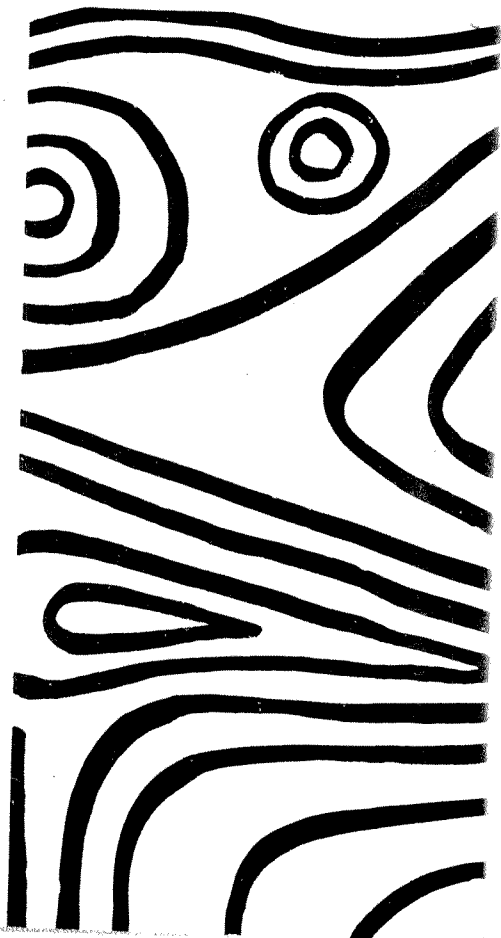


DEFAKA: Ijo's closest linguistic relative

CHARLES E.W. JENEWARI

DELTA SERIES
no. 2



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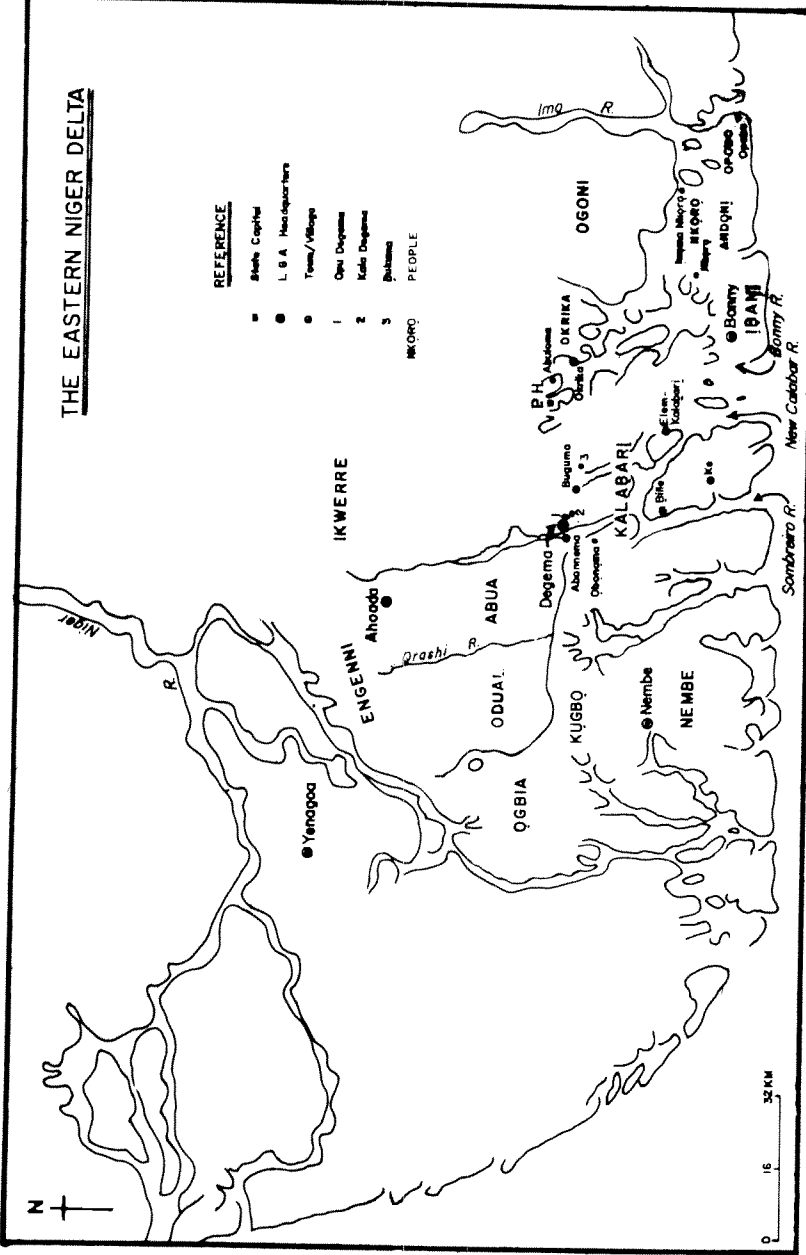
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THE EASTERN NIGER DELTA



REFERENCE

- State Capital
- L.S.A. Headquarters
- Town/Village
- 1 Oge Duguma
- 2 Kulu Duguma
- 3 Ibibio

PEOPLE

● NKQRQ

INTRODUCTION*

Ijọ is notable among Niger-Congo languages for its relative isolation within the language family. Westermann (1927) tentatively classified it as belonging to the Kwa group; and Greenberg, after placing it in a group of its own in his 1955 classification, also placed it among the Kwa languages in 1963 (Greenberg, 1963).

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I wish to thank Professors Alagoa and Williamson for drawing my attention to the poor state of knowledge of the Defaka people and their language. Kay Williamson deserves additional thanks for her useful comments on earlier versions of this paper. I would also like to thank all my Nkqrq and Defaka informants for their cooperation. Special thanks go to Chiefs P. Diepiriye, Gladday M. Mbre, Aaron Asiah, Raymond Maduka, Messrs. L. Kpokpo, C.I. Alagoa, J.A. Asiah, F. Igbigiyemieari, and Mrs. Naomi Diepiriye. Finally, Mr. E.I. Wokoma of the Rivers State Ministry of Housing and Environment, Port Harcourt, also deserves thanks for the accompanying map.

Greenberg (1963) uses the term 'Kwa' to refer to one of six coordinate branches of the Niger-Congo family of languages, the other branches being West Atlantic, Mande, Gur, Benue-Congo, and Adamawa-Eastern. But he expresses doubts as to the validity of treating Kwa and Benue-Congo as coordinate branches of Niger-Congo, for the two language groups 'are particularly close to each other' (p.39). And more recently, Elugbe and Williamson (1977) have reached the conclusion that 'Benue-Congo and Kwa form a single subfamily of Niger-Congo', which they label 'Benue-Kwa'.

Williamson (1965:4, 1971:281, 1972:1-2) doubts the classification of Ijọ as a Kwa language, for 'Ijọ differs in many respects from both typical Kwa languages and typical Benue-Congo languages', and tentatively suggests that 'if Kwa and Benue-Congo are to be regarded not as separate, co-ordinate branches, but as one large branch, then Ijọ will fit easily into this large branch as a special sub-group, and it will not be necessary to assign it arbitrarily to either Kwa or Benue-Congo' (1972:2).

In a recent reclassification of Niger-Kordofanian languages Bennett and Sterk (1977) have independently proposed a classification of Ijọ that is consonant with Williamson's suggestion: Ijọ is classified as constituting one of the three branches of South Central Niger-Congo (henceforth SCNC), which subsumes the former Kwa and Benue-Congo branches; the other two branches are Western SCNC (equivalent to Greenberg's Western Kwa, minus Kru) and Eastern SCNC, comprising the rest of Kwa and all of Benue-Congo. Thus, according to Bennett and Sterk, Ijọ is less closely related to languages such as Yoruba, Èdo, and Igbo than these are to Greenberg's Benue-Congo languages. Bennett and Sterk's subgrouping is however only tentative, as is made clear in the following statement (1977:251):

'The position of Ijọ like that of Kru is ambiguous Some evidence links it with East SCNC, other data indicate that it should be classed as a coordinate branch, and a position as an independent branch of Central Niger-Congo or even Niger-Congo is not inconceivable. Many of the possible cognates are much changed, thereby distinguishing Ijọ sharply from the remainder of SCNC'.

It is not clear whether or not the ambiguity in the position of Ijọ can ever be satisfactorily resolved. However, it is encouraging to report that a new Niger-Congo language, which appears to be the closest linguistic relative of Ijọ, has recently been discovered in the Niger Delta. The language in question is Defaka (pronounced with a High-Low-Low tone pattern), better known to the outside world by the Ijọ appellation Afakani (pronounced with low tones). It is expected that the discovery of this language will lead to some refinement of the Bennett and Sterk classification.

This paper reports for the first time data from Defaka, and is divided into two parts. The first part provides information on the social background of the Defaka people, including language use in the community. The second part, which is the main thrust of the paper, deals with the nature of the affinity between Defaka and Ijọ.

PART I

Until very recently, the Defaka were a historically obscure people. Alagoa (1972:165) is probably the first scholar to report about them in the historical literature: 'The town of Nkqrq has within it a ward, Afakani, whose members speak a completely different language. The Afakani language and traditions suggest a connection with groups like the Abuloma of Okrika or Udekama (Degema)

of Kalabari'. His impression about their cultural-linguistic relationship is, however, in error, if the above statement is taken literally. For even a cursory inspection of lexical items in Defaka, Abuloma, and Udekama (Degema) clearly reveals that Defaka is not specially related to either of the other two languages. Nor do the Defaka people ever refer to any special historical (= ethnic) connections with either of these two peoples. But this was not really the interpretation the author intended (Alagoa, personal communication). What he had in mind at the time of writing the above-mentioned work is the common settlement pattern in the present-day Eastern Niger Delta in which certain non-Ijò-speaking communities exist as cultural-linguistic enclaves within the political domain of their respective numerically superior Ijò-speaking neighbours.

The Defaka are a small community whose tribal territory is fragmented geographically. One portion of them live, as Alagoa correctly noted, in the Afakani ward of Nkòrò town. The dominant population in this town is that of the Nkòrò and Ijò people whose closest (linguistic) relatives are the Kalabari, Okrika, and Ipani (Bonny). To the South of Nkòrò town lie the Opobo and the Andoni; to its North lie the Ogoni and the Ndoki; to its North-West lie the Okrika; and to its West lie the Bonny people. The other portion of the Defaka-speaking community live on the isolated island of Iwoma Nkòrò (founded in 1884 as an offshoot of the Afakani ward in Nkòrò) near the Ogoni town of Kono.

The history of migration of the Defaka is a long narrative of the adventures of a small people constantly harassed by their numerically superior neighbours. According to the tradition narrated to the author, the original home of the Defaka was in the Iselema area, that is, in the Warri region of the present-day Bendel State of Nigeria. From there, they moved into the Central Delta and thence into the Eastern Delta, where they lived close to

the Abuloma people in the Okrika territory. Later they abandoned this Okrika settlement and lived close to the Udekama (Degema) people in the Engenni area. There they left for Abalama Olotombia in the Bonny territory, and later settled near Bodo in Ogoni. From there, they moved to Iyoba in the Andoni country, and later left this settlement to establish Olomama Nkòrò (Old town). This old site is now abandoned except for a few fishermen who use it as a fishing camp. From Olomama Nkòrò, they finally moved to the present-day Nkòrò town.

The Nkòrò relate a similar tradition of migration. From Gbelegbeleala in the Central Delta, they moved into the Okrika territory and later left for Iyoba in the Andoni country. From there, they proceeded to found Olom Nkòrò, which is geographically contiguous to Olomama Nkòrò town.¹ Alagoa (1972:169) tentatively dates the establishment of the Nkòrò in the Kòn-tòrù (Fishing River) region or Eastern Delta Fringe (i.e., the portion of the Niger Delta occupied by the Ogoni, Andoni, Opobo, and Nkòrò) before the end of the seventeenth century.

One interesting point that seems to emerge from these oral traditions is that the Defaka and Nkòrò peoples have been living together as neighbours prior to the establishment of Nkòrò town. Since they were at Iyoba, they have either been one community, or have lived as separate but in geographically contiguous communities. It is also likely that this kind of contact began while both of them were in the Okrika territory. It will therefore be assumed in this paper that the Nkòrò and the Defaka have been in a contact situation for an extended period of time.

¹ Olomama Nkòrò, Olom Nkòrò, and Nkòrò town stand on the same land mass.

In spite of the fact that they are ethnically distinct peoples, the Nkq̄r̄q̄ and the Defaka would like to be seen in foreign eyes as one people, going under a common name, Nkq̄r̄q̄. The Nkq̄r̄q̄ consider the K̄n-t̄q̄r̄ region an environment infested with enemies; and in this region they are the smallest in terms of numbers. According to the 1963 Nigeria Census, the Nkq̄r̄q̄-Defaka people number only 5,468, distributed as follows: Nkq̄r̄q̄ town 4,557, Iw̄q̄ma Nkq̄r̄q̄ 509, Nkq̄r̄q̄ villages 420. The Defaka have assimilated Nkq̄r̄q̄ culture to such a degree that today it appears that the only cultural element that clearly bears the stamp of Defaka identity is the language. In almost every other thing, in their economic pursuits, marriage system, religious life, and recreational activities, the Defaka are indistinguishable from their culturally and numerically dominant neighbours.

Linguistically, the Defaka are an interesting people. Being in frequent contact with their various numerically superior neighbours, the Defaka cannot but maintain a polyglot tradition. Most Defaka are bi- or even trilingual in the native languages spoken in the Eastern Delta Fringe, namely Nkq̄r̄q̄, Defaka, Igbo, Obolo (Andoni), and Kana (Ogoni). There are in fact some Defaka people who possess a knowledge of all these languages.² Some Defaka people do not even know that there exists another native language, besides Nkq̄r̄q̄, in the community. Those who can speak the native Defaka tongue are mostly middle-aged to elderly people, and these constitute a rapidly decreasing minority. But even among these people the language is rarely spoken; speakers resort to it usually for the purpose of cutting out of communication those who they know are ignorant of it. Children grow up in the two Defaka communities speaking Nkq̄r̄q̄ as a first language although there appears to be a stronger Defaka tradition in Iw̄q̄ma than in Nkq̄r̄q̄ town.

² 'Knowledge' of a language here includes what Robert J. Pietro calls 'receptive bilingualism', that is, understanding a second language without being able to speak it.

The Defaka, as they themselves admit, do not care if a man does not speak Defaka but speaks Nkq̄r̄q̄ well. In other words, they regard Nkq̄r̄q̄ as essentially a language of integration. It therefore appears, looking at the present trend of events, that Defaka is being gradually pushed to extinction. One might add that a complete shift to Nkq̄r̄q̄ is likely to come sooner in Nkq̄r̄q̄ town than in Iw̄q̄ma. The reason for saying this is fairly obvious. At Iw̄q̄ma Nkq̄r̄q̄, the Defaka are in the midst of alien people -- the Ogoni, and relations between these two groups are far from cordial. Under such conditions, one would expect the Defaka to cling more intimately to their native language. For, 'the small language or dialect', Michael West (1958) tells us, 'is the natural and important distinguishing feature of the small group. Anything which, while common to the group, tends to differentiate it from other groups tends to intensify the sense of solidarity and of distinctness. Of all instruments for the intensification of group individuality, language is undoubtedly the most powerful'

After Nkq̄r̄q̄, the next most active language among the Nkq̄r̄q̄ and Defaka people is Igbo. Igbo is a legacy they inherited from the political influence of Opobo, whose vehicular language is Igbo. Since the days of the Oil Rivers Trade, the Opobo have been the most dominant group in the Eastern Delta Fringe. This influence has manifested itself in the widespread use of Igbo in the whole area. Under the former Eastern Nigeria set-up, the Opobo, Andoni and Nkq̄r̄q̄ formed one division, with Opobo town as headquarters. The language of the native court at Opobo which served the three communities was Igbo. Most of the teachers who taught in Nkq̄r̄q̄ and Andoni schools were of Opobo origin; consequently, Igbo was a language of instruction in these schools. The language of evangelization throughout the whole division was also Igbo. Today, however, Igbo has ceased to be the language of the church and of the lower classes of the elementary school at Nkq̄r̄q̄. But it still functions as the language of trade for the different peoples that inhabit the K̄n-t̄q̄r̄ region, as well as the

language of the joint Nkq̄r̄q̄q̄-Andoni court sessions at Unyeada, in Andoni clan.

The native languages of the area least spoken by the Defaka are Kana (Ogoni) and Obolo (Andoni). The presence of any of these languages in the linguistic repertoire of a Defaka usually reflects the geographical location of that particular individual. The Defaka at Iw̄q̄ma, because he is nearer to, and has more direct contact with, the Ogoni than with the Andoni, is more likely to speak Kana than Obolo. Conversely, his counterpart at Nkq̄r̄q̄q̄, by reason of his closer contact with the Andoni, is more likely to speak Obolo than Kana.

PART II

The various Niger Delta peoples who have been in contact with the Defaka speak languages which fall into six linguistic groups. These are: (1) Ij̄q̄ group, (2) Lower Niger group (to which Igbo belongs) (3) Delta Edo group, which comprises Epie, Engenni and Degema, (4) Ogoni group comprising Kana, Gokana, and Eleme, (5) Central Delta group comprising Abua, Qgbia, Kugb̄q̄, B̄ukuma (or Qgbr̄n̄uagum), Abuloma, etc, (6) Lower Cross group, to which Andoni (Obolo) belongs. These languages belong to the part of Niger-Congo which Bennett and Sterk (1977) call South Central Niger-Congo (henceforth SCNC), which they subdivide into: Western SCNC, Eastern SCNC, and Ij̄q̄.³

³ More recently, a Working Group at the 14th West African Languages Congress (April 1980) in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, has proposed the following working compromise classification of Niger-Kordofanian: Niger-Kordofanian is divided into two branches, Niger-Congo and Kordofanian; Niger-Congo is subdivided into Mande, West Atlantic, and Central Niger-Congo; Central Niger-Congo in turn is subdivided into Kru, Gur, 'Western Kwa', Ij̄q̄-Defaka, Eastern Niger-Congo, and Adamawa-Ubangian.

The geographical position of Defaka thus suggests that it is a Niger-Congo language, in all probability, a member of SCNC. Admittedly, Bennett and Sterk have not presented an SCNC wordlist. However, an examination of lexical items in Defaka and its six linguistic neighbours (using the Ibadan 400 wordlist) easily reveals that Defaka must be placed within the same broad subgroup of Niger-Congo as its neighbours. For Defaka shares with these languages, taken as a whole, a fairly large number of apparent cognates. The relevant lexical items are listed in Table 1, with the apparent cognates underlined. I have excluded from the comparison items which appear to be exclusively shared by Defaka and Nkq̄r̄q̄q̄ (or Eastern Ij̄q̄ - the subgroup of Ij̄q̄ which comprises Kalabari, Okrika, Iḡani, and Nkq̄r̄q̄q̄). These include items like one (numeral), star, mountain, and certain words for items of material culture.

The sources of the data are as follows. For Ij̄q̄ I have used Williamson's Proto-Ij̄q̄ reconstructions (personal communication). For Lower Niger, I have used Igbo (comprising the five dialects of Owerri, Oh̄uḡu, Orlu, Umuoji, and Ukwaaḡi) in Armstrong (1967); data are generally cited in the Oh̄uḡu dialect unless indicated otherwise. For Delta Edo, I have used Ben Elugbe's Proto-Eḡoid reconstructions (personal communication) supplemented with data from Degema (De), Epie (Ep), and Engenni (En) in Thomas and Williamson (1967). For Central Delta, I have cited data from almost all the varieties, more specifically, from Abua (A), Oḡual (Od), Kugb̄q̄ (Ku), Eastern Qgbia (or Kolo) (EO), Western Qgbia (WO), and B̄ukuma (unspecified). Abuloma is not cited because for every item on our list it shares a cognate with some other variety of Central Delta. Data on Central Delta excluding B̄ukuma come from Wolff (1969); data on B̄ukuma come from the author's own collection. The Ogoni group is represented principally by Kana

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The native languages of the area least spoken by the Defaka are Kana (Ogoni) and Obolo (Andoni). The presence of any of these languages in the linguistic repertoire of a Defaka usually reflects the geographical location of that particular individual. The Defaka at Iw̄oma, because he is nearer to, and has more direct contact with, the Ogoni than with the Andoni, is more likely to speak Kana than Obolo. Conversely, his counterpart at Nkq̄r̄q̄q̄, by reason of his closer contact with the Andoni, is more likely to speak Obolo than Kana.

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which is not referred to by any label in the list; Gokana and Eleme are referred to as (Go) and (El) respectively. Data on Kana come from Nwinee Williamson and other informants; data on Gokana and Eleme come from Brosnahan (1967) and Williamson (1973) respectively. Lower Cross is represented by Andoni (Obolo), and its data come from Reading and Writing Obolo, 1979, and Dr. N.C. Ejituwu (personal communication). Nkq̄r̄q̄ forms have also been cited so that one can see the degree of resemblance in the cognate items of Defaka and Nkq̄r̄q̄. Data on Defaka and Nkq̄r̄q̄ come from the author's own collection. In the Proto-Ij̄q̄ and Nkq̄r̄q̄ column, the Nkq̄r̄q̄ item is always placed last. Note that the citing for a single form in a language group does not necessarily imply that the form in question is cognate throughout the group.

The following orthographic convention may also be noted:

<u>Orthographic</u>	<u>Phonetic (I.P.A.)</u>
b	[b]
gb	[b̥] (in Igbo only)
gb	[gb] (other languages)
d	[d]
j	[dʒ]
y	[j]
ny	[ɲ]
gh	[ɣ]
bh	[β] (in Central Delta)
bh	[bʰ] (in Igbo)
final n	nasalization of preceding vowel(s) and approximant(s) (in Defaka or Ij̄q̄)

The tonal notation used for all Defaka, Ij̄q̄, Delta Edo, and Central Delta data include high tone (´), downstepped high tone (ˉ), and low tone (unmarked); in Kana, high and low tones are marked, while mid tone is unmarked; the data in Lower Niger and Lower Cross have been fully tonemarked, since their orthographic tone marking conventions are different from the others.

TABLE I
Apparent cognates in Defaka and neighbouring languages

	Defaka	PIj̄q̄, NK	LNiger	DEdo	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
1. two	<u>maama</u>	<u>maami</u> <u>maami</u>	<u>àb̄p̄ò</u>	<u>f̄va(De)</u>	<u>ival(WO)</u>	<u>baè</u>	<u>f̄ba</u>
2. three	<u>tácc̄</u>	<u>tárú</u> <u>taarú</u>	<u>àt̄ó</u>	<u>is̄aí(De)</u>	<u>issar(WO)</u>	<u>t̄aa</u>	<u>f̄t̄é</u>
3. four	<u>n̄éin</u>	<u>in̄c̄n̄í</u> <u>n̄éin</u>	<u>ànc̄</u>	<u>in̄f̄(De)</u>	<u>fr̄e(WO)</u>	<u>n̄ia</u>	<u>f̄n̄í</u>
4. five	<u>t̄úuno</u>	<u>s̄ón̄ón̄ó</u> <u>s̄ón̄ón̄ó</u>	<u>is̄e(Um)</u>	<u>is̄aw̄óí(De)</u>	<u>owu(WO)</u>	<u>ò'òò</u>	<u>gò</u>
5. ten	<u>w̄éi</u>	<u>òw̄í</u> , <u>atei</u> <u>òw̄í</u>	<u>ir̄f̄</u>	<u>-gweNi</u>	<u>eqiobh(Oa)</u>	<u>lòb</u>	<u>àkòp</u>
6. twenty	<u>s̄if̄i</u>	<u>s̄í</u> <u>s̄í</u>	<u>òhú</u>	<u>-gheGi</u>	<u>equsubh(ku)</u>	<u>tub</u>	<u>àkòp-f̄b̄a</u> , <u>èt̄if̄</u>
7. father	<u>izulo, deá</u>	<u>deú</u> <u>daa</u>	<u>ínà</u>	<u>òs̄ū(De)</u>	<u>odám</u>	<u>t̄è</u>	<u>út̄é</u>
8. husband	<u>lei</u>	<u>deí</u> <u>lie</u>	<u>dí</u>	<u>óm̄ōs̄í</u>	<u>olomámu</u>	<u>dán</u>	<u>ólóm</u>

	Defaka	PIjo, NK	LNiger	DEdoïd	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
9. person	<u>nóm</u>	-bɔ, kɪmí kɪnɪ	mádhù	-kwéchi	<u>éwúnóm</u> (EO)	nèn (Go)	éné
10. wife	<u>taa</u>	tá taa	nwúnýè	ánɪ (En)	á'riam	wa	nwá
11. friend	ókó báí	ikie' ikiabɔ	ényì	ývrɛ̄ (De)	óyá-g'íram	kóó (Go)	úné
12. guest	<u>ikéní</u> (tɪ)	igoni' ikenifɔ	óbnyà	ókíkɪá (De)	isolom (WO)	nèncáá (Go)	ùgwù- lchèn
13. animal, meat	<u>ónúamá,</u> emí	námá námá	ánú	enám (De)	énam	nam	ánám
14. fish	<u>tina</u>	ibí01' ni	ázù	esén	éna	bá'ri	írú
15. dog	<u>ebere</u>	obiri' obiri	ńkítá	-bhwa	ayóngbó	gbó	ibo
16. goat	(ó)bó'ri	ópó'ri óbó'ri	éghú	-bhuy	ewel (EO)	bó'í (Go)	ébot
17. fowl, chicken	<u>okuna</u>	bókɔ (NK)	òkúkò	-khokho	okina	kɔn	úmàn (hen) órífé (cock)

	Defaka	PIjo, NK	LNiger	DEdoïd	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
18. sheep	<u>ánáná</u>	ónáná ánáná	áthúrŷ	ýsŷmáí (De)	onugholu	naaná- péé	úmòn áróñ
19. tortoise	<u>írákí</u>	írákí/íkéí írákí	ńbèkwú, ńnábè	-ghuNi	alugulu	kurú	íkwút
20. elephant	<u>ɸíla</u>	ɸíla' ɸíla	ényí	-ni	ɔɔma	ji	éniñ
21. crocodile	<u>sako</u>	seki'/segi' saku	éghííyí	ýsaní (De)	éghólu	mèñé	àsákwút
22. bat	<u>peku</u>	poki'/pogi' poku	ýsú	ɔgbóm, ɔnwanwa (De)	ɔnɔnwan	bíá	áfíán
23. toad, frog	<u>akalám</u>	akpala(n)í? akalám	áwò, ákírí	otúó (Ep)	obhom (EO)	kára (Go)	ákwúók
24. housefly	<u>ɔmɔmɔ</u>	ɔmɔmɔ ɔmɔmɔ	éjɪ, ńjúná	-khiNa	íwí	sí	ánánáñ
25. snail	<u>osi</u>	osi' osi		ýkpá (De)	egboi (EO)	búé	égúrú, ékpéé

	Defaka	Piɔ, NK	LNiger	Dɛdoid	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
26. feather	<u>pióm</u>	<u>ípiók(ɔ́)</u> ? <u>piɔ</u>	ábnùbà	ukpɔ́(De) yɔ̀yɔ̀n(Ep)	aláwo etc.	páá	ákóhò
27. back	<u>okpo</u>	òbù, tòguɔ̀, òkpo	àzù	-kè	oma	òkpùè(EL)	ùdù
28. blood	<u>asi</u>	<u>asi(n)</u> ' <u>asi</u>	òbnàrà	ízála (De)	arimí	míí	é,é,éé
29. ear	<u>basi</u>	<u>beri</u> ' <u>beri</u>	ńthì	-chòfi	oro	tò	útò
30. hair(of head)	<u>ime</u>	<u>dime</u> ' <u>dime</u>	ńthùthù	-tùN	esinémù	ziá	íjéék
31. hand, arm	<u>kéa</u>	<u>bára</u> ' <u>bára</u>	<u>áká</u>	ùbò(De)	ará	bá	ùbòk
32. head	<u>tòpo</u>	<u>típi</u> ' <u>tépe</u>	ísf	-chiémhi	ému'	ékóbee	íbòt

	Defaka	Piɔ, NK	LNiger	Dɛdoid	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
33. mouth	<u>bíí,bee</u>	<u>bíí</u> ' <u>bébé</u>	ónù	-nua	onù	éga'	ótú
34. neck	<u>omu</u>	kəgəŋ(ɔ́) kəngə	ólú,ónú	inyan(De)	orumu	omé(EL)	ébèk
35. nose	<u>nini</u>	<u>nini</u> ' <u>nini</u>	ímf	-chuaNi	ijonu	bí'ò	inwòm
36. tooth	<u>nian</u>	áká	éze	-kùN	ónáí	dáa	éjéré
37. bone	<u>mbua</u>	ígbeńú mgbá	ókúkúkú	ùbúó (De)	òkpò	ékpò	úkwiúk
38. penis	<u>oyóm</u>	tògòŋò tòngò	úthù, ámù	-chua	oghùm(Od)	píí(Go)	áfí,ufòp
39. vagina	<u>taḃéé</u>	<u>tebi</u> ' <u>tibi</u>	óní,òtù, íkpù	ùḃe(Ep)	etu	bi(Go)	ékpò,édfm
40. finger- nail	<u>mmémé</u>	<u>mmémé</u> ' <u>mmémé</u>	ímwó-áká	ívùtò (Ep)	owabh(EO)	piq	ábón

	Defaka	Piɔo,NK	LNiger	DEdoid	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
58. long	<u>nángá</u>	<u>gégápelú</u> <u>nángwó</u>	<u>ógólógó</u>	dedhi	-wei(EO)	nyónyoo	újónó
59. white	<u>pene</u>	<u>pána</u> <u>pína</u>	<u>óhá</u>	<u>puNa</u>	-balabel (EO)	ééé	ókukét
60. black	<u>bire</u>	dirima kúkúú	<u>ófi</u>	<u>bi</u>	<u>bil(Od)</u>	<u>bilra</u>	óffift
61. new	<u>áyé</u>	<u>áyá, íwó</u> <u>áyé</u>	<u>óhúrú</u>	pha	omom(EO)	ááa	<u>áyáya</u>
62. left	<u>kándó(-ba)</u>	<u>kóDónó</u> kóndó	áké èkpè	úvití	èkein	klé	újlt
63. blow(with mouth)	<u>oforo</u>	<u>ófúró</u> <u>óforo</u>	<u>ífú</u>	phupho	aríwílu	<u>fúuri</u>	wút
64. cook	<u>twa</u>	<u>tyó</u> <u>tyó</u>	<u>ísí</u>	dér(De)	-sa(A)	bùl	tém
65. dance	<u>séseki</u>	<u>séki/séki</u> <u>séki</u>	izè <u>ígba égwú</u>	gwhe	kery	yeb	jóp

	Defaka	Piɔo,NK	LNiger	DEdoid	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
66. dig	<u>sókí</u>	<u>sókú/sókú</u> <u>sókú</u>	<u>íkó,ígvú</u>	tòN	arímú	dòpra	ròkò,gvú
67. drink	<u>mbú</u>	<u>bóú</u> <u>bóon</u>	<u>íny</u>	vòNa,da	puo	ó	nwó
68. hear	<u>nea</u>	<u>na</u> <u>nea</u>	<u>ínú</u>	chianhi	muon(EO)	<u>dá</u>	<u>nó</u>
69. kill	<u>báá</u>	<u>bé</u> <u>báá</u>	<u>ígbú</u>	gweGi	gi	fè	kpáN
70. see	<u>ese</u>	<u>ófi</u> <u>ófi</u>	<u>ínú</u>	mónhi	-bi(EO)	mué	kpò,máN
71. sew	<u>ébin</u>	<u>ébiní</u> <u>ébin</u>	<u>ídnú,</u> <u>íkwa</u>	cú	kpo(EO)	gba	chím
72. shoot	<u>tejn</u>	<u>teñi</u> <u>tejn</u>	<u>ígba</u>	pi	-tabh, rabh(A)	<u>tá</u>	sónró

	Defaka	Piɔo,NK	LNiger	DEdoId	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
73. swallow	<u>meni</u>	<u>mini/mbili</u> <u>meui</u>	<u>iyō,ino</u>	<u>dhui</u>	<u>minu</u>	<u>me(El)</u>	<u>mén</u>
74. wring (clothes)	<u>imi</u>	<u>imi(NK)</u>	<u>ihī</u>	<u>mi</u>	<u>miimu</u>	bi	fúúú
75. bury	<u>libi</u>	<u>ḡibi'</u> <u>libi</u>	<u>ilī</u>	zi (De)	<u>-ḡi(A)</u>	<u>li(Go)</u>	<u>ifónú</u>
76. urinate	<u>sean</u>	<u>sán</u> <u>séan</u>	<u>inyū</u>	phē	muno	tá máni	sòk-énáú
77. surpass	<u>néngéma</u>	<u>ḡesi'oi'</u> <u>néngi</u>	<u>ixāli</u>	fiē(De)	<u>-pu(A)</u>	eéá	ḡák
78. enter	<u>sue</u>	<u>svó</u> <u>svó</u>	bhá,ibhá	<u>ḡián(De)</u>	ḡi	yii	níú
79. climb	<u>tandi</u>	<u>tendi (NK)</u>	<u>ifē,ifē,</u> <u>ikwē</u>	fumu(En)	sin(Ku)	<u>ḡéḡ</u>	nénè
80. sing	<u>túú</u>	<u>tún</u> <u>túun</u>		cú	<u>-m̄oq(oa)</u> etc.	uḡ	kòt

	Defaka	Piɔo,NK	LNiger	DEdoId	CDelta	Ogoni	LCross
81. play	<u>tei</u>	<u>téi'</u> <u>tée</u>	<u>ígwù égwù,</u> <u>irò úrò</u>	<u>keke(Ep)</u>	<u>-zo(EO)</u> etc.	birá	<u>ffit</u>
82. count	<u>kejin</u>	<u>kiné'</u> <u>kejin</u>	<u>ifēhū</u>	<u>nwafin</u>	belu	bùú	fúk
83. put on (clothes)	<u>tia</u>	<u>tjá'</u> <u>tja</u>	<u>ftIri</u>	<u>stila(Ep)</u>	<u>mabám</u>	yá	tép
84. untie	<u>kpokpo</u>	<u>kpúkpó'</u> <u>gb-gb-</u> <u>fúruma</u>	<u>ftòpù</u>	thāN	<u>-buton</u> (EO)	yárf	kpúlù
85. sweep	<u>ofi</u>	<u>ófin</u> <u>ófin</u>	<u>íza</u>	<u>gbéḡé</u>	<u>-wol(EO)</u>	kpáá	chān
86. grind	<u>sean</u>	<u>'san,gbé'</u> <u>gbéin</u>	<u>ígwē</u>	lq	<u>gbé(EO)</u>	ku	kòk
87. reply	<u>pakara</u>	<u>pakarə'</u> <u>pákara</u>	<u>ázizá n.</u> <u>íza v.</u>	<u>tatané</u> (De)	<u>paráani</u>	àgàrá	íçòk
88. sell	<u>lele</u>	<u>deri'</u> <u>jeri</u>	<u>frē</u>	<u>ḡéḡi'</u>	<u>-wol(EO)</u>	ò'òó	nyám

Some of the items listed in Table 1 go back to Proto-Niger-Congo or Proto-SCNC. These include such items as 2,3,4,5,7,9,11,12, 13,14,16, 31,34,43,46,49,50,51,53,55,57,59,60,61,63,73,74, and 75. When these items have been eliminated, we find that of the six linguistic neighbours of Defaka it is only Ijɔ that shares exclusively with Defaka a fairly large number of lexical items, some of which appear to be exclusive to the two languages even at the Niger-Congo level. The remaining five linguistic neighbours of Defaka, as a whole, share probably not more than ten items exclusively with Defaka. I therefore propose that within SCNC Defaka's closest affiliation appears to be with Ijɔ, although the relationship is a remote one. This hypothesis is consistent with the following observation: There is no language spoken in the Niger Delta that is not closely related to some other language(s) spoken in the region. Thus, it would seem only a remote possibility that the closest linguistic relative of Defaka (if there be one) will be found outside the Niger Delta. However, a wordlist of Defaka and Kalabari (representing Ijɔ)⁴ has been provided in Appendix II, partly in support of the above hypothesis, and partly in the interests of a mass comparison of SCNC or Niger-Congo languages.

The origin of the lexical similarities between Defaka and Ijɔ listed in Table 1 is difficult to determine. There are two plausible explanations for these similarities. One explanation is that at least some of these similarities represent intimate borrowings one way or the other,⁵ for Defaka and Ijɔ have been in contact for a very long time.

⁴ Kalabari is the author's native language.

⁵ The more probable direction of borrowing would be from Ijɔ to Defaka, since the languages of numerically and culturally dominant peoples are considered the more likely donors in lexical borrowing, while the less prominent peoples are more often the borrowers (cf. Scotton 1972:368).

What makes the borrowing hypothesis all the more plausible is the fact that in the majority of cases, the Defaka form is highly similar to its Proto-Ijɔ or Nkɔrɔɔ counterpart.

The second plausible explanation for the lexical similarities in Table 1 is that such similarities are the result of direct traditional transmission, and thus bear on genetic relationship. If indeed Proto-Ijɔ and Defaka are descended from a common parent, we would expect at least some consistent sound correspondences to show this. Indeed, there are a few such examples of regular correspondence, and these are given below:

Table 2
Defaka-Ijɔ correspondences

	Defaka	Ijɔ
-a = -e-	taɸee 'vagina'	teɸi
	basi 'ear'	ɸeri
-s = -r-	basi 'ear'	ɸeri
	ɸɸe 'see'	ɸri
l- = ɖ-	lɪkɪ 'rope'	ɖɪkɪ/ɖɪgɪ
	lɔgɔ 'story'	ɖɔgɔ
	libi 'bury'	ɖɪbi
j- = d/ɖ-	jei 'husband'	dei
	ɸimɛ 'hair(of head)'	ɸimɛ

Other items like oil, wine, and smoke etc. appear to be plausible cognates to their Ijɔ counterparts, but it is not easy to establish regular sound correspondences by which they can be related to a proto-language. Perhaps more significantly, there are many forms in Table 1 which suggest innovations common to Ijɔ and Defaka. These include items like two, twenty, wife, ear, mouth, nose, finger nail, etc.

is that the lexical evidence for subgrouping Ijọ and Defaka is fairly strong. But there is some other evidence, besides the lexical, which specially links Ijọ and Defaka. This other evidence is of a grammatical nature.

There are two striking grammatical similarities between Defaka and Ijọ. One such similarity concerns word order. Both languages have a basic sentence order of SOV (subject-object-verb).

For example:⁶

- Defaka: (1) a ebere kọ a okuna ɓááma
 the dog SM the fowl kill - TM
 'The dog killed the fowl'
- (2) a emenę ɓáí kọ a éyáan ééma
 the man SM the food eat-TM
 'The man ate the food'
- (3) Bomá i píníma
 Boma me beat-TM
 'Boma beat me'
- (4) obiri ɓé ọ̀bọ̀kọ̀ ɓé ɓám⁷
 dog the fowl the kill-TM
 'The dog killed the fowl'
- (5) óyíṓ ɓé ríyé mę fím
 man the food the eat-TM
 'The man ate the food'
- (6) Bomá i fomúm
 Boma me beat-TM
 'Boma beat me'

Ijọ
 (Kalabari
 dialect)

⁶ The following abbreviations used in these and later examples need explanation: TM = Tense marker, Part = Particle, SM = Subject maker, Pl = Plural.

⁷ Note that the (definite) article occurs prenominal in Defaka and postnominally in Ijọ.

Besides the SOV word order, the two languages share several SOV-related features in common. For example, both languages evince the generalization that the order of all types of modifiers in relation to their heads follows the same order as that of the verb and its object (Stockwell 1977:74).⁸ In both languages, we find the following word orders, which are some of the regular orders that occur in perfectly consistent SOV languages:

<u>Modifier</u>	<u>Head</u>
Object	Verb
Adverb(ial)	Verb
Relative clause	Noun
Genitive	Noun

For example (the object + verb order has already been illustrated in (1) - (6), and is therefore omitted in what follows):

Defaka:

Adverbial + Verb

- (7) Bomá íbaké isoma
 Boma yesterday come-TM
 'Boma came yesterday'
- (8) Bomá ogiqm ta kéema
 Boma knife part cut-TM
 'Boma cut it with a knife'

Relative clause + Noun

- (9) Bomá a tina tjáama wá sonq ísoma tina
 Boma the fish cook-TM we buy come-TM fish

OR

- wá sonq ísoma tina nde Bomá tjáama ke
 'Boma is cooking the fish that we bought'

⁸ This is 'the principle of natural serialization' of Bartsch and Vennemann, cited in Stockwell, p.74, footnote 3.

Genitive + Noun

- (10) i jfka
 'my house'
 Boma' naá
 'Boma's mother'
 i naá jfka
 'my mother's house'

Ijɔ (Kalaɓari dialect):

Adverbial + Verb

- (11) Bomá b̄iɛ̄n̄ b̄om̄
 Boma yesterday come-TM
 'Boma came yesterday'
- (12) ɔr̄i iɓ̄iɔk̄u an̄i ȳem̄
 he well it do-TM
 'He did it properly'

Relative clause + Noun

- (13) Bomá w̄a f̄é in̄j̄i m̄ē s̄ɔ́s̄ari
 Boma we buy-TM fish the cook-TM
 'Boma is cooking the fish that we bought'

Genitive + Noun

- (14) i ɗa
 'my father'
 Bomá ȳingi
 'Boma's mother'
 i ȳingi w̄ari
 'my mother's house'

Another important similarity concerns tense markers. In Ijɔ all the tense markers occur in postverbal position, the structure of the

tense marker being expressed in the following formula:⁹

$$\left(\begin{array}{l} \text{Reduplication} \\ \text{Tense verb} \end{array} \right) \text{ suffix}^n$$

$n \leq 2$

For example:

(15) Kalaɓari

- a. Bomá Gogó f̄om̄uɓa
 'Boma will beat Gogo'
- b. Bomá Gogó f̄omuári
 'Boma is beating Gogo'
- c. Bomá Gogó f̄om̄um̄
 'Boma beat Gogo'
- d. Bomá Gogó f̄om̄ut̄ēē
 'Boma has beaten Gogo'
- e. Bomá Gogó f̄om̄uf̄om̄um̄
 'Boma beats Gogo (from time to time)'
- f. Bomá an̄i yé ȳan̄am̄
 Boma it do TM
 'Boma must do it'

In Defaka, so far as the present knowledge of the verbal system goes, a tense marker consists of any of the following:

- (a) a suffix (e.g., 16a-e)
- (b) a prefix and a suffix (e.g., 16f,g)
- (c) a reduplication of the verb root plus a suffix (e.g. 16h)

⁹ The term 'tense marker' as applied to Ijɔ (and Defaka) is an abbreviation for 'tense-aspect-modal marker'. A 'tense verb' is one which is derived from a main verb, and which is used as a component of certain tense markers. It differs from another class of main-verb-derived verb, namely the auxiliary verb, in that it can co-occur with its putative main verb source.

For example:

(16) Defaka

- a. Bomá Gogó pínika
'Boma will beat Gogo'
- b. Bomárē Gogó píníma
'Boma is beating Gogo'
- c. Bomá Gogó píníma
'Boma beat Gogo'
- d. Bomá Gogó piníe
'Boma has beaten Gogo'
- e. Bomárē soma
'Boma is coming'
- f. Bomá ísoma
'Boma is coming'
- g. Bomá résoa
'Boma has come'
- h. Bomá Gogó pínípiníma
'Boma beats Gogo (from time to time)'

The SOV word order is extremely rare in Niger-Congo, being restricted, so far as is known, to Ijɔ, Defaka, Mande, and Gur; the prevalent word order in the family is SVO. Given this fact, it seems necessary to ask whether the incidence of SOV syntax in Defaka is indicative of its special genetic relationship to Ijɔ or is the result of contact with Ijɔ. This question is intimately linked with two important hypotheses about the basic word order of Proto-Niger-Congo. Givón (1975,1979) postulates an SOV word order for Proto-Niger-Congo, with Ijɔ, Mende, and Gur constituting relic areas in the family in this respect. Heine (1976,1980) on the other hand, postulates an SVO word order for the family, and regards Ijɔ as a more recent example of natural drift from VO to OV' (Givón 1979:222).

These two hypotheses suggest three possible origins of the SOV order in present-day Defaka vis-à-vis Ijɔ:

- (a) That the SOV order in both Ijɔ and Defaka represents the common retention of an old Niger-Congo feature.
- (b) That the SOV order in Ijɔ and Defaka represents a natural drift from an earlier SVO order, and hence constitutes an innovation common to the two languages.
- (c) That Defaka changed from an SOV language to a SVO language by a process of natural drift, and then acquired its present-day SOV order as the result of contact with Ijɔ.

Of these three possibilities, the last appears to be the least likely event. There are two reasons for this claim. In the first place, it is very doubtful if there is any (strong) evidence in known language history for such an evolution in word order typology in which the initial and terminal points of the process have the same word order. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, contemporary Defaka syntax does not reveal, so far as my knowledge goes, any significant features that are suggestive of an earlier SVO syntax. The third possibility must therefore be rejected.

The other two possibilities may be regarded as simply variants of a single general hypothesis, namely that the incidence of SOV order in Defaka suggests a special genetic relationship between Defaka and Ijɔ. This is the hypothesis that is adopted in this paper. Thus, given the limited goal of the paper, it may not be necessary to further inquire whether the SOV order in Ijɔ and Defaka represents an inheritance from Proto-Niger-Congo or is an innovation common to the two languages. However, I would like to remark that I hold the former viewpoint, which is consistent with Givón's hypothesis, for the following two reasons. First, I feel that the types of argument which Givón (1979) provides in support of his position and in the evaluation of Heine's hypothesis (and methodology) compel agreement with his hypothesis.

Secondly, it seems unlikely that such a complex grammatical feature as SOV and SOV-related syntax would develop as an innovation in two languages that are otherwise known to be genetically related.

The second striking similarity between Defaka and Ijɔ is the possession of a sex-gender system which distinguishes, minimally, masculine and feminine. In both languages this is shown in the personal pronouns. (In some varieties of Ijɔ, this is also shown in the (definite) articles (or markers) that are suffixed to nouns). Table 3 lists the pronouns of Defaka, together with those of Nkɔrɔɔ and Proto-Ijɔ (taken from Williamson (1967), updated by personal communication).

Table 3

Pronouns in Defaka, Nkɔrɔɔ, and Proto-Ijɔ¹⁰

	Defaka	Nkɔrɔɔ	Proto-Ijɔ
1 sg.	i	i,ye	a,i
2 sg.	í	í,yé	í/í
3 mase. sg.	o	o	o/ɔ-
3 fem. sg.	á	á	á-
3 neut. sg.	ye	a	?
1 pl.	wá	wá	wá-/wɔ-
2 pl.	ó	ó	ó/ɔ
3 pl.	iní, oní	oní, iní	ení?

¹⁰ The pronouns ye and yé are each used only as a genitival modifier of a vowel-initial noun, with the vowel of the head noun assimilating that of the modifier. The underlying forms of these pronouns have been based on the structure of cognate pronouns in Kalabari and Ibaní (Cf. Kalabari *iyé-iyé* 'me,my', *íyé-íyé* 'you(r) (sg)'; Ibaní *iyé* 'me,my', *iyé* 'you(r)(sg)').

From Table 3 it will be observed that the non-neuter third person singular pronouns appear to be cognate with their Proto-Ijɔ counterparts. The similarity in both form and meaning in these pronouns suggests that the pronouns in question are genetically related. Notice that all the pronoun roots, with the exception of the third person plural pronoun, are monosyllables, and these exhaust, with the exception of u, all the vowels that constitute the basic vowel space of Defaka.¹¹ This being the case, it would seem unreasonable to insist on the establishment of regular sound correspondences in this area of the grammar as evidence for a special historical connection between Defaka and Ijɔ.

One fact however casts some doubt on the validity of the genetic relationship hypothesis. This is that most of the Defaka forms, including the non-neuter third person singular pronouns, are identical with their Nkɔrɔɔ counterparts. On the other hand, one is encouraged to cling to the genetic relationship hypothesis by the fact that all the (reconstructed) Proto-Ijɔ forms appear to be cognate with their Defaka counterparts. However, since some doubt surrounds the origin of the forms of the Defaka pronouns, it seems advisable to go beyond the phonological forms and consider the question of the origin of the syntactic pattern that underlies the pronouns.

The fact that two languages, believed on other grounds to be genetically related, are similar in the pattern or organisation of their pronominal systems is itself suggestive of the special genetic relatedness of the languages concerned. As already noted, Defaka and Ijɔ have highly similar pronominal systems. The similarity in some of the categories in these pronominal systems is, of course, trivial. For example, the pronominal categories First person singular and plural, Second person,

¹¹ In most languages of the world, including Defaka, vowel height and backness form a basic two-dimensional vowel space (cf. Lindau (1975:2)).

and Third person are universal (Heath 1975:92). Furthermore, most, if not all, Niger-Congo languages make a singular-plural distinction in the second and third person categories. The really interesting aspect of the Ijọ and Defaka pronominal systems concerns the gender distinctions that are recognised in the third person singular. Sex-gender systems are extremely rare in South Central Niger-Congo, the phenomenon being restricted, so far as is known, to Ijọ and Defaka. The question that then arises is whether the masculine - neuter distinction found in Defaka is native to the language or is the result of diffusion from Ijọ.

A diffusionist position is difficult to defend. The only significant consideration that may attract someone to it is the fact of intense contact between Ijọ and Defaka. But in itself this suggests nothing other than that changes in pronominal systems actually take place, though very rarely, in contact situations. The relative rarity of the sex-gender phenomenon in South Central Niger-Congo would not, in the author's opinion, constitute a good argument for the diffusionist position, for such an argument raises, in turn, the question of how or why Ijọ came to possess this particular syntactic feature. This is certainly not going to be an easy question to settle, and it is doubtful if the result of such an inquiry will help the diffusionist hypothesis considering the fact that Ijọ and Defaka share several structural features in common, besides gender.¹²

A hypothesis of native origin appears to be a more plausible explanation for the incidence of sex-gender in Defaka. Two pieces of evidence seem to support this latter position. Firstly, the syntax (in the sense of occurrence and application) of the third person

¹² See Appendix I for further structural similarities between Ijọ and Defaka.

pronouns in Defaka does not show any gaps or inconsistencies, which suggests that the categories that these phonological forms expound belong to the mainstream of the language history. For example:

Genitive construction

- (17) á tóḃo 'her head'
 o toḃo 'his head'
 yé tóḃo 'its head'
 oní tóḃo 'their heads'

Reflexive construction¹³

- (18) a. Gogó kḃ o ọm ɓááma
 Gogo part his body kill-TM
 'Gogo killed himself'
 b. Bené kḃ á ọm ɓááma
 Bene part her body kill-TM
 'Bene killed herself'
 c. ebere kḃ ye ọm ɓááma
 dog part its body kill-TM
 'The dog killed itself'
 d. okuna kḃ ye ọm ɓááma
 fowl part its body kill-TM
 'The fowl killed itself'
 e. áamá kḃ ye ọm ɓááma
 town part its body kill-TM
 'The town destroyed itself'
 f. ẹmẹnẹmí kḃ oní ọm ɓááma
 man - Pl part their body kill-TM
 'The men killed themselves'

¹³ In those examples, the vowel of the pronouns o 'he, him, his' and ye 'it(s), they, them, their' assimilates to that of the immediate following word.

g. owere ebere kọ ye ọm ɓááma
 ? dog part its body kill-3M
 'The dogs killed themselves'

Interrogative copula sentence

- (19) á-yán, á tári?
 she she who
 'Who is she?'
 á(kō) tári?
 she-SM who
 'Who is she?'
 o-yan, o/ọ tári?
 he he who
 'Who is he?'
 o(kọ) tári?
 'Who is he?'
 áyán (yaa) kọ taá
 this thing SM what
 'What is this?'

Secondly, and more importantly, the gender semantics of the Defaka third person pronouns is different from that of any Ijọ variety. The distinctions expounded by these pronouns are entirely semantically based: the masculine pronoun denotes male human beings; the feminine pronoun denotes female human beings; while the neuter pronoun refers to non-human beings. This classification is consistent with some other facts concerning gender in the language. For example, it is observed that there is a more basic gender distinction in the language, involving the categories 'human' and 'non-human'. This is manifested in the interrogative words tári 'who' and taá 'what', as in (19). Furthermore, the Defaka third person plural pronoun is used only to refer to human beings (see (18)).

Given facts such as these, one finds it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the masculine-feminine-neuter distinction found in Defaka is native to the language.

Conclusion

The main contribution of this paper has been to report for the first time data from Defaka, a newly-discovered, fast receding, but rather fascinating Niger-Congo language, spoken in Nigeria's Niger Delta. This language has been in close contact with Ijọ for more than 300 years, and shares with it a fairly large number of similar lexical items. Some of the lexical similarities must certainly be ascribed to borrowing, while others must be ascribed to genetic relationship, even though examples of regular sound correspondences are few. Besides the lexical evidence, two remarkable grammatical similarities link Ijọ and Defaka. The first is the basic word order of SOV, which is very probably a shared genetic feature. The second is the incidence of a masculine-feminine (-neuter) sex-gender system, which is, probably, also a shared genetic feature.

The conclusion that is suggested by these lexical and grammatical similarities, taken as a whole, is that Ijọ is the closest linguistic relative of Defaka, although the relationship is a remote one. This view, if accepted, suggests a refinement of the Bennett and Sterk classification of South Central Niger-Congo to the effect that Ijọ will cease to constitute a single-member subgroup of South Central Niger-Congo.

Further similarities between Ijò and Defaka

In the interests of typology, the following structural similarities shared by Ijò and Defaka may also be mentioned:

1. The two languages have highly similar systematic-phonetic consonant inventories (twenty-four in Ijò and twenty-three in Defaka) and identical vowel phonemes, divided into two harmonic sets. These are shown in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4: Phonetic consonants of Ijò and Defaka

Non-implosive stop	p	t	k	kp
	b	d	g	gb
Implosive stop	ɓ	ɗ		
Fricative	f	s		
	v	z	gh(Ijò only)	
Nasal	m	n	ŋ	ɲm
Liquid		l,r		
Approximant	w		y	

Table 5: Vowels of Ijò and Defaka

	<u>Expanded</u>		<u>Non-expanded</u>	
High	i,ĩ	u,ũ	ɨ,ĩ	ɯ,ũ
Mid	e,ẽ	o,õ	ɛ,ẽ	ɔ,õ
Low	(a,ã)		a,ã	

2. Both languages make no distinction between noun and verb in their word structure. A noun, as well as a verb, may either begin with a vowel or consonant, although there is evidence in both languages of an older situation in which nouns began with vowels (e.g., Defaka ótúó tuo 'sing a song'; Kalabari fúru 'steal' afuru 'thief', dūā 'defend', áqūá 'defence'.)

Finally, both languages appear to have preserved the Niger-Congo prefix a- which functioned as the plural of (d)ĩ- class (Williamson 1971:283). In Defaka and in most (if not all) varieties of Ijò the a- is preserved as a suffix attached to the qualifying forms of the numerals Two through Ten (and Twenty in Ijò) (see the a element which occurs finally in the Defaka numerals Two - Ten in Appendix II.) In some varieties of Ijò (e.g., Kalabari, Nkoro, Nembe) this element is also found prefixed to a consonant-initial plural noun co-occurring with a pronominal qualifier.

Appendix II

Defaka - Kalabari Ijọ wordlist

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
1. head	tópo	sítí
2. hair(head)	jímé	ínúmé
3. eye	ọyọ	tórū
4. ear	basí	berí
5. nose	níní	níní
6. mouth	bíí	bíbí
7. tooth	níán	áká
8. tongue	mẹnduọ	bẹlẹ
9. jaw	ẹbẹkú	bẹkẹkẹ
10. chin	ímángí	íkú
11. beard	ẹfẹrú	ípòrí
12. neck	omu	kongo
13. breast(female)	ọnúọ	índó
14. heart	kúọ	bíó-bẹ-íngbọ
15. belly, stomach	itọ	fúrō
16. navel	ísóró	ómbú
17. back	okpo	ọpú, ọpukúlō
18. arm, hand	káa	bara
19. nail(finger or toe)	ámémé	ínúmé
20. buttocks	taḅá píriká	okolo-bọkọ
21. penis	oyóm	tóngo
22. vagina	tabée	okolo
23. leg	pára	búọ
24. body	óm	ójū
25. bone	mbua	íngbe
26. blood	asi	ombi-yé, pulo
27. saliva	kuta	fíla
28. urine	saan	sán
29. faeces	báta	fíyan
30. food	éyáan	fíyé

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
31. water	mbíá	minji
32. soup/sauce/stew	árúá	fúló, ọdu
33. meat	ámi	námá
34. fat	osọ	bẹlẹkí
35. fish	tina	infi
36. oil	píra	pulo
37. salt	óó	fún
38. wine(general word)	ilo	iru
39. palm wine	íyíá ilo	tomina irú
40. yam	íní	buru
41. cassava(fresh) (cooked)	mpataka akpakuru	imbaraka sín imbaraka
42. maize	akpukpa	imbíaká
43. beans	akídi	akídi
44. pepper	agada	sani
45. okra	ókuru	ókuru
46. plantain	ọbinqm	imbáná
47. banana	ọbọbọnọ	banána, ókúyam
48. orange	olukajan	éleínda
49. groundnut	awúékéré	apapá
50. kola nut	kúmbé	dáwó
51. tobacco	jírí	dírí
52. cotton	íwō yáan	énéme
53. oil palm	lom tiin	sín íngbọlì
54. seed	tiin tobo	ósúká
55. grass	mbóbárf	sín
56. tree	ibo tiin	íyán
57. leaf	jírí ápá	sín ápára
58. bark(of tree)	tiin bọọ	kuno
59. root	tiin ili	nangi
60. thorn	nóm tayan	

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
61. stick	tíin	sín
62. firewood	áyó	fíni
63. charcoal	áin	áyin-mgbó
64. fire	ayom	fíni
65. smoke	eweni	ovin
66. ashes	lári waan	fóon
67. waterpot	mbiá pórú	kúkú
68. cooking pot	íjá	bélé
69. calabash	okpokoró	baba, aburo
70. (grinding)stone	kókó	dúbarí
71. mortar	oku	pumbú
72. knife	kíngí bóm	ogie
73. hoe	atujin	ógú
74. axe	ngi	kumbu
75. matchet	ogiom	ogie
76. spear(war)	ikparí gbé	bekere
77. bow(weapon)	obum	iboli
78. arrow	íkpiá	déin
79. iron(metal)	nkukuru yaan	íkúléle
80. mat	óbídá	étéré
81. basket	lúá	kana
82. bag	akpa	akpa
83. rope	lírí	qígí
84. needle	ílégá	légá
85. thread	iri	irí
86. cloth(material)	ókúrú	bíte
87. robe(man's)	ógbiam	képa
88. hat/cap	okpobiré	sún
89. shoe	agbakí	ókúrú
90. money	étákí	igbigi

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
91. door(way)	óbū	bókó
92. room	afaka	bíó
93. house	jika	warí
94. wall(of house)	jika ɓaa (internal)	warí akáka
	jika akparú (external)	
95. compound	ókúná	póló
96. town	ámá	ámá
97. village	ámá ɓom	kálá ámá
98. well	mbiá abana	suɓe
99. rubbish heap	uun akúma léé	sará
100. road	ía biq	eteláa
101. market	kia	ogumabiri, fɛ
102. farm	ído	duo
103. 'bush'	ónúma	piri
104. river	biq	tórú
105. sea	ibo biq	tórú
106. boat(canoe)	ánu	arú
107. mountain	anaa	ígú
108. ground	uun	kírí
109. earth(soil)	uun obio	kírí
110. sand	waan	ówín
111. dust	waan ojúko	fóon
112. mud(for house)	jika waan	abain
113. mud(in swamp)	ojokú	lika
114. wind	ímio	férú
115. rain	sóin	éne
116. sun	úo	írúá
117. moon	ɓáán	akalú
118. star	ípíní	lolía

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
119.	day	ofifio
120.	night	ɸifin
121.	dawn	lére ọọa
122.	darkness	kúminí
123.	sleep	ibi
124.	work	ọkúyon
125.	war, fight	ay
126.	fear	mgbugbo
127.	hunger	éyáan tari
128.	thirst	ikpoko kákárí
129.	year	ólọọ
130.	rainy season	sọin kia
131.	dry season	ọọ kia
132.	song	túó
133.	story	lógó
134.	word	kọrọ
135.	lie(s)	kọtalá
136.	thing	yáa
137.	animal	amí, ónúmá
138.	goat	óbórí
139.	he-goat	ọ̀párí óbórí
140.	sheep	ánáná
141.	cow(zebu)	ánám̄bá
142.	horse, donkey	inyinyan
143.	dog	ebere
144.	cat	bọ̀sì
145.	rat	inọm
146.	fowl(domestic)	okuna

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
147.	cock	ọ̀páí okuna
148.	duck	ɸekemíní okuna
149.	egg	ítéfin
150.	wing	ápá
151.	feather	pióm
152.	horn	ifálí
153.	tail	niyon
154.	leopard	toto
155.	crocodile	sako
156.	elephant	ɸila
157.	buffalo(bush cow)	ebe
158.	monkey	tiin kambáí
159.	tortoise	íkákí
160.	snake	sese yáan
161.	lizard	agára
162.	crab(sea)	ání
163.	crab(land)	atu
164.	toad('frog')	akalám
165.	snail	osi
166.	housefly	omomó
167.	bee	ɸém
168.	mosquito	nóm peyaan
169.	louse	mkpi
170.	bird	yey
171.	vulture	edele
172.	hawk	ákpanákpa
173.	bat	peku
174.	person	nóm

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
175.	name	ítá
176.	man	emene báí
177.	male	ópáí
178.	husband	jei
179.	woman	ésèrē ti
180.	female	ólúla
181.	wife	taa
182.	old person	ólṓtí
183.	senior/older	móngīti
184.	father	izulo, daá
185.	mother	iziza(m), naa
186.	child	awo
187.	children	ewere miní
188.	son	emene bṓm
189.	daughter	ésèrē bṓm
190.	brother(elder) (for man)	móngī báí
191.	brother(younger) (for man)	agbara báí
192.	sister(elder) (for man)	móngī ála
193.	sister(younger) (for man)	agbara ála
194.	mother's brother	erená toí
195.	in-law	wọ háí
196.	guest	ikénítí
197.	friend	ókó báí
198.	king	ámá ete báí
199.	hunter	ónúma tein báí
200.	thief	ewéntí
		éṛé
		tombó, ówíḃó
		ówí
		di(ḃo)
		éṛéḃó
		iyoró
		ta(ḃo)
		ómóngíḃo
		ómóngíḃo
		ḃa(ḃo)
		yingi(ḃo)
		tṽḃo
		awomee
		ówíḃo tṽḃo
		éṛéḃo tṽḃo
		imbere ómóngíḃo
		imbéré kálá tṽḃo
		imbará ómóngíḃo
		imbará kálá tṽḃo
		yingiḃo imbere
		ógō, áḃō
		igonibó
		ikiabó
		ámáyánáḃo
		námá-téin-ḃo
		fúruḃo

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
201.	doctor(native)	bótótí
202.	witch	iyórṓtí
203.	chief	dēḃen báí
204.	medicine(charm)	iyoro
205.	fetish('juju')	ọu
206.	corpse	eze nṓm
207.	God	tabíḃo
208.	one	gbṓrí
209.	two	maama
210.	three	tátó, tátá
211.	four	nēin, nēā
212.	five	túúno, túnā
213.	six	maango, maanga
214.	seven	túaama
215.	eight	túatúa
216.	nine	túunein, túunea
217.	ten	úwei, wōā
218.	eleven	úwei gbṓrí
219.	twelve	úwei maama kein
220.	thirteen	úwei tátó
221.	fourteen	úwei nēin
222.	fifteen	úwei túúno
223.	sixteen	nēin ile síi
224.	seventeen	tátó ile síi
225.	eighteen	maama kein ile síi
226.	nineteen	gbṓrí ile síi
227.	twenty	síi
228.	twenty-one	síi tẹ gbṓrí tẹ
229.	twenty-two	síi tẹ maama kein tẹ
230.	thirty	síi tẹ úwei tẹ
		bíríḃó
		ariḃó
		áláḃo
		ḃírí
		órú
		dúḃin
		támúnó
		gbér(íy)é, ingeí, gbṓrí
		maí, ma
		tíṛéí, tírá
		íní, íniá
		sónó, sṓná
		sóníó, sṓniá
		sṓnoma, sṓnómá
		níne, nína
		éséni, éséniá
		óyí, atí, óyá
		óyí gbéré fínjí
		óyí maí fínjí
		óyí tíṛéí fínjí
		ingie fa ji
		jiei
		íní fa sí
		tíṛéí fa sí
		maí fa sí
		gbéré fa sí
		sí
		sí gbéré fínjí
		sí maí fínjí
		súéí(=20+10)

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalaḅari</u>
231. forty	maama síi	mesi (= 2x20)
232. fifty	maama síiteṭe úwei te	mesi óyí fínjǐ
233. sixty	tátá síi	tési (=3x20)
234. seventy	tátá síi te úwei te	tési óyí fínjǐ
235. eighty	nēa síi	íná si
236. ninety	nēa síi te úwei te	íná si óyí fínjǐ
237. hundred	túnā síi	sóná si
238. two hundred	úwei á-síi	óyá si
239. four hundred	óbóón	éndé
240. black	ḅire	kúrúkúrú
241. white	peṇe	pínā(píná)
242. red	áwúkō	áwú
243. big(great, large)	ibo	opu(adj), ḅuḅa(v)
244. small	agbara	kálá(adj), írū(v)
245. long(of stick)	nángā	nóngó(v)
246. short(of stick)	íbā	kpúlú(v)
247. old (opp. new)	ólō	ómóngí(v)
248. new	áyá	íwó(v)
249. wet	ḅuḅu	pisí(v)
250. dry	kákárí	sámúnó(v)
251. hot(as fire)	oro	ófírí(v)
252. cold	saṅ	óbókū(v)
253. right(side)	emeneṅ kaḅa	ama ḅára
254. left	kòndó ḅa	kòndó/éré
255. good	íyókó	ibi
256. bad	sei	si
257. sweet(tasty)	ótóm	ḅelé
258. heavy	ii	íkū
259. full	ḅáya	ḅín

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalaḅari</u>
260. strong, hard	mbé	kuro
261. eat	éé	fí
262. drink	mbú	ḅú
263. swallow	mení	mení
264. bite	agba	ówín
265. lick	dúḅon	táḅā
266. taste	esé	ḅíḅí kẹ lámā
267. vomit	sóró	ósú
268. urinate	saan	sán
269. defecate	ngo	ḅíé
270. give birth	ezé	iyi
271. die	eze	fí
272. stand(up)	uun síá	sé
273. sit(down)	uun ḅa	legí
274. kneel	páráanga	kparakí
275. sleep, lie(down)	ibi	mónō, ḅololó
276. dream	ibi esé	dáwó
277. go	sia	mú, só
278. come	soo	ḅó
279. arrive	iso	lāā
280. enter	sua	só
281. climb	tandí	kpólí
282. descend	izé	íwō
283. fall	ḅéké	ḅíkí
284. walk	yáan	ménjí
285. run	ngie	mangí
286. jump	yéi	dosi
287. fly	yéma	fín
288. pass(by)	ḅia	ḅúró

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>	
9.	turn round(intr.)	kanama	kana
0.	follow	pirima	ḍúgā
1.	see	ese	erí
2.	hear	naa	na
3.	listen	naagara	pókí
4.	touch(with hand)	iyon laa	ḅára ke lámā
5.	know	jíríma	nímí
6.	think	íkéré	kuromá
7.	remember	íkéré isooma	ḅíó kúrómá
8.	forget	ḅatama	ḅíó ḅáramá
9.	learn	dídèin	ḍawó
0.	laugh	kété	derí
1.	weep(cry)	lua	owú
2.	sing	ótúó	sú
3.	dance	sésèki	sèkí
4.	play(games)	tei	tíí
5.	fear	mgbugbo	ḅálá fa
6.	greet(salute)	írí oqa	sín
7.	abuse, curse	kari	wori, kari
8.	fight	ay	owu sò
9.	call(summon)	ḅun	sín, sémā
0.	send	onionma	firimá
1.	say	faa	ḍuko, ḅéé
2.	ask(question)	gbilia	gbólā
3.	reply	pakara	pákírí
4.	ask(request)	mundu	ḅi
5.	refuse	odun	ḍuku + Neg. part
6.	like	omion	ḅélē
7.	want(desire)	karama	ḅi

		<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
318.	look for	kara	ḍokí
319.	lose(something)	ḅákí	fama
320.	get (obtain)	eté	ókí
321.	gather(things)	kobiri	kóbírí
322.	steal	éwēn	rúru
323.	take	mgbe	ókí
324.	carry(load)	éké	dógí
325.	show(something)	ese	die
326.	give	ama	pirí
327.	sell	lele	derí
328.	choose	kúomio	sele
329.	buy	sono	fé
330.	pay(for something)	sóngó	gbéé
331.	count	yaa kejin	kijen
332.	divide(share out)	ḅara	die
333.	finish(intr.)	olia	main verb + lámā
334.	catch	ari	kun
335.	shoot	tejin	tejin
336.	kill	ḅáá	ḅá
337.	skin(flay)	íkpa	ésin
338.	cook, fry	tua	sò
339.	roast	oq	foi
340.	pound(in mortar)	tuka	temi
341.	grind	saan	gbéé
342.	pour	kura	sara
343.	throw	ave	gbín
344.	sweep	ofi	ofín
345.	burn(tr.)	ooma	ḍókínā
346.	extinguish(tr.)	ḅoqma	binmá
347.	plait(hair)	luo	párí

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
348.	weave(cloth)	luo
349.	spin(thread)	kpaá
350.	put on(clothes)	tĩa
351.	sew	gbíin
352.	take off(clothes)	lele
353.	wash (things)	suku
354.	wash(body)	soro
355.	wring(clothes)	imi
356.	pull	iyánma
357.	push	daan
358.	beat(person)	pini
359.	beat(drum)	onuna
360.	break(pot, calabash)	ɓáá
361.	break(a stick)	ajuma
362.	tear(tr.)	kakara
363.	split(tr.)	paya
364.	pierce	anga
365.	hoe, dig	soki
366.	sow, plant	kura
367.	bury	libi
368.	build	anga
369.	mould	búra
370.	carve(wood)	ebe
371.	make	yáa
372.	hold	ari
373.	tie	kuma
374.	untie	kpokpo
375.	cover(a pot)	kpana
376.	open(door)	qoma

	<u>Defaka</u>	<u>Kalabari</u>
377.	close	kpana
378.	(be) rotten	se yáan
379.	stink	qrɔ
380.	swell (of boil)	fukɔ
381.	blow (with mouth)	oforo
382.	blow (of wind)	fukuma
383.	surpass	nengema
384.	dwell	mbaa

<u>Kalabari</u>
gbáin
ɓuru
fúrú
fóin
ófúró
fiyé
nengi(ma)
ángá, simé

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