

The Isu, or Isubu language is spoken in a single village, Bimbia, which is a few miles along the coast from Limbe, in northwest Cameroun. The village is only accessible by a bad road, although the recent opening of a new road to a nearby army barracks has made the journey shorter. The Isu language is clearly related to Mokpe, or Bakweri, and indeed it has largely disappeared in favour Mokpe and Pidgin English. There are probably about 600 speakers and semi-speakers. Although fishing is the major subsistence activity, few speakers know the names of more than a few common species in Isu and noun plurals have largely disappeared. A visit was made on 26/2/10 and the speaker who gave us this information, Peter Maliva, was said to be one of only who retains knowledge of this technical vocabulary, and even he had forgotten the names of one or two common species. It is therefore probably the last time this type of material can be collected.

Table 1. Isu fish names

sg.	pl.	English	Latin	Pidgin	Comments	Page
ndòmí	-	shark, generic				
è-tùmátumá	βè-	guitarfish	<i>Rhinobatos spp.</i>			51
lùbà	mùbà	stingray	<i>Dasyatis spp.</i>			63
ndéli	-	Atlantic tarpon	<i>Tarpon atlanticus</i>			85
m̀bè		moray eel	<i>Muraena spp.</i>		probably also the snakefish <i>Pisodonophis sp.</i>	89
efaka		bonga shad	<i>Ethmalosa fimbriata</i>			101
mwéò	néò	razorfish	<i>Ilisha africana</i>			103
kèndá	-	sea catfish	<i>Arius heudelotii</i>			107
è-yàáká	βè-					
ijɔmɔ		tongue sole	<i>Cynoglossus spp.</i>			F27
m̀-̀siláŋgá	m̀-	half-beak	<i>Hemiramphus brasiliensis</i>			121
m̀-̀nyányé	m̀-	flying fish	<i>Cheilopogon sp.</i>			125
m̀-̀klá ványá	m̀-	needlefish	<i>Tylosaurus crocodilus crocodilus</i>			127
káŋgá	imi-	comber	<i>Serranus cabrilla</i>		? borrowed name this is usually a freshwater fish	159
l̀-̀mbù	m̀-	comb grouper	<i>Mycteroperca rubra</i>			161
̀ngèlé	?	dara	<i>Parakuhlia macrophthalmus</i>			175
m̀-̀tòndò	m̀-	crevally jack, kingfish	<i>Caranx hippos</i>			195-9
̀-̀gòvé	imi-	longfin pompano	<i>Trachinotus goreensis</i>		probably also <i>Trachinotus maxillosus</i>	207, F19

Isu fish names

sg.	pl.	English	Latin	Pidgin	Comments	Page
sê		threadfin	<i>Polydactylus quadrifilis</i>			
è-kèkè	βè-	moony	<i>Psettias sebae</i>		+ Alectes 289-293	289
è-vòmávòmá	pè-	sea chub	<i>Kyphosus sectatrix</i>			291
ñ-gòwé	-					224
è-pòndzò	-	biglip grunt	<i>Plectorhynchus macrolepis</i>			235
mò-sòbò	mè-	cassava croaker	<i>Pseudotolithus elongatus</i>			279
nyèmbè	-	longneck croaker	<i>Pseudotolithus typus</i>			F66
nyèndì	-	bobo croaker	<i>Pseudotolithus senegalensis</i>			275
m̀bòkó	-	mullet	<i>Liza falcipinnis</i>			309-315
mò-káù	mè-	barracuda	<i>Sphyraena guachancho</i>			319
mò-βándò	mè-		<i>Coris atlantica, C. julis</i>		? parrotfish	329
m̀bàlì	-	hairtail	<i>Trichiurus lepturus</i>			351
è-kò yá mòké	pè-	sole	<i>Solea spp., Dicologlossa spp.</i>			391
̀ndù̀ndù̀ndù̀mé		pufferfish	<i>Ephippion guttiferum, Lagocephalus laevigatus</i>			409
nyàmà ñgoba		porcupine fish	<i>Diodon hystrix, Chilomycterus spinosus mauretanicus</i>		= 'fish porcupine'	415
Others						
̀ndzò̀ndzì		whale				
lì-yòsò	vi-	dolphin				
mò-sai	mè-	prawn				
è-ku	vè-	turtle			all spp.	
èkà ùmà		jellyfish				

References

- Seret, B. & P. Opic 1997. [2nd ed.] *Poisson de mer de l'Ouest Africain tropical*. Paris : ORSTOM.
 Schneider, Wolfgang 1990. *Field guide to the commercial marine resources of the Gulf of Guinea*. Rome : FAO.
 Vivien, J. 1991. *Faune du Cameroun: guide des mammifères et poissons*. Yaoundé : GICAM.

Maritime terminology

sg.	pl.	English	Comments
wòlò	mòlò	boat	
pàkì		paddle	
dió		anchor	
yóvi	vóvi	hook	
m̀b̀èndú		float	
li-bitò	mà-	weight	
èfèsè		net	
k̀t̀t̀		fish-fence	
ndembá		fish-trap I	
iṣ̣ngé		fish-trap II	
m̀b̀ùndzà		cast net	
mwándzà		sea	
li-wó	mà-	beach	
ṅg̣̣y		storm I	
è-wùli	βè-	storm II	
moliyo mondene		high tide	
moliyo mosali		low tide	
lif̣̣		whirlpool	
li-k̀l̀è		small wind from land	
li-ẁng̀ò	mà-	sea-breeze	
è-tiyà	βè-	current	
li-k̀k̀é		dry season Nov Mar	
è-vùvá		wet season Mar Oct	