to Proto-Atlantic-Congo. Ijò ɓó Also Chadic: Yiwom ɓèl , Kulere bo , Tsagu ɓàà , Tera ɓa ,
294.	Come out (of room)	turuk	cf. Tarok tur ⁺ 'remove'
295.	Continue (to do s.t.)	waŋ	
296.	Cough	kpar	cf. Tarok pír , Pe kpeesi ,
297.	Count	ɓiɓəɓə	
298.	Cut down (tree)	pà	cf. Tarok, Pe pà , Rukul fa ,
299.	Cut in two	ga	
300.	Dance	soyar	cf. Tarok gbəp , Pe gu ,
301.	Die	ku	cf. Tarok, Sur kú , Pe pu , Eggon kpù , Tesu kwe , Kenyi kie , Surubu kee . Niger-Congo root #- ku .
302.	Dig (earth etc.)	suŋ	See also 'uproot' (374.). cf. Pe sum , Sur ʃiŋ Fyem cin , Horom sim , Tesu ʃumu , Kulu cem , Berom ciŋ
303.	Do/make	na	cf. Tarok nim ⁺ , Kegboid
304.	Drag	gwok	
305.	Drink	wa	cf. Sur, Tarok, Arum wá , Pe wu , perhaps reduced from Ngas mwak ? See also Mambiloid, LC
306.	Dry up	ŋwom	cf. Tarok wóm 'to be dry', Sur womi , Pe wom .
307.	Eat	yi	cf. Hasha, Che, Chori yi ,
308.	Enter	gat	
309.	Fall (rain)	duŋai	
310.	Fall over	bowot	cf. Sur wət ,
311.	Feel (cold etc.)	bu (gwot)	
312.	Fight (in war)	zaya	
313.	Finish (a task)	kun gogwot	
314.	Flog	wi	
315.	Flow (water etc.)	ŋai	cf. Tarok náŋ ,
316.	Fly (birds)	laywət	
317.	Fold (cloth etc.)	gwuŋ	
318.	Follow	təbu	
319.	Forget	nyidwot	
320.	Fry (in oil)	wuŋ	cf. Sur wum ,
321.	Gather/collect	nyoŋ	
322.	Give	yi	cf. Wapan, Jaku yi ,
323.	Give birth	mat	cf. Tarok mar ⁺ , but a pan-African root
324.	Go	waŋ	
325.	Go out/exit	turuk	cf. Sur tur , Tarok tur ⁺ 'to remove', Nindem doru , Mada dorwe , and possibly also Ribina sùrú and Ekoid M dúù but also in Chadic, Bokkos đu , Fyer đoo
326.	Grind	gba	cf. Sur gwak , Tarok kpà Also Chadic: Ngas gwak
327.	Grow (plants)	kim	

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
328.	Hatch (egg)	tisak (gwot)	
329.	Hear	puk	cf. Pe pok . See discussion in Muk. Festschrift
330.	Hunt	ti	
331.	Jump	lak	
332.	Kill	wyu	cf. Pe wel , Sur wəl , Fyem, Horom wol , Sur wəl , Kwanka won , Olulomo wùlú although as #wu this is widespread in Niger-Congo
333.	Know	yakwi	cf. Tarok nyí , Sur yək , Pe yi ,
334.	Laugh	yidu	cf. Tarok ñ-yil 'laughter'
335.	Lick	yak	
336.	Lie down	kwat	
337.	Listen	dyok	
338.	Marry	ɓar	cf. Pe ɓwa
339.	Mix	kut	
340.	Mould (pot)	wut	cf. 'build' (Error! Reference source not found.).
341.	Open	poŋ	
342.	Plant (crop etc.)	ɓər	cf. Pe ɓwak , Tarok ɓal ⁺ 'to transplant',
343.	Play	gwen	
344.	Pound (in mortar)	tur	cf. Pe tər , Tarok atúm 'mortar'. Hausa túrmíi may be from this source.
345.	Pour (liquid)	səku	
346.	Pull	gwoo	
347.	Receive	pət	
348.	Refuse	nda	
349.	Remember	ryaŋ	cf. Tarok riŋ ⁺ , Pe leŋkat , Sur lyeŋ ,
350.	Return	kom	cf. Sur kaman ,
351.	Ride (horse etc.)	lak	
352.	Roast on coals	vyəŋ	cf. Tarok wəŋ , Sur vəŋ , Pe mva , Eloyi vyé , Ekajuk wô , Eggon vòm , Kohumono vəβ , Obolo fūŋ
353.	Run	nyan	
354.	Say/speak	wur	cf. Sur wwar ,
355.	See	gyaŋ	
356.	Sell	yep	cf. Tarok yáp ,
357.	Send	mbə	
358.	Sharpen	pyat	
359.	Shoot (arrow, gun)	tat	cf. Tarok, Pe, Sur tat ⁺ . A Niger-Congo root often found as #-ta 'bow'
360.	Sieve	dokte	cf. Tarok ɗok ⁺ ,
361.	Sing	ɓəm	widespread Plateau #bom- , also Igboid
362.	Slaughter (animal)	pa	cf. Tarok, Pe pà , Ijò Bá , Yourba 'kpa' 'kill'
363.	Sleep	nyinə	
364.	Smash	ŋyam	cf. Tarok nyáp , Sur ŋaya ,
365.	Spit	tat kume	cf. discussion under 'shoot' (Error! Reference source not found.)
366.	Stand	ɗiyok	
367.	Steal	laŋ	cf. Sur ri-laŋ ,
368.	Suck (breast etc.)	wami	'drink breast'
369.	Surpass	ke	
370.	Swallow	mər	cf. Tarok məkən ⁺ , Sur mərək
371.	Tear (cloth etc.)	kata	? cf. Tarok kəkci , Pe kapti ,
372.	Throw	ɓaŋ	
373.	Twist (rope etc.)	myar	cf. Tarok myar ⁺ ,
374.	Uproot (tuber)	suŋ	see also 'dig' (302.).
375.	Walk	gyar	
376.	Want/need	maŋ	cf. Tarok mən ⁺ 'like'
377.	Wash	nwi	cf. Tarok nəl , Sur ŋgal , Pe nyali ,
378.	Wear	pa	cf. Tarok pá ,

NO.	Gloss	Singular	Commentary
379.	Weep	ra	
380.	Work	ɓina	

Edible and Useful Plants

No.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
381.	Guinea-yam ¹³	kyor		cf. Yangkam ì-kot , but this is a widespread Benue-Congo root
382.	Aerial yam ¹⁴	kyor tiyoŋ		
383.	Water-yam ¹⁵	kyor seloŋ		
384.	Taro (Old cocoyam) ¹⁶	ŋgwan	alwan	cf. Tarok ŋgwàn ,
385.	Sweet potato* ¹⁷	mulwak		
386.	Tumuku ¹⁸	gwu		cf. Tarok akù ‘rizga cultivar’
387.	Rizga ¹⁹	ɟwar	afɟwar	
388.	Sorghum ²⁰	re		
389.	3-month Sorghum	re ɟyok		
390.	Millet ²¹ <i>maiwa</i>	sala		
391.	Millet <i>gero</i>	marak		cf. Tarok imàr
392.	Finger-millet* ²²	saraŋa		cf. Tarok izàŋziŋ , ? Sur sargi , Yangkam saraŋa ,
393.	Maize* ²³	duguri		Almost certainly from the Duguri people, one of the Jarawan Bantu group
394.	Rice* ²⁴	we ri duksuk		‘grass of bush-pig’
395.	Cowpea ²⁵	gyok		
396.	Small cowpea ²⁶	gyok ru noi		
397.	Striped bean	akyur gyo		
398.	Spiral cowpea	ngelwon		
399.	Bambara groundnut ²⁷	nzuk u dudum		
400.	Groundnut (Peanut) ²⁸	nzuk u poyep		
401.	Tiger-nut ²⁹	fwak		cf. Pe apwak ,
402.	Garden egg ³⁰	pyar		cf. Tarok mpyár , Pe mpe ,
403.	Okra ³¹	gombɔram		cf. Tarok ibwàm
404.	Chili pepper* (large) ³²	ɟida		< Hausa

¹³ (*Dioscorea guineensis*)¹⁴ (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)¹⁵ (*Dioscorea alata*)¹⁶ (*Colocasia esculenta*)¹⁷ (*Ipomoea batatas*)¹⁸ (*Plectranthus esculentus*)¹⁹ (*Solenostemon rotundifolius*)²⁰ (*Sorghum bicolor*)²¹ (*Pennisetum typhoideum*)²² (H. tamba) (*Eleusine coracana*)²³ (*Zea mays*)²⁴ (*Oryza sativa/ glaberrima*)²⁵ (*Vigna unguiculata*)²⁶ (H. waken sunsun)²⁷ (*Vigna subterranea*)²⁸ (*Arachis hypogaea*)²⁹ (*Cyperus esculentus*)³⁰ (*Solanum melongena*)³¹ (*Abelmoschus esculentus*)³² (*Capsicum frutescens*)

No.	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Commentary
405.	Onion (<i>Allium cepa</i>)	alwan		
406.	Melon (guna) ³³	yilə		
407.	Edible squash ³⁴	be		cf. Tarok iβik , Pe ti-pe , Sur bat , Berom ebe , Abuan ee-phe , Mambila fei . A Benue-Congo root: Nupe èbé
408.	Sorrel/roselle ³⁵	zaŋ		'leaf'
409.	Kenaf ³⁶ (<i>H. rama</i>)	rok		
410.	White sesame seeds ³⁷	ɓindam		
411.	Sesame leaves ³⁸	ɓindam		
412.	Cow-itch ³⁹	kaŋ bæ sonyit		
413.	Pawpaw* ⁴⁰	tuywe		
414.	Gourd (Generic)	yok		
415.	Gourd-bottle ⁴¹	boŋ		cf. Tarok abəŋ
416.	Gourd (spherical) ⁴²	nyiyok		
417.	Tobacco*	ataa		< Hausa
418.	Sugar-cane*	nyaŋa		
419.	Loofah ⁴³	bibu wuryit		'thing to wash with'
420.	Cola	matraŋ		
421.	Raphia/ bamboo palm (<i>Raphia</i> spp.)	kaŋa baar		
422.	Fan-palm ⁴⁴	kaŋa		cf. Pe n-kurkaŋ ,
423.	Wild date-palm ⁴⁵	zidoŋ		cf. Horom jjjòŋ
424.	Baobab ⁴⁶	tonuk		cf. Tarok ituŋ ,
425.	Silk-cotton Tree ⁴⁷	kum		cf. Rukul kum , but a widespread root.
426.	Shea tree ⁴⁸	raŋ		
427.	Locust tree ⁴⁹	roi		cf. Tarok ilur , Horom riyəl ,
428.	Locust fruit	amun roi		
429.	Locust-bean cakes	gyu		
430.	Tamarind ⁵⁰	ɗum		cf. Tarok itùlùm , Pe itum , Sur ndum ,
431.	Black plum ⁵¹	dudu		cf. Rukul a-tu

³³ (*Cucumis* spp)³⁴ (*Cucurbita pepo*)³⁵ (*H. yakuwa*) (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*)³⁶ (*Hibiscus cannabinus*)³⁷ (*H. Ri dī*) (*Sesamum indicum*)³⁸ (*H. karkashi*)³⁹ (*Mucuna pruriens*)⁴⁰ (*Carica papaya*)⁴¹ (*Lagenaria siceraria*)⁴² (*Cucurbita maxima*)⁴³ (*H. soso*) (*Luffa cylindrica*)⁴⁴ (*Borassus aethiopum*)⁴⁵ (*Phoenix reclinata*)⁴⁶ (*Adansonia digitata*)⁴⁷ (*Ceiba pentandra*)⁴⁸ (*Vitellaria paradoxa*)⁴⁹ (*Parkia biglobosa*)⁵⁰ (*Tamarindus indica*)⁵¹ (*Vitex doniana*)

7. The affinities of Yangkam

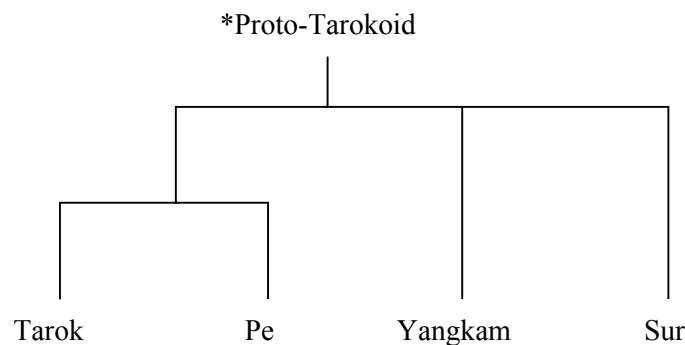
Yangkam has always been considered as part of Plateau, and has been classified with Tarok, although on very limited evidence. Yangkam has a number of ‘classic’ Niger-Congo roots, whose sources can be consulted in Westermann (1927) and Mukarovsky (1976-1977) (e.g. 1., **Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found.,**). Its affiliation with Plateau is also clearly correct, with widespread cognates in East Benue-Congo (e.g.).

Yangkam does not appear to show particular closeness to any other language in the Tarokoid group. Although it has virtually lost its nominal prefix system as has Sur, it seems quite possible this process is independent in the case of the two languages. The Tarokoid group consists of Tarok, Yangkam, Pe and Sur but excludes Toro (Turkwam) and Arum-Chessu, formerly listed as members (Blench 1996b). Yangkam shares lexical items exclusively with Tarok (e.g.), Sur (e.g.) and with Pe (e.g.).

Otherwise Yangkam seems to show no special relationship with any Plateau languages outside Tarokoid. It has a number of items shared with Ngas, but these are often also part of the general process of Chadic/Plateau interaction. It may share more lexical items with little-known neighbouring languages such as Kantana (Jarawan Bantu) and Boghom (Chadic) but these languages are themselves poorly known. It can be said that nothing in the language reflects the complex oral history recounted in §2.4.

Error! Reference source not found. presents tentative structure for the Tarokoid group showing the place of Yangkam, based on present knowledge.

Figure 1. Internal structure of Tarokoid



In view of the extremely threatened status of Yangkam, further work is a high priority.

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