

A preliminary assessment of Ndoola (Ndoro)

Bruce Connell and Roger Blench

Introduction (BC & RMB)

Ndoola, also known in the literature as Ndoro or Ndooro, and in Cameroon as Njoyame, is called la' ndòòla', or simply ndòòla', by its speakers. Little is known of this language. It has been classified most recently as Mambiloid (e.g. Blench 1993; Connell 2000 expresses reservations concerning its inclusion within Mambiloid), though over the years since it first became known to scholars, there have been diverging opinions as to its affiliation. Talbot (1923; Vol 4: 82) suggests Ndoola to be one of three branches of Jukun, along with Jukun and Tugun, while Meek (1931; Vol 2: 590) tentatively includes it in Johnston's Nki (= Bokyi?) group, but notes "it closely resembles Buti and Gandua (i.e. Vute and Wawa of Gandua, both of which are now considered Mambiloid). Johnston (1919) himself does not mention Ndoola. Westermann & Bryan (1952) note Meek's opinion, but they themselves list it as an isolated unit. Greenberg (1963) goes no farther than to include it as Bantoid, together with Mambila, and Vute, among others.

Location (BC& RMB)

According to Meek, found in villages of Galea, Ndahoro, Bente, Binam, Tawan, Sewa, Yakuba, Dombo, Nyakwe, Angbashi, and Dodeo [Cameroon]. Also at Rai Buba in French Cameroon. Work by Marieke Martin in March 2014 showed that there were only three remaining speakers in Dodeo, all over the age of eighty.

Crozier & Blench (1992): pop 10,000+; spoken in Sardauna and Gashaka LGAs, Taraba State; Njoyame spoken in one village (Dodeo) in Cameroon. Classified as Mambiloid (Blench 1993). Ethnologue gives pop of 50,000; also spoken in Bali LGA.

History (BC & RMB)

Meek (p. 590) At some point they were probably under the influence of the Jukun of Korofa and Wukari, but no real evidence of this. Subjugated by the Chamba in the mid 1700s [esp Chamba of Donga]; chiefly title 'ga' from Chamba. Subjugated by Fulani (of Gashaka) in the late 1900s; esp Ndoro at Yakuba, who were reduced to slavery; they adopted Islam but retained their former culture; but Fulani mixed with them, adopted their language.

The Language (BC & RMB)

The present analysis is based primarily on the speech of Pastor Nebula Si Gambo, 36, who is from Doori but now lives in Zongo Ajiya, with his father Mekwata and other family members. Mekwata assisted in the elicitation session, which took place in Zongo Ajiya on 22 Jan, 1999. Discussion is based almost entirely on analysis of lexical items, as time did not permit elicitation of grammatical characteristics. What grammatical information is adduced comes from extant sources, referred to at the appropriate points in the discussion.

Dialect variation.

Phonology (BC)

Consonants (Phonetic)

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labialised Velar	Glottal
Nasal	m	n	ɲ	ŋ	ŋ ^w	
Prenasalized	mb	nd	ndʒ	ŋg	ŋg ^w	
Stop	p b	t d	c ɟ	k g	k ^w g ^w	ʔ
Fricative	f v	s z	ʃ			h
Affricate			tʃ dʒ			
Approximate	w	r	j			
Lateral		l	ʎ			

Consonants (Phonemic)

Vowels (Phonetic)

Short

i		u
e		o
ɛ	ə	ɔ
u	a	

Long

		u
e		o
ɛ	a	

Vowels (Phonemic)

Examples of contrasts

Tone

Ndoola has three basic tones, High, Mid and Low.

Examples of tonal contrasts

Morphology (BC&RMB?)

Affixes on nouns: Both prefixes and suffixes are found on nouns, though not on all nouns. Many nouns show a prefix, a-, though this is not as common as has been observed in other dialects, e.g. that of Baissa (Blench ms, Koops, ms). There are a very few cases where a prenasalized C1 is in free variation with an oral C. The nasal element may reflect a former prefix. Many nouns also end in a suffix -a.

Pluralization: The majority of nouns in Ndoro are unmarked for plural. Of some 450 nouns in our database, only approximately 160 have plural forms. Where plurals are marked, it is done primarily through suffixization. The prefix a- is sometimes also used in plural forms where it is not used in the singular, i.e. both prefix and suffix mark the plural. (An a- prefix is also recorded on some singular forms, though it apparently occurs less frequently than in other Ndoola dialects (cf. Blench ms, Koops, ms). In our recording, the suffix is sometimes separated from the stem by a glottal stop; these cases have been transcribed in the database, but they may ultimately prove to be an affectation of the speaker for demonstration/recording purposes.

- -bu' (some exx with L have been recorded) used for [+animate] nouns. (Some possible exceptions exist, e.g. 'corpse', which is presumably no longer animate.)

- -a:i or -ai' for other nouns; it is not clear whether these are actually two separate suffixes. In many nouns the -a: is part of the singular form; where it doesn't occur in the singular it is added in the plural. (It may originally be a nominalizing suffix with no function of indicating number.) The true plural markers are therefore simply -i and -i'
- a few irregular forms or suppletives are recorded. In many of the suppletives, the appropriate suffix (-bu' or i) is also used.

Pluralization, therefore, is different from that found elsewhere in Mambiloid, where the -bV suffix is usually generalized and there is, in most languages, remnants of an earlier system (Connell 2000) so far not attested in Ndoro. [Check Vute (Thwing) for correspondences to -i and -i']

(from Meek)

Suffix bu used as optional plural marker

Suffix ti = 'this'

Present tense marker = saman

Past tense marker = agu

Negative = guro

Pronouns

Pronouns provide interesting evidence that Ndoola is Mambiloid. Table 1 shows the set of subject pronouns in Ndoola compared with two other languages, Tep and Nizaa. These show that Ndoola has an nV- affix, generally prefixed, but suffixed in the third person singular, which when deleted leaves a form which is clearly cognate with other Mambiloid pronouns.

Table 1. Ndoola pronouns in comparative perspective

Gloss	Ndoola	Tep	Nizaa
I	nímè	mē	mī
you (s.)	níbâ	bè	wū, dñi
he, she, it	wūnī	wō	ŋwū
we	nájā	jû	jí
you (pl.)	ninjīnā	ŋē	njú, dñwū
they	nébū	bō	ḡū, /ū, /wāā

Classification/Affiliation

Ndoola and Mambiloid (BC)

Ndoola and Bantoid (BC)

Ndoola and Jukunoid (RMB)

Ndoola and Platoid (RMB)

Synopsis (BC&RMB)

Ndoola wordlist (Doori lect)

Collected 22.01.99 by Bruce Connell and Roger Blench in Zongo Ajiya.

Informant: Pastor Nebula Si Gambo assisted by Mekwata.

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
head	húlā	húlā		cf. Mvanip hun but this is exceptional within Mambiloid
hair (head)	áwā húlā	áwā húlā		
eye	jírā	jírā	jírā-í	cf. Tep jiā , Nizaa jí r
nose	ŋ ^w úná ⁻	ŋ ^w úná ⁻	ŋ ^w úná ⁻ -í	common in Mambiloid though usually with <i>ŋ</i> -. Also cf. Horom wól pl. awól , Fyem du-wól pl. awól , Berom wól pl. bāwól , Kulu iweene , Wase nwán , cf. Oumiari nū`ŋ , Fyem núŋ , but a widespread Niger-Congo root
mouth	ŋ ^w ū	ŋ ^w ū	ŋ ^w ū-āí	Common in Mambiloid but with palatal nasal, e.g. Somyev ɲââ
tooth	īŋā	īŋā	īŋā	Could be metathesis of typical Mambiloid forms such as Lemele nómāl . # lam - roots are widespread in Niger-Congo. Also occurs in Atlantic as # mel -
tongue	mēlā	mēlā	mēlā	
cheek	ā-ŋjégā	āŋjégā	āŋjégā	This is clearly the same word as ‘jaw’. Cognacy depends on the consonant now appearing as a glottal stop
chin	ā-ʔálā	āʔálā	āʔálā	cf. common Mambiloid roots e.g. Tep dērè chin. Obolo í-dzèt , Buru e-dín (a-) , Tiv índí'ér , Noni ke-déw , Kenyang be-di , PEG*- dil`
beard	dōōrā	dōōrā	dōōrā	cf. ‘chin’.
jaw	ā-ʔárā	āʔárā	āʔárā	cf. ‘forehead’
face	ʃí	ʃí	ʃí-íá	cf. Ndung, Cambap si . Rukul iri-sil , but presumably a shift from ‘face’.
forehead	ʃí	ʃí	ʃí-íá	This root is common in Plateau as ‘eye’
ear	ʃō	ʃō	ʃō-āí	cf. Horom tòŋ , Fyem hutóŋ , Bo utó , Ningye tŋ , also throughout Tarokoid, but a PVC root # tuN -.
neck	mènā	mènā	á-mènā	cf. ‘to swallow’. Rukul mer , Yanƙam mər , Tarok məkən⁺ , ‘throat’ Ekoid mèl , Ba Mambila mènà . Widespread root for ‘throat’ reconstructed for PBC as #- meren in Blench (ms.)
throat	tōŋgā	tōŋgā	tōŋgā	cf. Tep tóŋ and other Mambiloid
arm, hand	ā-ŋgárā	āŋgárā	āŋgárā	The series of hand/arm lexemes are clearly all related to a basic root # ngar for ‘arm’. This is not general Mambiloid, but shows up in Vute ngár as ‘palm’
shoulder	ā-pāŋgārā	āpāŋgārā	āpāŋgārā	
armpit	ʃímʃíá	ʃímʃíá	ʃímʃíá	cf. Nizaa ʃāmʃá w̃
elbow	kōŋgārā	kōŋgārā	kōŋgārā	
hand (palm)	bāŋgārā	bāŋgārā	bāŋgārā	
finger	wōŋgārā	wōŋgārā	wōŋgārā-i	
nail	ā-fōŋgārā	āfōŋgārā	āfōŋgārā	
body	fúmā	fúmā	fúmā-i	
skin (b)	kwā	kwā	kwā-i	widespread Niger-Congo # kpa
chest	sīèmʃā	sīèmʃā	sīèmʃā-i	
breast (female)	māārā	māārā		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
belly	Λè	Λè		Niger-Congo root, originally meaning 'intestine'. e.g. PB #- dà , Ijo ilá . cf. Horom la , Yanƙam lwak although also Bokkos daár
navel	ʃúmā	ʃúmā	ʃúmā-i	cf. Mambiloid (Cambap) kúmbūn . Also Pe, Tarok igum , Yanƙam kum , Nindem ikom , also PLC *- kóp , Nizaa kómni , Vute cómè . Also, PB # kóbù Also in Chadic: Mwaghavul kúm , Tangale kúmbi
back	ʃòòrā	ʃòɔrā	ʃòòrā	
waist	ā-kwōbó	ākwōbó	ākwōbó-i	
hip	pē	pē	pē	
buttocks	pòríbī	pòríbī	pòríbī	
vagina	ā-dīénó	ādīénó	ādīénó	
penis	ʃūè	ʃūè		
leg	ā-ŋgúrā	āŋg ^w úrā	āŋg ^w úrā-i	
thigh	á-p ^h èrā	áp ^h èrā	áp ^h ègōŋāi	
knee	ɖzúra	ɖzúra	ɖzúra	
shin	ā-ɖzárā	āɖzárā	āɖzárā	
foot	pāngūrā	pāngūrā	pāngūrā	
toe	wòŋgūrā	wòŋgūrā	wò ŋgū?áí	
bone	ā-fú	āfú	āfú	cf. Fyem huhúp pl. ahúp , weakened from the more widespread # kup . Cf. Bo ukúp , Pe ukup , Ninzo ukfúkú , Tarok akúp and Yanƙam kup and PB #- kubi
skull	ā-fúhúlā	āfúhúlā	āfúhúlā	bone + head
rib	â-fútágāŋā	âfútágāŋā	âfútágāŋā-i	bone + x
brain	ŋgwihúlā	ŋgwihúlā	ŋgwihúlā	x + head
heart	sēmā	sēmā	sēmā-dá	cf widespread East Benue-Congo # tema
lungs	ā-bwōbā	ābwōbā		
stomach	lèbí	lèbí	-āi	
liver	ʃūèmā	ʃūèmā	-i	same as 'heart'
intestine	lèbí?áí	lèbí?áí		stomach + x
muscle	kālā	kālā		
vein	kālŋgááró	kālŋgááró		
blood	mūŋā ⁻	mūŋā ⁻		cf. Rukul manji , Also Chadic: Margi mámci , Huba mamfi ,
saliva	ā-ndūūrā	āndūūrā		
tear (n.)	mórá	mórá	mórá-i	cf. Alumu miyá , Toro amya
perspiration	â-mdū	âmdū	âmdū	
faeces	bí	bí	bí	cf. Nupe ebi ⁺ though # bi- is an extremely widespread Niger-Congo root
urine	ā-ligā	āligā	āligā	
breath	â-wē	âwē	âwē	
voice	wúná	wúná	wúná	
person	ŋjírā	ŋjírā	-bú	
man	nūŋwárā	nūŋwárā	-bú	
woman	nūŋwánā	nūŋwánā	-bú	
child	wòŋjé	wòŋjé		cf. Rukul a-wyen ,
children	wòŋjámābū	wòŋjámābū		
husband	núnā	núnā		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
wife	ɲwánā	ɲwánā		
mother	ɲwántámfórá	ɲwántámfórá		
father	támfórá	támfórá		
brother (elder, for male)	mōnā ⁻ m	mōnā ⁻ m	-bū	
sister (elder, for m.)	ādámínū	ādámínū	ādámūbū	
relations	fūmwánáʔè	fūmwánáʔè		
ancestors	būábū	būábū		
in-law	gūnā	gūnā		
friend	mbārā	mbārā	āmbārāmbū	
guest, stranger	ɖʒírā ⁻	ɖʒírā ⁻	ɖʒírābú	
chief	kúmā	kúmā	kúmābú	presumably cf. widespread East Benue-Congo #goma roots
doctor (native)	ɲjīkwánjīrá	ɲjīkwánjīrá		
blacksmith	ɲjīlèʔámā	ɲjīlèʔámā	ɲjīlèʔámābú	
hunter	hírā	hírā		
slave	bālā	bālā	bālābú	
thief	jē	jē	jēʔābú	Widespread #ye ‘to steal’ also nominalised.
witch	ʃírā	ʃírā	ʃírābú	
widow	ɲwánkūrā	ɲwánkūrā		
barren woman	ɲwândʒòŋā	ɲwândʒòŋā		
old person	nīgīérā	nīgīérā		
young man	ā-ʃēmā	āʃēmā		
maiden	wōɲwánʃēmā	wōɲwánʃēmā		
shadow	ɲjēlā	ɲjēlā		
corpse	ɖʒāŋā	ɖʒāŋā	ɖʒāŋā-i	
food	kwāmā	kwāmā		
water	mbúrá	mbúrá		
meat	ɲjāmā	ɲjāmā		#nam is a Niger-Congo root.
soup	wě	wě		
fat	nī	nī		cf. Berom nŋy,
oil	kúrā	kúrā		
palm wine	kúrā	kúrā		
sorghum beer	ɲgárā	ɲgárā		
peelings	wōn	wōn		
poison	ɖʒīè	ɖʒīè		
forest	lābā	lābā		
bush	wōōnā	wōōnā		
grass	wōōnā	wōōnā		
algae	è-rōŋē	èrōŋē	ārōŋā-í	
tree	ʃī	ʃī	-ʔái	Niger-Congo root #-ti ‘tree’
branch	jè	jè		
leaf	fú	fú		cf. Nupe fini,
bark (of tree)	fǒʃī	fǒʃī		x + tree
root	ɖʒāŋʃī	ɖʒāŋʃī		x + tree
seed	ɖʒūè	ɖʒūè	dūè-ʔái	
thorn	ā-ɲg ^w ārā	āɲg ^w ārā		
vine (gen.)	fūʃíátārōātārō	fūʃíátārātārō		
oil palm	bórā	bórā	-i	cf. Rukul abal, but an old root for raphia palm (see Mukarovsky)
raphia palm	è-ʃūrū	èʃūrū	èʃūā-i	
banana (Musa AAA)	ʃūē	ʃūē	-i	

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
pawpaw (<i>Carica papaya</i>)	ā-pèèǰĩ	āpèèǰĩ		
yam (gen.)	ŋgòlā	ŋgòlā	-ʔáí	
wild yam	ŋgòlwōnā	ŋgòlwōnā	-í	yam + bush
yam heap (mound)	á-lā	álā		
old cocoyam ¹	ā-kūrā	ākūrā	-í	
new cocoyam ²	á-kúdāmbā	ákúdāmbā	-í	
cassava	ŋgòǰĩ	ŋgòǰĩ	-ʔāí	
sweet potato	dāŋkálĩ	dāŋkálĩ	dāŋkálāí	< Hausa
beans (gen.)	ē-ǰĩē	ēǰĩē	-āí	
groundnut(s)	ŋg ^w ōmā	ŋg ^w ōmā	-í	
bird pepper chili	mātá	mātá	-ē	
maize	kwānā	kwānā	-í	
rice	jīwōnā	jīwōnā	jīwōnā-í	x + bush
sorghum	jīgā	jīgā	-í	< Fulfulde <i>jigaari</i> ?
millet	gārā	gārā	-í	
mushroom (gen.)	tīēŋā	tīēŋā	ātīēŋʔáí	
tobacco	tābāʔírā	tābāʔírā		
sesame seeds	j)mmā			
bitterleaf	è-kíē	èkíē		
sorrel, roselle	bāzārā	bāzārā	-í	
okra	tūrē	tūrē	tūrēíʔāí	
onion	sāpánāwā	sāpánāwā		
melon (other)	wéǰbē			
gourd (generic)	kārā			
gourd	m̄bōŋā	m̄bōŋā		
calabash	kārā	kārā	-í	Basa ee-kele , Təsu krɔ , Yakö lè-kòlò , Mama koro widespread # kum in West Africa see 'meat'
silk-cotton tree	kūmā			
animal (gen.)	njāmā	njāmā	-í	
tail	k ^w ōlā	k ^w ōlā	k ^w ōlā-í	
horn	gāmā	gāmā	āgāmā-í	cf. Vute gaam , Tep gam , Nnakenyare gaam ⁺ , Lamja gyema ⁺ , ǰi widespread pan-African wanderword
dog	ǰĩē	ǰĩē		
cat	wāípītánk ^w è	wāípītánk ^w è		
goat	vólá	vólá	-bú	cf Niger-Congo # -bu
he-goat	vólŋwánā	vólŋwánā		
he-goat, castrated	ʔāā	ʔāā		
sheep	vóltimbín	vóltimbín	-ābú	# tVma roots are widespread in West Africa
cow, zebu	niē	niē	-ābō	Niger-Congo # -na
donkey	ā- m̄fwénāfwénā	ām̄fwénāfwénā	-bú	
horse	vónā	vónā	āvónā-bú	
pig	ŋgōrē	ŋgōrē		
antelope (gen.)	təmbwórá			cf. next entry. This has arisen due to common West African English name for the duiker, which is 'hare'
'hare'	təmbwórá			
rabbit	təmbwórá	təmbwórá	-bú	

¹ (*Colocasia esculenta*)

² (*Xanthosoma mafaffa*)

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
squirrel (gen., types)	ɕʒālā	ɕʒālā		
bat, house	mvúrā	mvúrā	-kòbú	
rat (generic)	ndū	ndū	ándūābú	
giant rat	kódòkrwā	kódòkrwā	-kūbú	
cane rat	zāmā	zāmā	-bú	
porcupine (crested)	bíérā	bíérā	ābīērā-bú	
porcupine (brush-tailed)	séŋā			
monkey (gen.)	jöörā			
vervet monkey	ŋgānā	ŋgānā	-bú	cf. widespread #-kana
patas monkey	dáū	dáū	-ābú	
chimpanzee	bīē	bīē	-ābú	
baboon	ɕʒòrā	ɕʒòrā	-bú	
hyena	támbinā	támbinā	-bú	
bush-pig	ɕʒú	ɕʒú	āɕʒúākūbú	
buffalo, "bushcow"	jáárā	jáárā		
elephant	sāŋgāmā	sāŋgāmā		highly unusual name
hippopotamus	ɕʒáī	ɕʒáī		
leopard	mbárá	mbárá	-kūbú	cf. Ndung mpòār
lion	wūjígā	wūjígā	-kūbú	
giant snail	ā-kāɕʒírā	ākāɕʒírā	-bú	
fish	ndūŋā	ndūŋā	-bú	
catfish (Synodontis)	ā-gāmbū	āgāmbū	-ābú	
tilapia (spp.)	kāārā			
crab (land)	ʃjālā	ʃjālā	ā-ʃjālā-bú	Probably an affricated form of widespread #kara- roots (cf. Blench & Zeitlyn ? 1990)
tortoise	ʃjúlā	ʃjúlā	-bú	Probably an affricated form of widespread #kur- roots
crocodile	ŋgāānā	ŋgāānā	-bú	Yangkam (Tarokoid) gaan , Mambila Ba ŋ-gàgà , Tikar ŋ-gā , Mbula gandu Meta ŋ-gàn Manenguba *-gàndó , CB *-gàndó . No trace of the -du element in North Bantoid, so this may have been innovated in South Bantoid, or even Bantu proper. The ŋ- that appears fused to the stem in Mambiloid was presumably a functioning prefix early in the history of the group, and remains so in Grassfields languages. Niger-Congo #-wa Mukarovsky
snake (generic)	wé̄	wé̄	-ābú	
spitting cobra	fárúmā	fárúmā	-kūbú	
frog (types)	ktūŋwē	ktūŋwē	-bú	
toad	túk ^w órá	túk ^w órá	-bú	
lizard, agama	mbḗ	mbḗ	-ābú	
gecko	ŋ ^w imā	ŋ ^w imā	-bú	
chameleon	ŋgəmbə̄rā	ŋgəmbə̄rā	-bú	gecko + x
millipede	nnáɕʒúrā	nnáɕʒúrā	-bú	
bird	nōnā	nōnā	-bú	cf widespread East Benue-Congo #nun-
bird's nest	búlā	búlā	ā-búlā-i	
wing	kjēbā	cēbā	ā-kjēbā-i	

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
egg	ŋjɛ̀nā	ŋjɛ̀nā	ŋgjɛ̀nā-i	
duck	ā-bák ^w ē	ābák ^w ē	-ābú	
pigeon (domestic)	ōðmǎ			
fowl, chicken	ʃōōrā	ʃōōrā	ʃūābú	
cock	ʃōŋā	ʃōŋā		
guinea-fowl	ʃíʃáŋā	ʃíʃáŋā		
bush-fowl	túk ^w ārā	túk ^w ārā	-kūbú	cf widespread #kpara roots in East Benue-Congo
vulture	ʃúúbā	ʃúúbā	-bú	
cattle-egret	dāfīnā	dāfīnā	-bú	
owl	ŋg ^w ōŋā	ŋg ^w ōŋā	-bú	
village weaver	ŋgāā	ŋgāā	-rā	cf Benue-Congo #-ga
woodpecker	g ^w ōng ^w ōŋfī	g ^w ōng ^w ōŋfī	-ābú	
insect (gen.)	ŋg ^w ērā	ŋg ^w ērā	ŋg ^w ērā-bú	
housefly	ndzīē	ndzīē	ándzīē-ābú	? cognate with widespread #ciN- roots
cockroach	ə̀fīrā	ə̀fīrā	-bú	
cricket, giant	ŋgīrā	ŋgīrā	-bú	
mosquito	mwī	mwī	-ābú	
louse	mmāā	mmāā	āmāā-bú	
bee	nāŋ ^w ē	nāŋ ^w ē	-ābú	
mason wasp	māāmāwīrā			(<i>Belenogaster</i> spp.)
butterfly	má ^ˉ jābā	má ^ˉ jābā	-bú	
firefly	nzūlbí	nzūlbí	-ābú	
praying mantis	mág ^w ōŋtūk ^w ārā	mág ^w ōŋtūk ^w ārā	-bú	
ant (gen.)	ŋg ^w ōrā	ŋg ^w ōrā		
ant (soldier)	sīmā	sīmā	āsīmā-bú	
termite (gen.)	ādzē	ādzē	-ābú	
termite hill	dēlā	dēlā		
house-spider	ndará	ndará		
ground-spider	māmāwērā	māmāwērā	-bú	
scorpion	njā	njā	-ābú	
village compound	dzītūtīnjēn	dzītūtīnjēn		
farm	Λīēl	Λīēl		
fence	mūŋō	mūŋō		
house	kāmā	kāmā		
roof	zīmā	zīmā		
door	ʃūē	ʃūē		
room	mūnjīŋā	mūnjīŋā		
stool	lèzīmā	lèzīmā		
mat (gen.)	ndūŋā	ndūŋā	-i	
well (n.)	dírā	dírā	ādírā-i	
bundle	hòmbúrá	hòmbúrá		x + water
comb	būrā	būrā		
iron (metal)	ā-pārā	āpārā	-i	
axe	mbīēmā	mbīēmā	-i	
hoe (gen.)	ʃārā	ʃārā	ʃāā-i	
handle (of hoe)	tānā	tānā	-i	
knife	fō	fō	-āi	cf East Benue-Congo #-fu
matchet	bè	bè	ā-bē	cf East Benue-Congo #-be
	dá	dá	-i	cf widespread loanwords #-dā° ? ! Yoruba adā
adze	símá	símá	-i	
hammer	g ^w ōdí̄m	g ^w ōdí̄m	-āi	? ! fiauxa guduma
bow (weapon)	læ	læ	-āi	
arrow	pānā	pānā	-i	

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
quiver	gəŋdʒɪná	gəŋdʒɪná	-i	
rope	rəŋə	rəŋə	-i	
ladder	ʃɪtəŋə	ʃɪtəŋə	-i	
money	mbɪrɔ́	mbɪrɔ́		
cloth (material)	ʃárá	ʃárá	-i	
floor-beater	ərə́ m	ərə́ m		
bag (gen.)	ʃɔŋá	ʃɔŋá	-i	
bag (men's)	ā-bírǎ			
basket (gen.)	ʃūá	ʃūá	-i	
basket (back)	ā-ʃūápǎrǎ	āʃūápǎrǎ		
headpad	ā-kálá	ākálá	-i	cf Benue-Congo #-kata
broom	wōŋá	wōŋá	-i	
mortar	tíkírǎ	tíkírǎ	-i	
pestle	ʃɪtíkírǎ	ʃɪtíkírǎ		
winnowing tray	bájɪ	bájɪ		
grindstone (lower)	ʃɛlvūámá	ʃɛlvūámá		
grindstone (upper)	wōnārǎ	wōnārǎ		
pot (gen., clay)	wērǎ	wērǎ		
waterpot	wēembúrá	wēembúrá		
pots (others)	túnǎ	túnǎ		
gum, glue	mārǎ	mārǎ		
needle (a)	wá	wá	-ē	
snare	jɪlǎ	jɪlǎ	-i	
fish-trap	ā-párǎ	āpárǎ	-i	
spear	gəgōŋá	gəgōŋá	-i	
flute	ā-ʃɪmá	āʃɪmá		
horn (musical instrument)	ā-gāmá	āgāmá		cf 'animal horn'
iron gong	ʃɔŋá	ʃɔŋá		
ankle rattles	ā-nnɪŋá	ānnɪŋá		
drum	kódɛrǎ	kódɛrǎ		
fire	ŋgūrǎ	ŋgūrǎ		
fireplace	tōŋgūrǎ	tōŋgūrǎ	ātōŋwē´	
firewood	ʃúnə	ʃúnə		cf. widespread #kon- roots see eg Aten tson, Yemba Bafou ñ-tsqɪŋ.
ashes	ātōŋá	ātōŋá		Niger-Congo #-toŋ- (Mukarovsky 560)
charcoal	ʃǎnǎ	ʃǎnǎ	ā-ʃǎnǎ-i	cf widespread #kana root
smoke	dʒɪ	dʒɪ		
rubbish heap	kádɪēmá	kádɪēmá		
earth, soil	bélá			
stone	ʃɛlǎ	ʃɛlǎ	ʃɛlǎ-i	
sand	ŋjɪ	ŋjɪ		
mud	lɛbə	lɛbə		
clay (for pots)	ā-mārǎ	āmārǎ		
dust	ā´-tūrǎ	ā´tūrǎ		
hole (in ground)	hòòrǎ	hòòrǎ		
dew	ā-mɛ			Niger-Congo #-mee (Mukarovsky 366)
land, country	bélǎ	bélǎ		cf 'ground' e.g. Berom vwel, Rukul amwel
lake	gúmǎ			
swamp, wetland	lɛbə	lɛbə		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
hill	kūmǎ			cf. PJ *kùn, Obolo ó-gòòŋ, Langa kɔn, Nnakenyare kúsum, PEG *-kóŋ`
mountain	húnkúmā	húnkúmā		
road	kpâ	kpâ		
river	kwāngíŋgíénā	kwàngíŋgíénā		
river, large	kwānmǎlā	kwànmǎlā		
riverbank	bāmā	bāmā		
sky	ká biʔò	ká biʔò		
cloud	ám-kūná	ámkūná		
wind	āfūū	āfūū		widespread phonaesthetic form
rain (n.)	ʔò	ʔò		
lightning	ʔòŋwènám	ʔòŋwènám		
sun	ānjārā	ānjārā		
moon, month	ʃtē	ʃtē		? cognate with Niger-Congo #fye forms
star	sārā	sārā		
rainy season	kó zārā	kó zārā		
dry season	jángò	jángò		
harmattan	ám-kūná	ámkūná		cf. cloud
day	kó njāgōŋ	kó njāgōŋ		
dawn	wāká	wāká		? loan
morning	mbīírā	mbīírā		
evening	kó rinā	kó rinā		
night	bólá	bólá		
today	njārē	njārē		
yesterday	jālārè	jālārè		
tomorrow	ʃērǎ	ʃērǎ		
day after tomorrow	ā-tīērē	ātīērē		
year	rūnā	rūnā		
world	bíél kūrā	bíél kūrā		
illness	ʃjènā	ʃjènā	-i	
wound	bórēmā	bórēmā		
boil (n)	mb ^w órā	mb ^w órā	-ē	
diarrhoea	lèlū	lèlū		
eczema	ʔèénā	ʔèénā		
smallpox	ʔá ^m -tārā	ʔá ^m -tārā		
goitre	tìmfè	tìmfè		
famine	ā-zòŋā			
hunger	sèèmwè	sèèmwè		
war	tjimā	tjimā		cf Batu ʈɔm, Obolo è-tím, Bekwara ù-tje',
lie (n.)	hòmʃǎbá	hòmʃǎbá		
laughter	bīēnā	bīēnā		
death	ʃǎ [~]	ʃǎ [~]		
work (n.)	ʃwāmā	ʃwàmā		cf widespread Niger-Congo #tom-
divination (gen.)	njèsūʃǎlā	njèsūʃǎlā		
masquerade	njèná	njèná		
language	lǎé	lǎé		
word	námʔǎl	námʔǎl		
name	jélā	jélā		
story	mārā	mārā		
proverb	gāā	gāā		
prophecy	ʃǎlā	ʃǎlā		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
news	ā-wānāmā	āwānāmā		
song	bínō	bínō	-í	cf East Benue-Congo #byn-
medicine (gen.)	ŋgālā	ŋgālā		cf
place	ndʒí´	ndʒí´		
market	ʃībā	ʃībā		
thing	á-mā	ámā		
sleep (n.)	nímâ	nímâ		
god	ā-māmā	āmāmā		
grave	múrā	múrā		
shoe	kwáŋgūrā	kwáŋgūrā	-i	
running, race	lūmā	lūmā		
eat	jíé	jíé		
chew	èjī	èjī		
drink	ŋwā	ŋwā		
bite	nām	nām		Niger-Congo #-dum e.g. CB #dúm- but also TR forms with n- e.g. Avatime némî , also Gur Mampruli nõ . (Mukarovsky 110)
lick	bīèlā	bīèlā		
swallow	mèn	mèn		see commentary under ‘neck’
suck (e.g. breast)	ámā	ámā		Niger-Congo #-muN- (Mukarovsky 384)
suck (e.g. orange)	ámā	ámā		
spit	ndūā	ndūā		
blow (with mouth)	èwûl	èwûl		
give birth	tórá	tórá		
die	ʃā	ʃā		
marry	bǎ	bǎ		
sleep (v.)	mbònā	mbònā		
awaken (someone)	wōŋā	wōŋā		
lie (down)	bōnθēā	bōnθēā		
stand (up)	jémā	jémā		
enter	ʌé̄	ʌé̄		
come	gə̀bō	gə̀bō		
go out, exit	érūā	érūā		
go (finally)	ē	ē		
return	hīrā	hīrā		
accompany	tōgə̀má	tōgə̀má		
walk	gā	gā		
run	lūā	lūā		
climb	ʔāŋ	ʔāŋ		
fall	ʃònām	ʃònām		
jump	múŋā	múŋā		
dance	bínō	bínō		This root was originally identified by B & S as a defining innovation but it has now become clear it is widespread in West Africa. cf. Degema ʃɛɛ , Tiv vine , Proto-Igboid é-bō cf. Kulu wók , Efik wók ,
swim	wú̄	wú̄		
ride (e.g. horse)	ʔāŋ	ʔāŋ		
wash (body)	wúlā	wúlā		
drag	dúgā	dúgā		
pull	dúrā	dúrā		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
drop	ʃṵsḗdḗ	ʃṵsḗdḗ		
rub	ʃā	ʃā		
wipe	rūā	rūà		
put on (clothes)	sūā	sūà		
plait (hair)	húlfè	húlfè		
know	jèʃḗ	jèʃḗ		
remember	rēmʃṵnā	rēmʃṵnā		
forget	njánθā	njánθā		
count	ākwān	ākwān		
want (v.)	jírè	jírè		
begin	ásíjā	ásíjā		
continue	gḗkḗʃāl	gḗkḗʃāl		
finish	fínḗ'm	fínḗ'm		
call	gḗbó	gḗbó		
send	támā	támā		
say (+ direct speech)	nāmá	nāmá		
speak (a language)	nāmá	nāmá		
ask (question)	âmpíkī	âmpíkī		< Fulfulde ?
reply (question)	jírá	jírá		
ask, beg	mvô	mvô		
refuse (request)	ʃām	ʃām		
laugh (v.)	wōlā	wōlā		
sing	dūè	dūè		
weep (cry)	lēlā	lēlā		
resemble	ādōṅbān	ādōṅbān		
see	jé	jé		
smell (v.)	ṅwārā	ṅwārā		
hear	wā	wā		At least PBC #- gbo but widespread weakening. e.g. Nupe wó , Horom wo , Daka wúk ,
listen	gíṅó	gíṅó		
cook (v.)	nǎ			
roast	ḗwè	ḗwè		
burn	jīlā 'm	jīlā 'm		
fry	ākāṅ	ākāṅ		At least PBC #- kaṅ -. e.g. Nupe kā+ , PUC *kaṅa ,
grind	vū	vū		
pour	wúrâ	wúrâ		
sweep	jè	jè		
tie (e.g. bundle)	dánjā	dánjā		
untie	wā	wà		
wring (clothes)	kām	kām		
fold (e.g. cloth)	hè'n	hè'n		
stir (soup)	jīnā	jīnā		
shake	jīnā	jīnā		
sharpen	érō	érō		cf. Plateau e.g. Tarok lwà , Ce lǎ ,
do, make	sá	sá		
work (v.)	ʃūāmā	ʃūāmà		
carve (e.g. wood)	njánjā			
cut (e.g. cloth)	vò kàā tḗ	vò kàā tḗ		
cut (e.g. wood)	vò ʃūā tḗ	vò ʃūā tḗ		
cut down (e.g. tree)	vòā	vòà		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
tear (v.)	dūʔā	dūʔā		
dig	tímā	tímā		
plant (crop)	dúè	dúè		
weed (with knife, hoe)	làè	làè		
uproot (tuber)	ɖʒūrā	ɖʒūrā		
grow	kúnū	kúnū		
hatch (egg)	ʔám	ʔám		
dry in sun	ʃíŋá	ʃíŋá		
become dry	ʔòmāmʔòmā	ʔòmāmʔòmā		
buy (general)	āgūrū	āgūrū		
sell	gūjē	gūjē		
steal	jē	jē		Niger-Congo #-yi (Mukarovsky 133)
gather (things)	ŋgúbān	ŋgúbān		
take	bēē	bēē		
give	mbūā	mbūā		
receive	bēè	bēè		
hunt	āhí r	āhí r		
catch	āhè	āhè		
throw (e.g. stone)	ndʒūē	ndʒūē		
shoot	kwágūrā	kwágūrā		
pierce, stab	túnū	túnū		cf. East Benue-Congo #-top- 'to throw spear'. Mada tō 'pierce', Takum tō, 'to stab',
kill	fǎrā	fǎrā		
slaughter (animal)	jénā	jénā		
fight (v.)	èrǎŋā	èrǎŋā		
choose	āʃā	āʃā		
add to	āhī 'nbā n	āhī 'nbā n		
play (games)	wèlá	wèlá		
beat (drum), flog	nāŋā	nāŋā		
break (e.g. pot)	ʔāā	ʔāā		
break (e.g. stick)	jūkūmā	jūkūmā		
build (house)	āmā	āmā		
mould (pot)	māwērā	māwērā		
tie (e.g. animal)	dāŋā	dāŋā		
fall (e.g. rain)	ʔeʃǒŋ	ʔeʃǒŋ		
feel (cold etc.)	áŋwèlá	áŋwèlá		
flow (water etc.)	siáθān	siáθān		
fly (v.)	jílò	jílò		
mix	hē 'nbān	hē 'nbān		
open (door)	kūmā	kūmā		
surpass	fūŋā	fūŋā		
twist (e.g. rope)	ŋjānā	ŋjānā		
be bent	gwāmá	gwámá		
be heavy	úrúrá	úrúrá		
be on	káʃúé	káʃúé		
be rotten	wènóm	wènóm		
be short	m`bàrá	m`bàrá		
be smooth	zí`lá	zí`lá		
be sweet (sugar)	ūdūèná	ūdūèná		
be bitter	ūdūrā	ūdūrā		
black	jīrā	jīrā		
white	wōrā	wōrā		

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
red	hīlá	hīlá		
wet	wèlá	wèlá		
dry (a.)	wōmá	wōmá		
cold	wèlá	wèlá		
hot (as fire)	jílá	jílá		
new (of thing)	hārā	hārā		
one	jírè	jírè		‘six’ suggests this was originally with an initial velar. If so, then cognate with widespread #kin roots, but exceptional in Mambiloid
two	hāj̄lā	hāj̄lā		cf. Somyev hààn , Tep há̄
three	tāj̄rā	tāj̄rā		A common Niger-Congo root
four	njā̄	njā̄		Common Mambiloid root though palatal in Ndoola is exceptional
five	sōnī	sōnī		? cognate with common Niger-Congo root # tooni . cf. Ndung ʃû.n ,
six	sōŋkírè	sōŋkírè		
seven	sōŋk ^w ālā	sōŋk ^w ālā		
eight	sōŋtāārā	sōŋtāārā		
nine	sōŋnjā̄	sōŋnjā̄		
ten	jóbēt	jóbēt		Exceptional within Mambiloid though Tep has yo
eleven	jōbétāzinjírè	jōbétāzinjírè		
twelve	jōbétāzinhālā	jōbétāzinhālā		
fifteen	jōbétāzinsōnī	jōbétāzinsōnī		
twenty	ɖʒāŋ	ɖʒāŋ		Not Mambiloid
thirty	ɖʒāŋkájōbét	ɖʒāŋkájōbét		
forty	nālā	nālā		
fifty	nālākájōbét	nālākájōbét		
sixty	njētāārā	njētāārā		
eighty	njēnjā̄	njēnjā̄		
hundred	njēsōmōnī	njēsōmōnī		
I	nīmè	nīmè		See comment in introduction
you (2PS)	nībā	nībā		
he, she, it	wūnī	wūnī		
we	nájā	nájā		
you (2PP)	ninjīnā	ninjīnā		
they	nébū	nébū		
who	wūnī̄	wūnī̄		
which	n´títā	n´títā		
what	tīnígé̄	tīnígé̄		
where	kón:ɖʒítā	kón:ɖʒítā		
four hundred	nènjénétʃanjā̀	nènjénétʃanjā̀		
waterlily	ātīèŋbúrá	ātīèŋbúrá	-kwèī	
seed of maize	ɖʒūěkwānā	ɖʒūěkwānā		
widower	núnkūrā	núnkūrā		
bull	niēnūŋg ^w ārā	niēnūŋg ^w ārā		
ram	tākāmā	tākāmā		
squirrel (tree)	tūljī	tūljī		
salt	mb ^w ōŋ	mb ^w ōŋ		
sickle	bām:sā̄	bām:sā̄	-i	
bridge	nɖʒārā	nɖʒārā	-i	
white carrot	kúkwā	kúkwā	-āi	
Bambara groundnuts	ŋg ^w ōmtūŋā	ŋg ^w ōmtūŋā	-i	

Gloss	Morphology	IPA	Plural	Comment
palm fruit	hūlpórá	hūlpórá		
flute (type)	gòòjē	gòʌjē		
bark of dog	bō̄	bō̄		
come out	ézinā	ézinā		
when	njātá̄	njātá̄		

Conclusion: the classification of Ndoola

The Ndoola language is problematic to classify, as it has lost much of the morphology characteristic of Bantoid languages. However, its general affinities are significantly greater with Mambiloid than any of the other languages in the region. There seems to be no particular link with either Jukunoid or Bendi, two suggestions in the earlier literature. In particular its pronominal system is strongly reminiscent of other Mambiloid languages. It definitely shows more affiliation with Tep, Ndung and other languages on the periphery than with Mambila itself.

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