

THE NORTH BANTOID HYPOTHESIS



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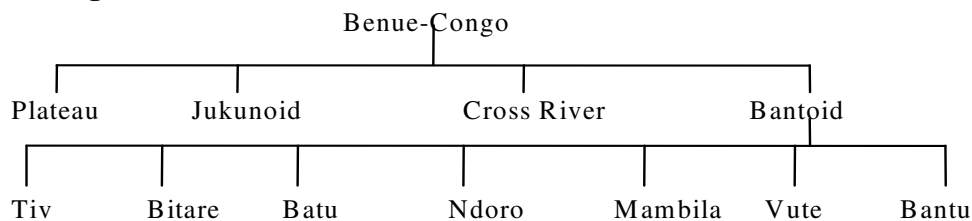
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1. Introduction: Bantoid

The classification of the large and complex set of languages generally known under the name ‘Bantoid’ has generally been given substantially less attention than the Bantu languages. There are two main reasons for this; the lack of descriptive material on many of these languages and their extreme phonological and morphological diversity. It was pointed out as early as 1886 that a wide range of West African languages exhibited noun-class features analogous to those classified as ‘Bantu’ (Johnston 1886). Johnston later went on to produce an extensive study of Bantu and ‘Semi-Bantu’ pointing out these connections without clarifying the implications for genetic relationships or otherwise (Johnston 1919, 1922). Westermann (1927) mentioned but did not explore the links between ‘Western Sudanic’ [Niger-Congo] and Bantu. Guthrie (1971,4:107-111) considered the problem briefly in his excursus ‘Bantuisms in non-Bantu languages’ but concluded that the links with languages such as Efik were so reduced as to be of little importance historically.

The work of Greenberg first appeared in the early 1950s, but was synthesised in book form in Greenberg (1963). In this work, Greenberg regarded Bantu as merely a branch of Benue-Congo, i.e. the group of languages of southern and eastern Nigeria. He says ‘the Bantu languages are simply a subgroup of an already established genetic subfamily of Western Sudanic (i.e. Niger-Congo, broadly speaking) (Greenberg, 1963:32). His classification is represented graphically in Figure 1;

Figure 1. Greenberg’s classification of Bantu



Greenberg further stated ‘Supposedly transitional languages are really Bantu’ (op. cit. 35). In other words, many languages without the features supposed to define Bantu are in fact genetically affiliated to Bantu. This hypothesis, that Bantu is simply a ‘subgroup’ of Benue-Congo, is now broadly accepted. However, since the 1960’s, data on the vast and complex array of languages in the ‘Bantu borderland’ has become available making such a simple ‘co-ordinate branch’ model inadequate to understand the linguistic ethnohistory of the region.

This paper¹ focuses on two groups of languages in this transitional zone, whose relationships with each other and to the other Bantoid languages as well as to Benue-Congo remain controversial. The Dakoid languages, spoken in East-Central Nigeria and the Mambiloid languages spoken in Nigeria and adjacent Cameroun have recently been studied in greater depth. New data open up the possibilities of more detailed hypotheses concerning their genetic affiliation and in turn throw light on the relationship of Bantoid to Bantu.

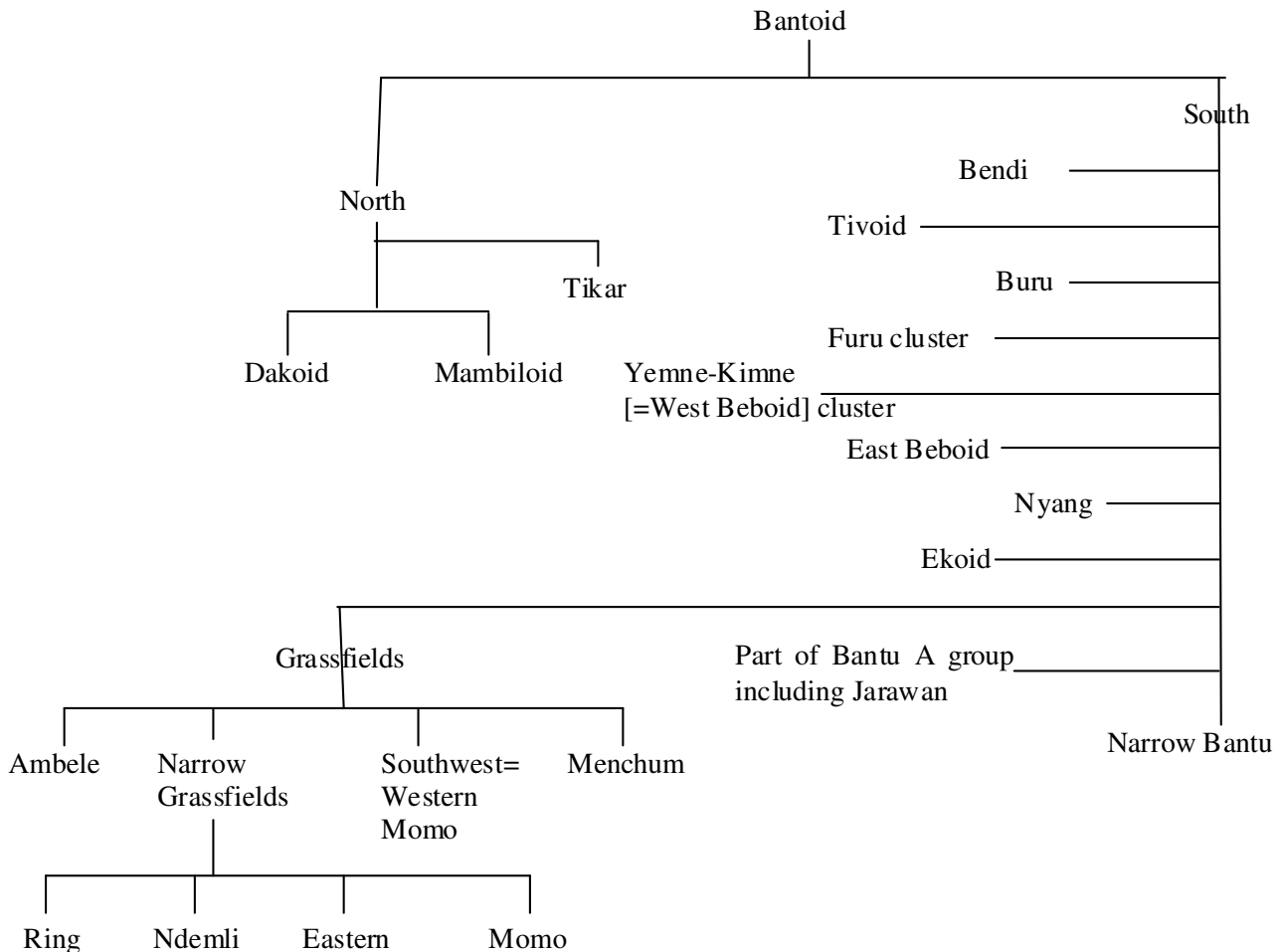
¹ The data for this paper is based on fieldwork conducted in the 1980s in the former Gongola State of Nigeria, and I am grateful to a wide range of informants who assisted me to put together the wordlists. Raymond Boyd and Richard Fardon kindly gave me access to their unpublished Daka data, especially the computer file of the Daka lexicon, which makes searching cognates substantially less time-consuming. Bruce Connell has made available his substantial database on Mambiloid languages and discussed the paper in various drafts. Thanks also to Robert Hedinger and Marieke Martin for access to unpublished field materials. The original notion of ‘North Bantoid’ was advanced in a conference presentation together with Kay Williamson although the present paper bears little resemblance, textually or in argumentation, to that paper. The Bantoid ‘tree’ has undergone numerous updates, most recently for the Bantu IV conference in Berlin in April 2011.

2. The branches of North Bantoid

2.1 The classification of Bantoid

Blench and Williamson (1987) made a tentative proposal to link together Dakoid and Mambiloid in a grouping they called ‘North Bantoid’ which they opposed to the other Bantoid languages, ‘South Bantoid’ which included Bantu proper. The resultant ‘tree’ was an earlier version of Figure 2;

Figure 2. Genetic tree of Bantoid languages



The classification of Bantoid languages included here is not the subject of this paper, but is given to clarify the other languages that are contenders in the complex question of the relations between Bantu and Bantoid. Additional accounts of the evolution of the classification of Bantoid can be found in Williamson (1971), Watters (1989) and Piron (1996). The evidence for the North Bantoid hypothesis at that stage was frankly, rather limited, and most of the original proposals in support of this grouping have had to be eliminated. This did not prevent the hypothesis from being replicated in various places, most notably Hedinger (1989) and Watters (1989). This was indicative of a lack of fresh research in this area rather than a critique of these authors. It has been criticised in general terms in Boyd (1994) for whom Dakoid is not Bantoid at all, and Piron (1996) who accepted the genetic assignation but rejected a specific link between Dakoid and Mambiloid.

Tikar was added to North Bantoid in more recent years as part of unpublished proposals in earlier version of the present paper. From lying largely outside the interest of most Africanist studies, Bantoid has recently come back into focus and the availability of new data has made a re-evaluation of the North Bantoid hypothesis more urgent. Sections (2.2-4) summarise research on Mambiloid, Dakoid and Tikar, and in

particular the evidence for nominal morphology which is a key to relations between the various branches of Bantoid. An extensive appendix includes a survey of potential cognates between the proposed branches of North Bantoid and which provides the backbone of sound-correspondences.

2.2 Mambiloid

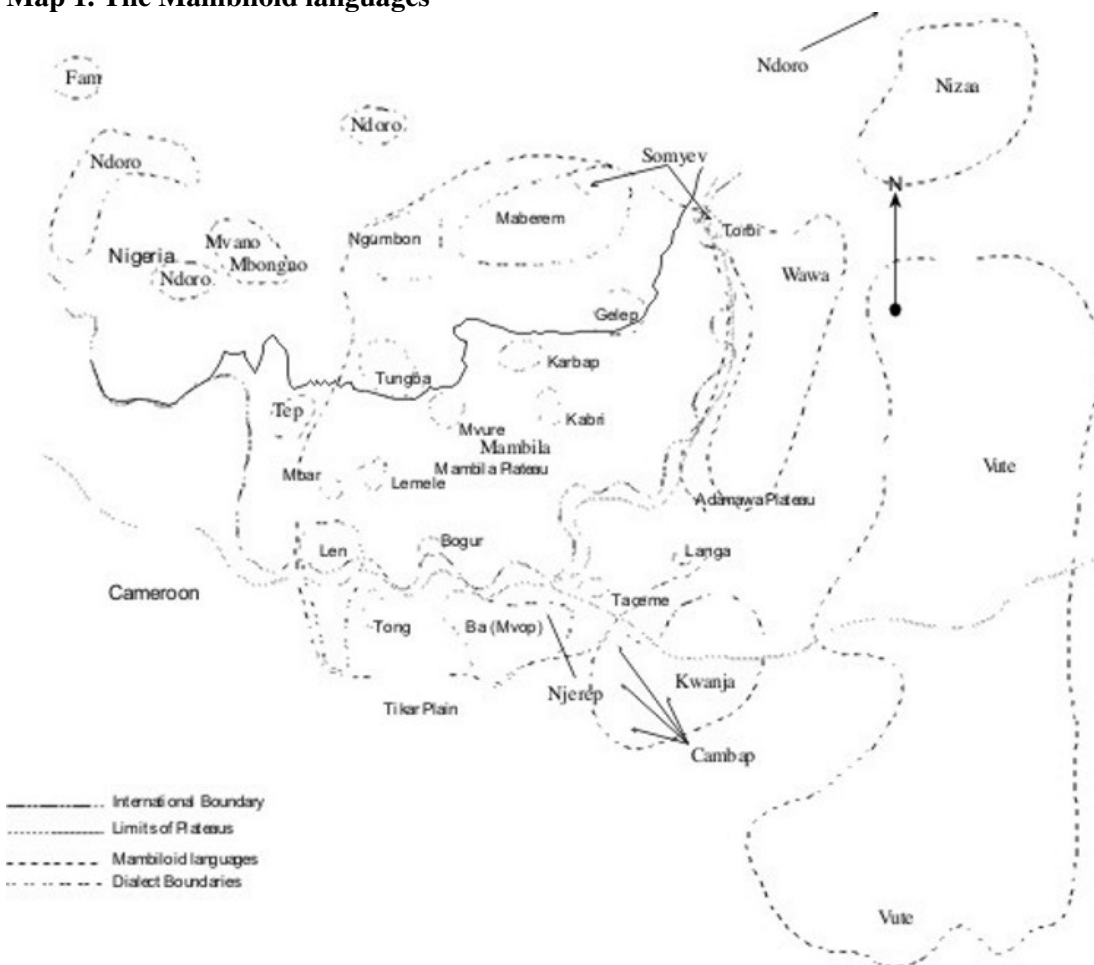
2.2.1 Overview

The linking together of languages such as Ndoro, Vute and Mambila derives from Greenberg (1963) (see Figure 1). Greenberg (1963:9), in a famous passage, treated these languages as co-ordinate branches of his group D of Benue-Congo, along with Tiv, Batu and Bantu itself. Earlier surveys, such as Richardson (1957), simply lump together these languages as ‘non-Bantu’ in a category that also includes Adamawa-Ubangian. The recognition of the unity of the group appears first in Williamson (1971) who proposed a 2-way split within Bantoid, between Bantu and non-Bantu languages, a division which Greenberg (1974) later accepted.

The use of the term ‘Mambiloid’ to group together a number of languages spoken in the grassy uplands between Nigeria and Cameroon is of fairly recent vintage. It was first introduced informally in the summary of a paper where the newly christened Mambiloid and Tivoid were linked (Greenberg 1974). Greenberg proposed a two-way division within Bantoid with Bane and Bantu as the other co-ordinate branch. Meussen (1974) replying to Greenberg, wished to treat Bane and Bantu as co-ordinate subdivisions of Bantu but did not question the Tivoid/Mambiloid grouping.

Map 1 shows the distribution of Mambiloid languages in the Nigeria/Cameroun borderland.

Map 1. The Mambiloid languages



Source: Courtesy Bruce Connell

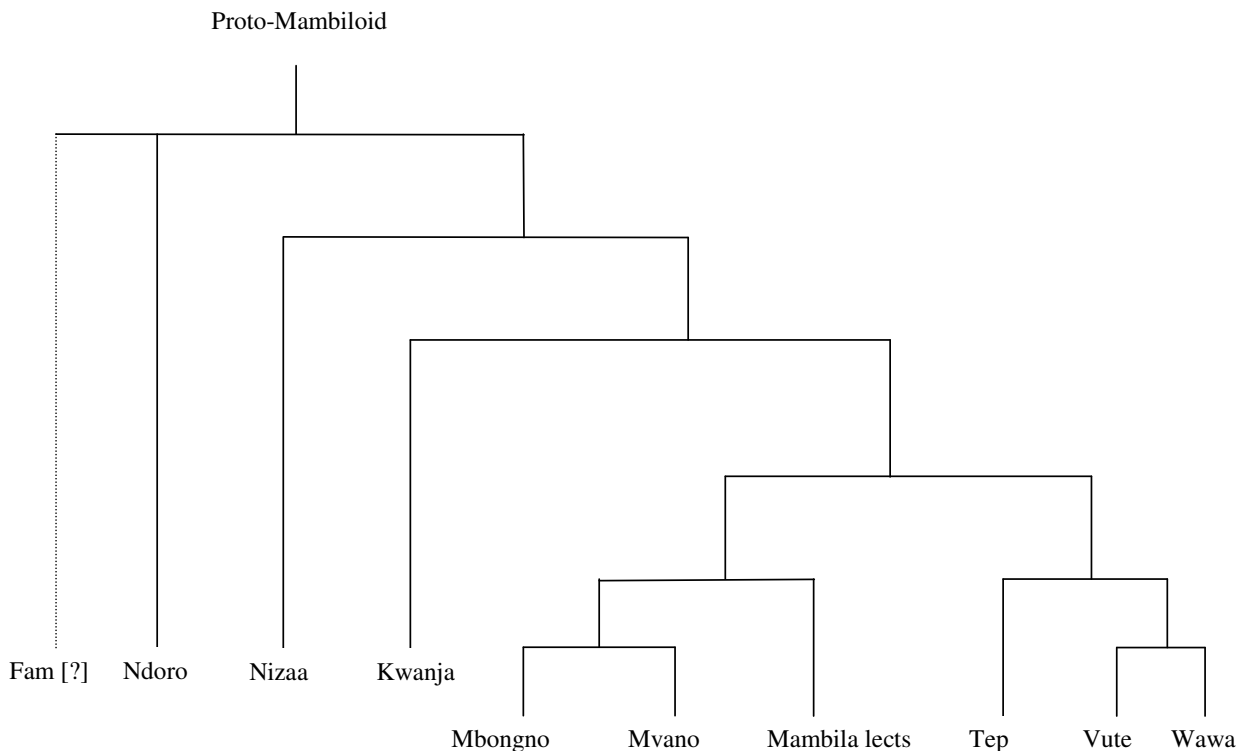
Williamson (1971) recognised ‘Mambila-Wute’ as consisting of the Mambila cluster (including Kamkam, Tep, Kila etc.), Ndoro and Vute (=Wute, Buti and including Gandua etc.) and this was reprised by Bennett

& Sterk (1977) in their Niger-Congo reclassification. The ALCAM classification of Camerounian languages added two further groups, Nizaa [=Nyamnyam, Suga] and Konja [Kwanja] (Dieu & Renaud, 1983). Blench (1993) published a summary of everything known at the time about Mambiloid languages and put forward some suggestions for isoglosses relating the whole family.

The unity of Mambiloid remains controversial. Boyd (1994) regarded Vute and Mambila as having no particular relationship and Endresen (1989, 1992a,b) sets out the correspondences between Nizaa [Suga] and Common Bantu, without looking at its nearer relatives. Two MA theses and an associated unpublished dictionary have expanded our knowledge of Nizaa grammatical structure (Kjelsvik 2002; Pepper 2010). Connell (p.c.) remains doubtful about the inclusion of the poorly documented Fam language but has published in several places on the overall unity of Mambiloid. However, as a result of considerably expanded work and the first recording of some lects, considerable progress has been made in this area (Connell 1995, 1996a,b, 1997a,b, 1998, 2000a,b, 2001, 2002a,b, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010; Connell & Bird 1997; Connell & Zeitlyn 2000). Bruce Connell's substantial but still incomplete database of Mambiloid languages provides an important starting point for investigating its wider affiliations.

Figure 3 shows a tentative tree of the Mambiloid languages in its latest incarnation. Earlier versions of this tree had Ndoro and Fam as a co-ordinate branch, but on further analysis, the membership of Fam in Mambiloid is highly uncertain. It shows more links with Mambiloid than any other branch of Bantoid, but this may be the incidence of areal features. Hence it is now represented as a single branch of Mambiloid with a dotted line marking the uncertainty of its affiliation.

Figure 3. The Mambiloid languages



2.2.2 Phonology

There is no current reconstruction of proto-Mambiloid phonology. Blench (1993) presents a common inventory of the consonant system and Connell (2001) a more comprehensive overview of the phonologies of specific branches of Mambiloid.

2.2.3 Nominal morphology

None of the Mambiloid languages today has a complete functioning noun class system with concord, although there are traces of such systems all across the family. Blench (1993) reviewed the evidence available up to the time of publication, but a much greater expansion of material makes it possible to give a more complete account. Martin (2011) has explored the traces for noun classes, starting from the situation in Wawa. In Mambila proper, the affix system appears to have completely disappeared and been replaced by the all-purpose number-marking suffix *-bu*. In Zongo Ajiya Ndoola [Ndoro], *-bu* is the common number marker, but prefixed *a-* has also been incorporated into the system, probably through contact with Jukunoid. Elsewhere, in Vute and Wawa, for example, number-marking is through a series of suffixes. However, in Wawa at least, some of these can be prefixed to the noun, and there are also traces of fossilised nominal affixes, some of which show affinities with more widespread Niger-Congo noun-classes. It is therefore probably useful to distinguish number-marking from noun-class pairings, which show evidence of being two separate subsystems. Table 1 summarises the suffixed number markers in Mambiloid languages

Table 1. Suffixed number markers in Mambiloid languages

Language	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Source
Vute	-ø/-b	-ø/-m	-ø,-r/-y	Ṽŋ/-ŋ,-k,-n,			Thwing (1987)
Wawa		-ø/-m			-ø/-rə, lə	-ø/-tə	Martin (2011)
Kwanja	-ø/-bì, -bà					-ø/-tì (-V)	Weber (n.d.)
Nizaa	-ø/-wu	(-m)	-ø/-ya				Endresen (1992)
Mambila	-ø/-bò						Perrin n.d. a
Ndoola (ZA)	-ø/-bú		-ø/-í, -í				Connell & Blench (fieldnotes)
Ndoola (B)	-ra, -ø/-bu	-ø/-ma	-ø/-yí, -bəyi			-ø/-ʃí	Blench (fieldnotes)

Two Ndoola lects were recorded, one in Zongo Ajiya on the Mambila Plateau, the other in Baissa, west of there, and off the Plateau. In Vute and Wawa, many of these can also be prefixes in certain nouns, although the trigger for this remains unclear.

Noun-classes can have alternations between zero and an affix as a result of erosion, but in principle there should always be tonal or relics of an agreement system. The fact that in Mambiloid, this subsystem always appears as an opposition between zero and a C or CV morpheme argues that we should see this as a system of number-marking, which has evolved subsequently to the erosion of noun-classes proper. If so, then it appears that a reconstruction of four number-marking suffixes, roughly *-bV*, *-mV*, *-yi* and *-ti*, is credible. Additional evidence can be sought from fossil morphology. For example, Nizaa has no singular/plural alternation with an *-m* suffix, but this does appear on a variety of nouns for liquids (cf. Martin 2011). A similarly morpheme survives in Baissa Ndoola, but no longer in Zongo Ajiya.

2.3 Dakoid

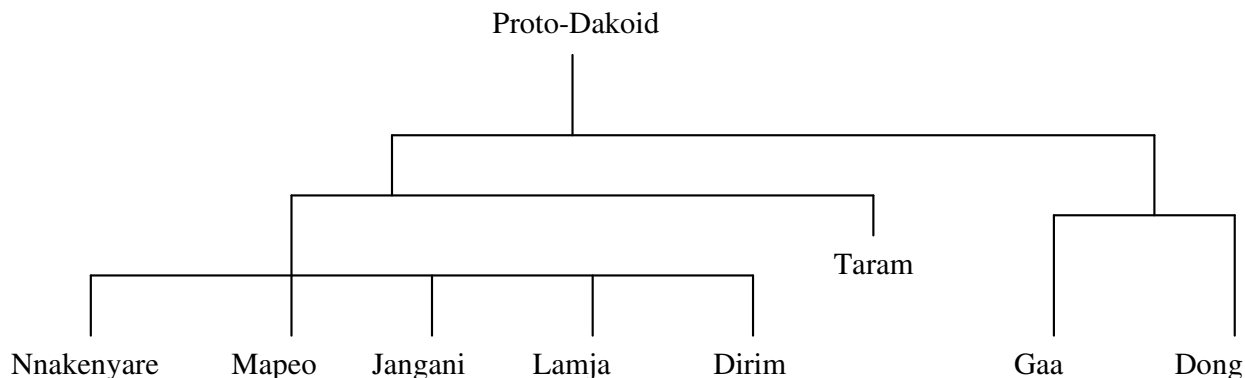
2.3.1 Overview

The first published data on the Dakoid languages is Strümpell (1910). A richer source is Meek (1931, I 394 ff.) who appended wordlists of Daka of Gandole, Taram and Dirrim of Kwagiri to his discussion of their ethnology. Meek recognised that Lamja, Chamba of ‘Tsugu’ (=Sugu i.e. the Chamba of Ganye) and Chamba of Nasarawa should be classified together, although he does not give wordlists. Meek noted the cultural similarities with the Leko languages but does not advance a hypothesis as to why their languages should be so different. Westermann & Bryan (1952) placed Daka and associated lects in an ‘isolated language group’, abnegating responsibility for classifying them.

The first attempt to classify a Daka language appears to be Greenberg (1963) who put Daka together with Leko as part of the Adamawa group. Bennett (1983) in a wide-ranging study of Adamawa languages considered this to be erroneous and proposed that Daka would better be classified with the Benue-Congo

languages. The reference article on Adamawa by Boyd (1989) accepted this reclassification and noted close links with the ‘Nyamnyam’ language (now generally known as Nizaa). Blench (1984) also picked up on Bennett’s suggestion and pointed out that Chamba Daka was not an isolated language but part of a cluster of unknown size and complexity, for which the name ‘Dakoid’ was proposed. During the 1980s additional fieldwork on Dakoid languages added some richness to this picture and a proposal for the internal structure of Dakoid was circulated (Figure 4);

Figure 4. The Dakoid languages



Earlier versions of this appeared in Blench (1989), Hedinger (1989), Crozier & Blench (1992) and Blench (1993).

The Dong [Dõ] language is spoken by a community that defines itself as Mumuye. Dong is known from a wordlist circulated by Blench (n.d.) partly reprised in Piron (1996). Blench (op. cit.) suggested links with Dakoid, although the material was too fragmentary to be sure, especially as Dong has very large numbers of loanwords (or cognates with) neighbouring Adamawa languages. Boyd (in ms.) has suggested that Dong is part of the Mumuye group although he gives no evidence for this belief.

Research on the Dakoid languages has been limited, with the exception of Raymond Boyd (Boyd 1994; Boyd and Fardon n.d.) and unpublished data collected by the present writer. Boyd (1994) considers the classification of Chamba Daka and apparently considers that Chamba Daka is a Niger-Congo isolate, although this is not explicitly stated in the text. Boyd (1999) has published a wordlist of Gaa [=Tiba] showing parallels in nearby Adamawa languages but considers the cognates with Daka as evidence for massive borrowing rather than a possible Dakoid affiliation². However, the other Dakoid languages remain unstudied and even the exact composition of the group remains disputed.

Table 2. Linguistic data sources on Dakoid languages

Lect	Source or reference
Nnakenyare	Boyd (1994), Blench ms.
Kiri	Edwards ms.
Gandole	Meek (1931)
Mapeo	Boyd (1994) and ms.
Jangani	Blench ms.
Lamja	Blench ms.
Dirim	Meek (1931), Edwards ms.
Taram	Meek (1931)
Gaa (=Tiba)	Blench ms., Boyd (1999)
Dõ	Gambo ms., Blench ms.

Data on Kiri and Gandole are not reliably transcribed and seems not to be sufficiently separate from Nnakenyare as to indicate a distinct classification. Tola is cited by some Daka as a distinct dialect but a visit to the settlement of Tola suggested this was based more on perceived ethnic differences than true linguistic

² Author comment on the online version with corrections

separation. However, there may well be more Dakoid lects as yet unrecorded in the foothills of the Shebshi mountains.

2.3.2 Nominal morphology

Daka has synchronically only a few exceptional lexical items with plural alternations. These are given in Boyd (1994:18) and with one exception are apparently adjectives;

s.	pl.	Gloss
dèèrí	dèmsá	long, far
tòrí	tòpsá	short, near
wàrí	wòpsá	big
míí	méém	small, child
sòkáä	sòkúüm	younger, junior

Boyd (1994:18) observes that the word structure of Daka makes it likely that it once had a productive system of suffixes and draws from this the conclusion that its classification within Benue-Congo must be erroneous. However, Mambiloid languages also once had a thoroughgoing suffix system and their Benue-Congo affiliation is not in question, suggesting that the same could have been true of Dakoid. If Daka word structures suggest fossil suffixes then it may be that they resemble some of those in Mambiloid. Possible suffixes are shown in Table 3;

Table 3. Possible fossil suffixes in Daka

Suffix	Examples	Gloss
-ba	líbá ‘cloth pouch’,	?
-ŋa	jàáŋà ‘okra’,	?
-k(á)	lúká ‘pimple’, wúuk ‘fish’	
-lá	dóláa ‘heap’, jiŋláa ‘hyena’, kòŋláa ‘elephant’,	?
-lí	jàmlí ‘flute’ kúmlí ‘cotton’, nyèŋlí ‘coals’	
-m(a)	bùsùm ‘ant’, sékum ‘flying ash’, tékùm ‘middle’, tóòmáa ‘ashes’	
-n	júrèn ‘anus’, kàsen ‘captive’, nyíngèn ‘shadow’,	
-p	bàrùp ‘twins’, béep ‘money’, bòòp ‘blindness’, sèp ‘chisel’,	
-rí	yírí ‘sorghum’,	= -lí ?
-sà	díísà ‘owl’, nyàáksà ‘crow’, nyèsà ‘breast’, vàsà ‘laterite’	
-sí	gipsí ‘body hair’, gòŋsí ‘life’, jòsí ‘star’, kəsí ‘limit’, láŋsí ‘rite’, nyémsí ‘armpit’	
-y	bày ‘cowry’, bəy ‘bushbuck’, ɔkàáy ‘maize’,	

Of these, the -p, -m, -n, -si, -ri, and -y affixes appear to be very similar in both Mambiloid and Dakoid.

2.4 Tikar

2.4.1 Overview

Tikar is a cover term for three relatively similar dialects spoken in the Cameroun Grassfields, Tikari, Tige and Tumu (Stanley 1991). Tikar is spoken on the Tikar plain, south and south-east of Mambiloid proper, and it shares a common border with some Mambila and Kwanja lects in Cameroun. The Tikar Plain, a highly multi-lingual region, is referenced in many early administrative documents. Koelle (1954) includes a Tikar wordlist, but the first analysis of the Tikar language may be in Westermann & Bryan (1952) who considered it an isolated language. Richardson (1957) groups it with Bantoid and Williamson (1971) treats it as an isolated subgroup of her Bantu node. Clearly, the Tikar language has always been somewhat problematic in terms of its classification. Dieu & Renaud (1983) placed it together with Ndemli, another language that is hard to classify, although this may be simply an admission of ignorance. Piron (1996, III:628) recognises it as part of her non-Bantu group and assigns it a co-ordinate branch with Dakoid, Tivoid, Grassfields and the other branches of Bantoid (her ‘South Bantoid’) in opposition to Mambiloid. Stanley (1991) notes that Tikar has many lexical similarities with the neighbouring Bafia (A53) but that the morphosyntax is quite different.

The main sources for this language are Hagège (1969), Jackson & Stanley (1977), Jackson (1980, 1984, 1987, 1988), Stanley (1982a,b,c; 1991) and Stanley-Thorne (1995). Following the establishment of a literacy programme, Tikar has been studied intensively and there are various academic papers on the syntax as well as a doctoral thesis (Stanley 1991). Separately a series of lexical studies published in German exist (Mamadou 1981, 1984). There is also an unpublished lexicon³ (Jackson 1988). The Bankim dialect, Twumwu, is the principal one chosen for standardisation and development. Nonetheless, primary comparisons do suggest that Tikar plays a role in the North Bantoid grouping and it is tentatively assigned a co-ordinate position with the Dakoid-Mambiloid grouping.

2.4.2 Phonology

The Tikar vowels form a symmetrical system which is highly idiosyncratic for the Grassfields (Table 4);

Table 4 Tikar Vowel Chart

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
Mid-Low	ɛ		ɔ
Low		æ	a

Source: Stanley (1991)

There are no nasalised vowels, but two diphthongs are recorded, *ea* and *oa*. There seems to be no trace of ATR vowel harmony, with vowels of any set co-occurring with any other.

Consonants

Table 5 shows the consonants of Tikar according to Stanley (1991:13);

Table 5. Tikar consonants

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveola	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	ɟʒ	k g	kp gb	
Nasal	m		n	ɲ	ŋ		
Fricative	ɸ	v	s	ʃ	ɣ		h
Implosive	ɓ		ɗ				
Lateral			l				
Approximant				y		w	

Tones

The description of Tikar tones appears to be somewhat contradictory. Stanley (1991:7) summarises the tonal system as four contrastive tones, Low, High, Rising and Falling with High unmarked. However, in a more detailed section, she provides evidence for three tone levels;

són esclave
 sōn hache
 sòn fibres de raphia

as well as a richer set of modulated tones. It can be assumed that Tikar has a three-tone system for all practical purposes.

³ Thanks to Robert Hedinger for an updated Unicode version of the Toolbox database

2.4.3 Nominal morphology

Stanley (1991, 1995) presents the noun-class system of Tikar. There are just two singular (one of which is zero) and two plural prefixes, *mè-* and *yì*, which do not obviously resemble characteristic Niger-Congo affixes and may be invariant number markers. However, Tikar has a richer array of existentials (called ‘identifiers’ by Stanley in English and *monèmes d’identification* in the original French), which precede the nouns. This terminology derives from Welmers’ (1973) description of Senari, a Senufoïd language, with an apparently similar system. These are probably old determiners although they have the curious feature that any individual singular existential can be paired with any plural which somehow does not make them resemble old noun-class markers. These are as follows (Table 6);

Table 6. Tikar existential morpheme pairings

Singular		Plural		
Morpheme	Class		Class	Morpheme
nɛ	1	→	2	bɛ
sɛ	3	→	4	yɛ
yɛ	5	→	6	nɛ

Source: Stanley (1995)

With all possible pairing this allows a systems of eight genders. Correlations with semantic classes are confined to humans, animals and body parts etc. with additional genders that appear to be miscellaneous. The Tikar system cannot be correlated with classical Bantu noun-classes; it appears to have been rebuilt rather radically. However, the lexicon suggests that Tikar once had a productive system of suffixes which is now fossilised. Tikar has a limited number of plurals showing initial consonant alternation, some which add *-i* prefixes and other which have alternating nasal prefixes (Hagège 1969:37-38). Syllable-final consonants are few in number. However, Tikar appears to have *-li*, *-m* and *-p* fossil affixes shown in Table 7 (Jackson & Stanley 1976:50; my examples).

Table 7. Possible fossil suffixes in Tikar

Suffix	Examples
-li	<i>nyili</i> ‘love’, <i>ɲkeli</i> ‘bamboo sp.’, <i>kùkùlì</i> ‘ant’, <i>lèlì</i> ‘uncle’
-m(i)	<i>gwùm</i> ‘abscess’, <i>kikæmi</i> ‘tree’, <i>ɲwùm</i> ‘iron’
-p/b	<i>kwèb</i> ‘wing’, <i>lèb</i> ‘tree sp.’, <i>twìb</i> ‘mushroom sp.’, <i>dèb</i> ‘sky’, <i>m̀lib</i> ‘woman’,

Other CV finals in Tikar are associated with loanwords.

3. Evidence for the North Bantoid hypothesis

3.1 General

Evidence for the North Bantoid hypothesis is driven by the available data; lexical, phonological and morphological correspondences have been identified (§3.). but syntactic material is too scarce to be adduced. Establishing that lexical cognates are not the result of contact remains problematic. In the present, Dakoid and Mambiloid languages have hardly any direct common border although Taram may adjoin Ndoola. However, this state of affairs is probably recent; the establishment of the Gumpti-Gashaka National Park in 1975 has driven a wedge between the two populations. Almost certainly the Daka groups formerly spread further southeast of the Shebshi mountains and there would have been Ndoola settlements throughout this region. Despite this, there appears to be no evidence of a particular relationship between Ndoola and Dakoid. However, language interaction in this region can be quite intensive and quite a weighty body of evidence is needed to ensure that similarities are not simply ancient loanwords. As noted above, Tikar borders on Mambiloid and some common lexical items may be due to geographical proximity and contact rather than true genetic affiliation.

3.2 Lexical evidence

Lexical items linking Dakoid, Mambiloid and Tikar are of three types;

- a) Those apparently found only in Dakoid and Mambiloid
- b) Those found in Dakoid and Mambiloid and in other Bantoid languages or Proto-Bantu
- c) Those shared with other branches of Niger-Congo

Items falling in category a) can be taken as evidence of a possible relationship between Dakoid and Mambiloid. Items falling in category b) can be taken as evidence of a relationship between Dakoid and Mambiloid inasmuch as both are part of Bantoid. In some cases, despite cognacy with a Bantu root, the particular morphology of a lexical item may mark it off as part of the Dakoid/Mambiloid grouping. Items falling in category c) simply demonstrate that both are part of Niger-Congo and may serve to confirm an already established phonological correspondence. Only a small sample of these are given, usually where the second syllable appears to show features that may be innovative.

All the lexical evidence so far accumulated is given in the Appendix and the numbers assigned to the proposed cognate sets are used to support the sound-correspondences given in §Table 8.

3.3 Phonological evidence

The basis of the phonological correspondences are the lexical correspondences given in the Appendix. At present these represent only a small subset of the lexical items the two groups share as they exclude common Niger-Congo roots which these languages share with many others. A rapid examination of such 'external' roots suggests that the picture would not alter significantly.

In an ideal world it would be possible to compare the reconstructed sound-systems of Mambiloid and Dakoid. Blench (1993) proposed a 'common Mambiloid' sound-system based on simple inspection of the lects then available. New data from the work of Connell (unpublished) suggests that this model was oversimplified. The phonology of Dakoid lects remains implicit in published work as it has yet to be described. In view of this, a hypothetical sound-system can be derived from evident sound-correspondences, but this is no substitute for a regular reconstruction. The Tikar sample is too small to establish regular correspondences and so no reference is made to it in these tables.

Sound correspondences

Sound-correspondences are easier to establish for consonants than for vowels. Consonants alone are given at present, pending further work on the internal reconstruction of Mambiloid vowel systems.

Consonants

Table 8 shows all the principal correspondences found in the lexical examples using Mambiloid as the primary source as it shows greater diversity than Dakoid.

Table 8. Consonant correspondences between Mambiloid and Dakoid

Class	Mambiloid	Dakoid	Examples
Stops			
Bilabial	b	b	1., 19., 22., 27., 39., 48., 58.,
	b	p	66.
Labio-dental	v	v	56.
Dental	t	t	31., 66., 71., 76., 91., 96.
	t	d	33.
	d	d	17., 29., 72., 77.
	nd	d	57.
Dental palatal	ɕʝ	j	28., 42., 47.
	ɕʝ	k	46.
	ɕʝ	d	5., 60., 70.
	ʧ	ɕʝ	41., 25.
	ʧ	k	46.
	ʧ	t	65.
Alveolar			
Fricative	s	s	8., 11., 20., 37., 45.
Palato-alveolar	s	ʃ	85.
	ʃ	ʃ	32.
Velar	g	g	2., 36., 55., 64.
	g	k	21., 44.
	k	k	3., 6., 12., 15., 23., 26., 30., 31., 43.
Labial-velar	kw	kp	68., 92.
	gb	gb	7., 61.
	g	gb	13., 24.
Nasals			
Alveolar	n	n	54., 79., 89.
Palatal	ɲ	ɲ	52., 87., 95.,
	ɲ	nw	16.
	ɲ	n	53.
Bilabial	m	m	5., 6., 25., 36., 49., 73., 84., 94.
Velar	ŋ	ŋ	19., 82.
Laterals			
Approximant	l	l	82., 80.
	r	l	38.
Tap/Trill	r	r	3., 43., 64., 77.
	r	d	26.
Approximant			
Palatal	y	y	63., 83.
Glottal	w	w	10., 38.

Dakoid does not have prenasalised stops in initial position and in many examples, all trace of nasalisation appears to be lost (see, for example, 19., 36., 57.). In the case of nasal palatals, however, palatalisation is sometimes lost in Dakoid (examples 53.) or retained (example 87., 95.). In some examples, it seems that a nasal prefix in Mambiloid is reflected either in C₂ or in a syllable-final nasal in Dakoid and in Tikar (26., 44., 61., 67.). There also some cases where words with a nasal prefix in Tikar have deleted this prefix in Mambiloid (examples 71., 75.)

Vowels

Dakoid (with the exception of Gaa) does not allow sequences of dissimilar vowels and the numerous VV sequences presumably derive from deletion of C₂ and vowel-assimilation, usually V₁ to judge by external cognates. In most cases the same rule applies in Nizaa, although the -w and -y final sequences may represent lost high back and high front vowels. According to Jackson & Stanley (1976:44), Tikar has a symmetrical eight-vowel system, six of which can be nasalised. Nizaa allows pairs of similar nasalised

vowels while Dakoid (except Dong) does not. Usually, but not always, the nasal appears elsewhere in the Dakoid forms (see examples 10., 20., 91., 95.).

3.4 Morphological evidence

Despite their relationship to Bantu and to Benue-Congo, neither Dakoid nor Mambiloid has synchronic system of alternating nominal affixes showing concord. The ‘headline’ languages, Nnakenyare and Gembu Mambila, both have a generalised plural marker *-bu*. At first sight this might seem to be good morphological evidence linking the two groups, but this is certainly misleading. At least in the case of Mambiloid this system is probably quite recent, and may even be an areal phenomenon, since *-bu* is also a plural marker used in Saharan languages, hence Tubu, Kanembu etc. Nearby Adamawa languages have generalised plural markers, for example Samba Leko **birá** and it seems likely that the loss of class affixes is an example of regional drift.

Dakoid has virtually entirely lost any active system of morphological number marking and it is possible that what does exist is a consequence of contact with the unrelated but cultural close Leko language. However, there seem to be extensive traces of a fossil suffix system and some suffixes appear to correspond broadly to those in Mambiloid. The Vute alternation *-ɲ/-m* and Ngoro *-ɲ/-ma* seems to parallel that in Daka and in the case of Ngoro ‘child’, *òɲé/òyámá*, to apply to the same lexical item.

Some Mambiloid languages, such as Wawa show clearly that the process of transition between prefixing and suffixing is still current, as it is in Tivoid, for example (Greenberg 1977). However, the situation is confused by a cross-cutting system of non-concordial number-marking. So Wawa retains some old Niger-Congo affixes, such as the *-m* for mass nouns and liquids, together with innovated markers which do not reflect these systems. It remains to be seen whether these are a local development in Vute-Wawa or should be reconstructed further back in Mambiloid. There is also an intriguing difference between the two dialects of Ngoro. In Zongo Ajiya, the number-marking seems to have been almost completely stripped away, perhaps through contact with Mambiloid. However, in the Baissa lect, more alternations are preserved.

Tikar has an innovative system of number marking where the actual bound morphemes are highly reduced but where the complexity of the system is increased through separate existential. However, it does have a small number of fossil affixes (Table 7), some of which seem to be cognate with those in Vute-Wawa, for example *-p/b* and *-li*.

It seems possible to match at least some of the proposed number marking affixes from all three branches of North Bantoid with one another, although the correspondence between Dakoid and Mambiloid is clearer than with Tikar. Table 9 shows the proposals for matching active and fossil number-marking morphemes in North Bantoid;

Table 9. Matching active and fossil number-marking morphemes in North Bantoid

Family	I	II	III	IV
Mambiloid	-bV	-mV	-yí	-tí
Dakoid	-p	-m(a)	-y	-sí
Tikar	-p/b	-m(i)		

We do not yet have very comprehensive data on fossil morphology in some key Mambiloid languages and this prevents a definitive resolution of this hypothesis for the moment.

4. Conclusion

The data on Dakoid, Mambiloid and Tikar remains too exiguous for any definitive solution to be possible at present. Mambiloid and Dakoid have striking internal divisions and clearer proof both their composition and internal structure remains an important priority. However, while Mambiloid and Dakoid have numerous lexical links, the source of these could be substrate languages, more intense geographical contact at an earlier period or inheritance from related Plateau languages whose lexicon and phonology also remain poorly known. This paper suggests that there is *a priori* evidence for a North Bantoid grouping and that it

should be regarded as a hypothesis for further investigation. The links with Tikar are also significant. Despite extensive borrowing between Tikar and A50 languages, the morphophonology of Tikar is highly distinctive and suggest a period of evolution separate from both Bantu and the other branches of North Bantoid.

Adamawa languages are distributed across the northern limit of Dakoid languages and there is every reason to think that there has been intensive interaction between Adamawa and Dakoid as well as other Benue-Congo languages further west. Dõ in particular shows both long-term Adamawa influence and more recent influence from Mumuye lects. If it is true that Adamawa is a more ancient branching of Niger-Congo than Bantoid, it seems likely that it was spread across this area *before* the Benue-Congo languages began to diffuse east and south. Contact with Adamawa languages may well be the source of significant lexical innovation in East Benue-Congo languages and in particular it may be that the trend towards suffixed number-marking has been adopted from Adamawa.

Appendix I: Lexical Evidence for North Bantoid

ACRONYMS

Acronym	Language(s)	Reference
#		Quasi-reconstruction
B1	Daka	Boyd (1994)
B2	Gaa	Boyd (1999)
BF	Daka	Boyd & Fardon (ined)
C	Mambiloid	Bruce Connell (unpublished wordlists)
E	Nizaa	Endresen (1989)
G	Common Bantu	Guthrie (1967-71)
Gu	Vute	Guarisma (1978)
J	Tikar	Jackson (1988)
LQ	Various	Linguistic Questionnaire, ALCAM, Cameroun
M	Various	Meek (1931)
Meu	Proto-Bantu	Meussen (1980)
P	Bantoid	Piron (1996)
PM	Mambila	Perrin & Mouh (1995)
RMB	Various	Blench mss.
S & J	Tikar	Stanley and Jackson (1976)
TT	Vute	Thwing and Thwing (1981)
WW	Kwanja	Weber & Weber (n.d.)

Each of the glosses is assigned a sequential number and these reference numbers are used in the text as well as in cross-references in the tables. Underlining within a gloss indicates that word that has been alphabetised. In some case a ‘quasi-reconstruction’ (i.e. derived from quick inspection of cognates) is given. This should not be treated as a worked out proto-form.

1. agama lizard #mbɔŋga

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Langa, Cambap	bāŋgā		C
Mambiloid	Vute	mbōŋ		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	mbē		C
Dakoid	Dɔ̃	bɔŋ		RMB

Comment: cf. Zhing **bɔ̃bɔ̃**

Ref:

2. ant (soldier) #ŋgaŋga

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	nɔŋgā		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	ŋgàŋgū`r		E
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ŋg`ōrā		C
Dakoid	Kiri	gasi		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	ŋgõn	<i>espèce de fourmi carnivore</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

3. antelope sp. I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	kàrə		C
Mambiloid	Somyev	korə		C
Dakoid	Nnakneyare	kórúm		BF

Comment:

Ref:

4. armpit

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ʃimʃiá		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	camcáˀw̃		E
Mambiloid	Somyev	ŋgési		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nyémsí		BF
Tikar		sìsàè'		J

Comment: The Somyev and Nnakenyare items appear to be cognate with each other and the Ndoro and Nizaa items similarly. They are included as they may be evidence of a fossil affix running throughout the group, although C₁ appears to be different.

Ref:

5. back I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mbɔŋɔ	yimá n		C
Mambiloid	Vute	puúm		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	ɖimáà		BF
Dakoid	Gaa	ɖimà		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	nyè		J

Comment: Perhaps cf. PB #-yimà if weakening has occurred

Ref:

6. back II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Gelep	kàmù		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	kɔʊɔ		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kum ⁺	lower back	BF
Dakoid	Taram	kwɔm		Meek

Comment: The Nnakenyare gloss may well be the case elsewhere. The substitution of /m/ for /n/ in the C₂ position seems to be characteristic for Bantoid; cf. Jarawan, Mbe, Bendi.

Ref:

7. beard

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gbùṅ		E
Dakoid	Daka Kiri	gbəṅsi gbsi	gbsi = 'hair'	AE
Tikar	Tikar	gyíwá		J

Comment: Most of Mambiloid retains the old Benue-Congo root #dē/ or similar.

Ref:

8. bee

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sùú		E
Mambiloid	Vute	súlamé		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	síí		BF

Comment: Not reliable evidence as this could reflect an older Benue-Congo root #so(k) which is widespread in Plateau.

Ref:

9. bee II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	ṅúí		C
Mambiloid	Hore Taram	ndʒugide		C
Tikar		nyedwi'		J

Comment: It is also possible these secondary forms in Tikar and Mambila are cognate. Certainly this is not a widespread root.

Ref:

10. body

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	ṅwãã ⁺		E
Mambiloid	Tep	we ⁺		C
Dakoid	Lamja	úùn		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	wúu		BF
Dakoid	Gaa	waa-sa		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	núí		J

Comment: The Lamja evidence suggests that the vowels of the proto-form were nasalised although there is no trace of this elsewhere in Dakoid.

Ref:

11. broom #-səna

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	fə		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja	fə		W
	Ndung			
Mambiloid	Tep	hè		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sèr		E
Dakoid	Kiri	isə		RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	èfɛ̀nà		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

12. buttocks

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Njerep	kí		C
Mambiloid	Ba	tí		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kìin		BF
Dakoid	Lamja	kinataà		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	ké		J

Comment: Ba and Njerep are spoken in the same village, Somié, so it may be that there is a t/k correspondence and **ti** forms, which are more widespread in Mambiloid are indeed cognate. If so, then forms such as Mvure **tɛnɛ**⁺ and Ndung **tũŋ** would be cognate and retain the nasalisation in Dakoid.

Ref:

13. cheek

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Langa	gìgàn		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	gìngē		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	gəyən		C
Mambiloid	Ndoola	āŋjégā		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gbáaŋ		BF

Comment: Possibly cf. Nizaa **gbíŋ** ‘throat’.

Ref:

14. chest #kàŋà

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	kàŋ		C
Mambiloid	Cambap	kamà		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	kā ŋ twè bə		C
Mambiloid	Vute	kámé		T
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gàŋà		BF
Tikar		kimmà'		J

Comment:

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
15. crab	#kàbón			
Mambiloid	Kara	kaban		C
Mambiloid	Ba	kāp		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	cǝε		E
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ácálá		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kǝ́n		BF
Tikar		kò		J

Comment: Roots for ‘crab’ with ka- as the first element are extremely common in Africa (Blench 1997) but the –b- as C₂ in Kara is surprising. It may be that the Nizaa/Ndoro items form a separate set and thus Dakoid would have lost an bilabial in C₂ position.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
16. dry season				
Mambiloid	Len	nyàm		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja	ɲwvaná		WW
Mambiloid	Somyev	nùómà		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	yómnǎ		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nwánén		BF
Tikar	Tikar	nǎm	<i>année passée</i>	J

Comment: In Mambiloid, words for dry season are either the same as, or connected with words for ‘year’.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
17. dance (n.)	#ndop			
Mambiloid	Mbamnga	ndo`p		C
Mambiloid	Somyev	daŋə	?cognate	C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dǝp		BF
Tikar		dǎn	<i>danse traditionnelle tikar</i>	J

Comment: Many Mambiloid languages retain the older Niger-Congo root #ben.

Ref:

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
18. dry, to become				
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sóm		C
Mambiloid	Somyev	hómdá		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	sūúm	be dry	BF

Comment:

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:41)

19. dust #mbúŋ				
Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	mbúŋ		C
Mambiloid	Mvanip	vón		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	mbùnmbúní		WW
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bùná		BF
Dakoid	Gaa	abùŋà		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

20. earth				
Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sǎǎ		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	sǎǎ		BF

Comment: Comparable processes linking Nizaa and Dakoid can be seen in gloss 10., where Nizaa shows nasalisation and Dakoid does not, but both have undergone (parallel?) loss of C₂. This root is isolated in Nizaa so possibly a borrowing.

Ref:

21. elephant				
Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gòŋ		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kòŋlǎa		BF

Comment: Root isolated in Nizaa where Mambiloid reflects either Bantu #*dzogu* or #*ten*.

Ref:

22. farm				
Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Tep	boŋ		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	baan⁺		BF
Dakoid	Gaa	abána		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

23. fence				
Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	káúǎ		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	kâ:		C
Dakoid	Kiri	koo		AE

Comment:

Ref:

24. fish-trap

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Len	gòr		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gèè		BF
Tikar	Tikar	gòn	<i>piège</i>	J

Comment: But cf. PB #–**gono**.

Ref:

25. #jim-

to fly

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	cím		E
Mambiloid	Wawa	sim		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	jìm	also dùm	BF
Dakoid	Gaa	lýnsì	‘to make fly’	B2

Comment: Nnakenyare has another word for ‘to fly’ which is conceivably related.

Ref:

26. frog

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Len	ɲkùà		C
Mambiloid	Cambap	kòrà		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	kùkwâr		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kònda		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	kwúnné	<i>grenouille, sp.</i>	J

Comment: Nasalisation is only clearly preserved in one Mambila lect, perhaps reflecting the nasal in Dakoid. The d/r correspondence is only attested here. It seems that the gloss with ‘toad’ is intertwined in both Mambiloid and Dakoid, although this is not generally the case in Benue-Congo.

Ref:

27. goat I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somyev	bien		C
Mambiloid	Len	bzi`n		C
Dakoid	Lamja	bín		RMB
Dakoid	Dirim	bini		M
Tikar		mgbæm	<i>bouc</i>	J

Comment: Although forms related to the PB #–**bódi** are widespread, this particular form seems to be restricted to this region.

Ref:

28. goat II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	jíí	he-goat	C
	Wawa	jé̃r		C
Dakoid	Taram	jun		M

Comment:

Ref:

29. goitre

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kila Yang	du.jun		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dáńdán gúù	'swollen throat'	BF

Comment:

Ref:

30. hawk

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Tep	kɔm		C
Mambiloid	Ba	kár		C
Mambiloid	Vute	gbá		T
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	ŋgá̀		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kòŋ		BF
Tikar		kwæ̀	<i>épervier</i>	J

Comment: Vute and Kwanja may belong to a different set

Ref:

31. hare

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	kɪtɛ⁺		C
Mambiloid	Vute	tùkur		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kùt		BF

Comment:

Ref:

32. hair of head

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mvure	ʃɪɛ⁺	hair of head	C
Dakoid	Dirim	ʃɛɛ	head	AE

Comment: Mambiloid has two series, one of the form /VrV/, the other of the form #yuri which could conceivably be related. If so, then the root is relatable to PB #-juidi. The semantic shift between hair on head and head is not common in Niger-Congo but looks convincing here.

Ref:

33. hill I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	tòr		C
Dakoid	Taram	dori		M

Comment: The resemblance to Cornish *tor* is presumably fortuitous. Perhaps compare PB #-tɔnda

Ref:

34. hoe I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kara	gbən		C
Mambiloid	Len	bən ⁺		C
Dakoid	Lamja	gbààn		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	kwón		J

Comment: Perhaps cognate with PB #-gembe.

Ref:

35. hoe II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	súún		E
Dakoid	Gaa	sànà		RMB

Comment: It is extremely unusual for a Dakoid language to retain a C₂ that is lost in Mambiloid, making it possible this is a secondary development.

Ref:

36. horn #-gʷaam

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	gaàm		Gu
Mambiloid	Somyev	gamnə		C
Mambiloid	Tep	gam		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	ngíar		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	àgama		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gaam ⁺		BF
Dakoid	Lamja	gyema ⁺		RMB

Comment: The presence of palatalisation in both Mambiloid and Dakoid may suggest that it should be reconstructed to the proto-form.

Ref:

37. insult

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Gembu	silíní		C
Mambiloid	Cambap	sàríà		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	sù		BF
Tikar		sèm		J

Comment:

Ref:

38. jaw

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	wàrá		WW
Mambiloid	Mbɔŋnɔ	wàrú		C
Mambiloid	Njerep	wulí		C
Dakoid	Daka Kiri	welum		AE

Comment: This lexical item is extremely variable in Mambiloid

Ref:

39. to join

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	‘bàn		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bàni		B1
Tikar		ɓwùnnɗi	<i>rencontrer, se</i>	J

Comment: Boyd (1994:54) notes a possible cognate in Pere, **bàn^o** ‘to meet’.

Ref: Boyd (1994:54)

40. knee

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gulǎ		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	lúu		BF

Comment: The **gu-** element of Nizaa is connected with the common Mambiloid for ‘leg’ #-**gul**. For denasalisation of Nizaa long vowels in Dakoid see 10., 20., 91.

Ref:

41. to laugh

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somyev	honda	? cognate	C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	co		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sòr		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	jǎ̀n		BF

Comment:

Ref:

42. light

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Camba	ɲwédí mù		C
	Somyev	ɲja ana		C
	Kwanja Ndung	ɲwêɲ		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	jèná	sunlight	BF
Tikar	Tikar	ɲwánní	<i>lumière du jour</i>	J

Comment: Possibly also compare Mambiloid forms for ‘daylight’ e.g. Gembu **sén**

Ref:

43. mat

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	kè		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	kfwára-kfwàrà		WW
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kirí		BF
Tikar	Tikar	kè	<i>natte</i>	J

Comment: Perhaps cf. PB #–**keka**. The initial kf- in Kwanja hints that the proto-form in Mambiloid might have been kp-. If so, the common forms in Mambiloid of the structure *bVrV*, e.g. Titong **bɛrɛ** would then also be cognate. Against this, although mats are clearly ancient, new types diffuse and these similarities may be due to loanwords.

Ref:

44. medicine

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kara	kɛgɛɲ		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	gvweé	cut skin (local medicine)	WW
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ɲgàlà		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gəən ⁺		BF

Comment:

Ref:

45. mongoose

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Len	sap		C
Mambiloid	Vute	sóbé		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	saà		BF

Comment:

Ref:

46. monkey

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	car⁺		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	joorá		RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	kára		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	kæ'	<i>singe gris</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

47. mortar

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kila Yang	jòŋgò		C
Dakoid	Gaa	jòŋa		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

48. mosquito

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somyev	təbogo		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bóósi		BF

Comment: If the –si is an affix in Nnakenyare, then the long vowel is an erosion of the –bogo in Somyev. However, this word is isolated in Dakoid

Ref:

49. mucus #minsi

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	míndzì		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	mìsí		B

Comment:

Ref: Boyd (1994:62)

50. navel

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	kómbɔ̀n		C
Mambiloid	Ngumbon	kémbɛn		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	wúbèn		BF
Dakoid	Lamja	úban		RMB

Comment: These are only cognate if *k in Mambiloid weakens to w in Dakoid. Mambiloid is clearly cognate with PB #-*kóbu*.

Ref:

51. neck #ɲɡunu

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	ɡúù		Boyd (1996-7)
Tikar		ɲɡun	<i>cou</i>	J

Comment: The form given in Boyd for Tikar appears to be inaccurate.

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:38)

52. nose #nyɔ̀ɔ̀n

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Len	nyòn		C
Dakoid	Lamja	nyó̀ɔ̀n		RMB

Comment: This root is usual throughout Mambiloid and Dakoid.

Ref:

53. one #noo-

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Torbi	yono⁺		C
Mambiloid	Titong	yunu		C
Mambiloid	Maberem	nyúnu		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nò̀nì		BF

Comment:

Ref:

54. rain (n.) #-nara

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	nu		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	nàra		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	nà	to rain	WW
Mambiloid	Nizaa	nàùrí	to rain	E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nàà	to rain	BF
Tikar		nwi	<i>pleuvoir</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

55. rainy season

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gùr		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gùsí		BF

Comment:

Ref:

56. rat I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Len	vil⁺		C
Mambiloid	Ngubin	vilip		C
Dakoid	Jangani	virí		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	veré		BF

Comment:

Ref:

57. rat II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	ndùkò		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ndū		C/RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	dòkà		RMB

Comment: a variety of Mambila lects have **ndop**, e.g. Ba and Mbamnga, and these may be related if C₂ in Mambiloid was originally -kp-. **ndop**, however, almost certainly applies principally to the giant rat, *Cricetomys*, so the root may be distinct.

Ref:

58. river I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	bóŋ		E
Mambiloid	Wawa	bóŋgə		C
Dakoid	Gaa	abuŋa⁺		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

59. river II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Tep	dyō		C
Tikar		du'	<i>rivière</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

60. to make round # dyəgli

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Gembu	jɛ⁴gi²	round	C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dəgli	to make round	BF

Comment: Also in neighbouring Adamawa languages, e.g. Leko **dəgál** 'round'.

Ref: Boyd (1994:130)

61. road I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	gbèèŋ		E
Mambiloid	Wawa	ŋgwā`r		C
Dakoid	Lamja	gbə̀nə		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gbaa⁺		BF

Comment: The usual Nnakenyare word for road, **bòno**, may be distinctive or somehow related.

Ref:

62. road II

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somyev	bî:		C
Mambiloid	Tep	bíɔk		C
Tikar		mbyi	<i>route</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

63. rope

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	ɸí		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	yí		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	yìsì		BF

Comment:

Ref:

64. sand

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
	# -gɛɛraa			
Mambiloid	Maberam	mɔ̃ŋgɔ̃rā		C
Mambiloid	Ngubin	wɔ̃ŋ ² gɔ̃ ² rɛp ²		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	geeráa		BF

Comment:

Ref:

65. shadow

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
	shade			
Mambiloid	Gembu	cìmi		C
Mambiloid	Vute	cò		Gu
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	cùcòm		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tìnáà		BF

Comment:

Ref:

66. shoe

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Tep	dabi		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	tá̃		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	táap		BF

Comment: Also in neighbouring Adamawa, e.g. Leko **táb**. A form, **padè**, common in this area is a loan from Fulfulde.

Ref: Boyd (1994:138)

67. skin I

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	ng̀̀n		C
Dakoid	Lamja	wú̀̀n		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gù̀̀		BF
Tikar	Tikar	ḡ̀̀wù̀̀		J

Comment: Again, Lamja retains nasalisation that is lost in Nnakenyare and Mapeo (cf. 10.). Tikar has rather good cognates of each of both root and the next.

Ref:

68. skin II #kpànda

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Wawa	ng ^w ai		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	pànda		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	kwa ⁺		RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	akpa		RMB
Tikar	Tikar	kwá'		J

Comment: The original form of this was certainly something like #kpànda, and the labial-velar is retained in Gaa. Proto-Bantu has #-kanda with loss of the labial element, while most Mambiloid languages lose velarity and have initial p- which then develops into b- and f- (e.g. Maberem **bànda** and Cambap **fànda**).

Ref:

69. sleep (v.) #lom

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	lōm		PM
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	nōm		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	láām		BF

Comment: Although #la is widespread in Niger-Congo for 'to sleep', the final -m is confined to Dakoid and Mambiloid within Bantoid, although it also occurs outside in Adamawa languages.

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:42)

70. smoke # dyuu

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somie	ju ²		PM
Mambiloid	Twendi	juu		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dù̀̀		BF
Dakoid	Dǎ	duksa		RMB

Comment: Cf. PB -jùkì

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:33)

71. stick (n.) # -tɔ́Ná

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kara	to		C
Dakoid	Mapeo	tòmá		BF
Tikar	Tikar	ńtwə́'		J

Comment: Probably related to PB #-tonga.

Ref:

72. stool

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	kɔ́ɔ́+ dənə́+		C
Mambiloid	Tep	kiŋ dina		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	dɔ́ŋ+		BF
Tikar		ŋgi-tòn	tabouret	J

Comment:

Ref:

73. to swallow

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	məna		B
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	mìn		WW
Mambiloid	Nizaa	mɛɛ́+		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	mìin		Boyd (1996-7)
Tikar	Tikar	myì		J

Comment: These roots must be interconnected with 'neck' (94.).

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:38)

74. sweat

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Gelep	cucuɔ́p+		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Ndung	sǎ́n	? cognate	C
Dakoid	Kiri	susu		AE

Comment:

Ref:

75. to swim #-gwaga

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba Mambila	gūgwāgá -		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gàà	(+wóok 'water')	B
Tikar	Tikar Nditam	g^wa		J

Comment: Connell (p.c.) proposes that PLC *gwók is cognate with this.

Ref:

76. tail # tɔrɔ

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila Lemele	tò		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	too⁺		BF
Dakoid	Dirim	toro		AE
Tikar		twæ̀	<i>queue d'oiseau</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

77. termite # ðìrì

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ngubin	tíndyìr		C
Mambiloid	Vute	dí		Gu
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ádelá		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	ðìrì		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

78. throat

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	kúu		Gu
Mambiloid	Gelep	gonu⁺		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	gúù		BF
Dakoid	Gaa	kuŋa		RMB
Tikar		ŋgun	<i>cou</i>	J

Comment: This is a puzzling root. The widespread Mambiloid forms have initial t- and forms such as Karbap **togó** seem to connect to the present root. Some Mambila lects have CVCVCV forms such as Taceme **tógólo** and Kabri **tugulù**, suggesting that a transitional three-syllable form existed, prior to the deletion of C₁. The existence of g/k correspondences in both groups suggests that sound-correspondences for the proposed higher level group will remain speculative. The nasal prefix in Tikar is also without parallel.

Ref:

79. today

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Vute	mwén		Gu
Mambiloid	Nizaa	mún		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	imòàn		RMB

Comment:

Ref:

80. tongue

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	léba		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	kílénni		E
Dakoid	Lamja	ləká		RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	lera		B2
Tikar		le'	<i>langue</i>	J

Comment: Only the **-le-** is stable, while the affixes seem very changeable. Tongue is often a word subject to phonaesthetic pressures, so these links may not be very significant.

Ref:

81. two

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Fam	baale		RMB
Mambiloid	Nizaa	ḃāārā		E
Mambiloid	Vute	ḃāám		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	bààrá		BF

Comment: #ba is a common Niger-Congo form for ‘two’ but the second syllable is confined to Bantoid, also occurring in Ekoid and some Jarawan languages.

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:38)

82. valley

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	lùṅgò		C
Mambiloid	Somyev	logo	hole in ground	C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	lùṅgú	hole	WW
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	lónṅ	gully	BF
Tikar	Tikar	lwó'	<i>puiser</i>	J

Comment: Also in Leko, **lónṅ** ‘gully’. Related lexical items in Mambiloid are ‘hole’ and ‘well’. Jackson (1988) does not give the word for ‘well’.

Ref: Boyd (1994:134)

83. water

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Cambap	yáráp		C
Dakoid	Dirim	yaa		AE

Comment: cf. Zing Mumuye *yán*.

Ref:

84. who? # mana

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila Lemele	māna		C
Mambiloid	Somyev	ciman		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	máà		BF

Comment:

Ref:

85. wind

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	fuó ⁺		C
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	foó		WW
Mambiloid	Nizaa	sùù		E
Mambiloid	Ndoro	áfùù		RMB
Dakoid	Gaa	afuwa		RMB
Tikar		m̀p̀ùn	<i>vent</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

86. woman

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Gelep	wunu gwiri	young girl	C
Mambiloid	Somyev	hon wɔ̀na	young girl	C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nwúù	wife	BF
Tikar		lwun	<i>femmes royales</i>	J

Comment:

Ref:

87. yesterday

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Tep	ya		C
Mambiloid	Vute	yáyaá		Gu
Mambiloid	Ndoro	yàlàrə		RMB
Mambiloid	Kwanja Sundani	nyàà	past before yesterday	WW
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	nyèm		BF

Comment: Perhaps compare PB #-yana.

Ref:

Words with wider Niger-Congo distribution

Some word with a wider distribution are relevant for understanding sound correspondences but cannot constitute proof of a special relationship.

88. buffalo

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Njerep	yàré		C
Mambiloid	Ndoro	yaara		RMB
Dakoid	Lamja	yéři		RMB

Comment: The presence of /r/ in C₂ is unusual, as this is generally /t/ in Bantoid and missing elsewhere.

Ref:

89. cow

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Somyev	naga		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	nàk		C
Dakoid	Taram	naxa		M
	Gaa	náksá		RMB

Comment: Although #na- for ‘cow’ may be reconstructible to a deep level in Niger-Congo this form with a velar in C₂ seems to be distinctive in this region.

Ref:

90. dew

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Kara	mən		C
Mambiloid	Nizaa	mwèè		E
Mambiloid	Ndoro	ámε		RMB
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	mənsén		BF

Comment:

Ref:

91. ear

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	twáã		E
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	táa		BF

Comment: A common Niger-Congo root, but usually with back vowels. Included for the Nizaa/CD correspondence in vowels and the characteristic loss of nasalisation.

Ref:

92. #-kpero bush-fowl

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ndoro	tukwara⁺		Meek
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	kpèèrá		BF
Nupoid	Nupe	kparó		B
Ekoid	Ejagham	kpáé	19/3	W
Bantu	PB	-kɔ̄ade		M

Comment:

Ref:

93. name #-yiri

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ba	yilí		C
Mambiloid	Wawa	?ir⁺		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	yírí		BF
Gur	Mampruli	yoori		Swadesh
Gur	Lobiri	ìrì		

Comment:

Ref: Boyd (1996-7:40)

94. neck #-meren

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila Kabri	mènà		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	mìn		BF
Bendi	Bekwara	o-mere		
Cross River	Kana	mẽẽ⁺		
Ekoid		mèl		Cr
Nyang	Kenyang	ε-mi /mε-		M
Bantu	Yamba	mì		

Comment: Boyd (1994:62) compares Mumuye **vmòdrè** ‘throat’ but this is doubtful.

Refs: Boyd (1994:62), Williamson (1989b:253-4)

95. tooth

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	ɲĩ		E
Mambiloid	Vute	ɲín		Gu
Dakoid	Lamja	nyĩ		RMB
Dakoid	Taram	nym		Meek

Comment:

Ref:

96. sheep

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Nizaa	tám		E
Mambiloid	Somyev	tɪmbɔna		C
Dakoid	Nnakenyare	tǎómsí		BF

Comment: Widespread in West Africa, even beyond Niger-Congo and probably reflects the spread of the sheep.

Ref:

The exact relationship of the following two items is still unclear. They look interconnected but may be distinct⁴.

97. # kúsum mountain

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Ndoro	kúma		RMB
Mambiloid	Vute	ngòmé		Gu
Dakoid	Nnakneyare	kúsum		BF
Cross River	Kukele	lì-kùm		Sterk

98. # kuun hump, mountain

Group	Language	Attestation	Gloss	Source
Mambiloid	Mambila Langa	kɔn ³	mountain	C
Mambiloid	Ndung	ɲguŋ ¹⁴	mountain	C
Mambiloid	Vute	ngúú(k)	mountain	Gu
Dakoid	Nnakneyare	kuun ⁺	hump	BF
Jukunoid	PJ	*kùn	mountain	Shimizu
Cross River	Ibibio	ékûŋ	hump	C

Comment: Dagaare **kuur** ‘stone’ may well also be related. If this is the case, then this is a Niger-Saharan root (Blench 1995) found widely in Africa, e.g. Nubian **kur** ‘stone’.

Appendix II: Dɔ̃-Gaa lexical correspondences

Boyd (1999) claims that Gaa is underlyingly an Adamawa language which has undergone extensive borrowing from Chamba Daka. I disagree, as there are also a set of interesting correspondences with Dɔ̃, a language not in contact with Daka, which nonetheless shows significant lexical similarities. Gaa clearly has

⁴ I am indebted to Bruce Connell for the present analysis

borrowed extensively from Daka, as the Appendix to Boyd shows. This table is intended to illustrate the similarities between Gaa and Dõ, and thereby provide further evidence for their incorporation into Dakoid.

Gloss	Dõ	Glossary
Belly	laa	cf. Gaa láa but an old Niger-Congo root, sometimes meaning ‘intestines’
Bird	wér	cf. Gaa wérùm bird sp.
Blood	gɔn	perhaps cf. Gaa gbaám
Corpse	yú	cf. Gaa yúu but see ‘death’ but also compare Zhing Mumuye yuúsaà ‘grave’ where saà = ‘place’
Egg	aŋ	cf. Gaa eŋá , DN gaa⁺ , Common Mumuye root e.g. Pugong angka (Shimizu 1979: Root 13) but also Iẓon aŋga
Fat	nɔ	cf. Gaa nwùù , Dŋ nòð . Common Mumuye root nuŋ (Shimizu 1979: Root 15). Also in Ekoid A and Kegboid
Firewood	was	cf. Gaa wésè
Fish	yo(k)	cf. Gaa yúksa , Dakoid cf. Lamja yuki
Gourd	kwen	cf. Gaa káŋtá
Hair	suk	cf. Saawa Mumuye su (Shimizu 1979: Root 20) Longuda sú-ké or Dakoid Gaa àsóksá
Hunger	nyúú	cf. Gaa nyú , perhaps Pugong nyɔkɔ but also Hausa yunwa
Leaf	yaa⁺	cf. DN yáà , Gaa yàásá
Mat	ris	cf. Gaa ísá
navel	diŋ sɔrɔk	cf. Gaa díŋ⁺
Penis	dɔk	cf. Gaa dúk⁺ , Momi deek
Salt	yɔk-(nan)	cf. Gaa yókúm
Song	lɛm	cf. Gaa nyémsa , DN nìmsí
Wing	kele	cf. Gaa káárá
Wound	gbɔm	cf. Gaa ḡóom
Ask	bip	cf. Gaa bîp . Benue-Congo – see BCCW, I Gloss 6,2
Fall over	guu	cf. Gaa gùù-
Fight	gɔn	? cf. Gaa nwoŋ , Dŋ nòŋ . Also ‘beat’
Laugh	zɔl	cf. ‘laughter’ Dŋ jóná , Gaa jɔ
Pound	zɔŋ	cf. Gaa júùŋ
Ten	hɔɔp	cf. Gaa wóob , but weakened from kɔp -a root common to Plateau, Lower Cross and Adamawa
Twenty	jeè	cf. Gaa féé
Long	dã	cf. Gaa díi , DN dèèrí

Unpublished Data

Blench, Roger	Dakoid, Ngoro, Mambila, Mbɔŋŋo wordlists
Connell, Bruce	Mambiloid comparative database
Endresen, Rolf	Nizaa wordlist
Edwards, Adrian	Kiri Daka wordlist (orthographic)
Guarisma, Gladys	Vute dialects, Kwanja wordlists
Jackson, Ellen	Tikar dictionary
Kjelsvik, Bjørghild	Nizaa dictionary
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Perrin, Mona	Mambila grammar and unpublished dictionary, Ngoro wordlist
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