

Proto Niger Congo 2nd International Conference

Proto-West Benue Congo Stem C1
Oyetayo Bankale Ph.D, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
email: tayo18bankale@yahoo.com

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Prof. Eno-Abasi Urua, University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
email: anemandinyene@yahoo.

1. Introduction:

- BC languages largely spoken in Nigeria.
- Reconstructions are based on available Proto forms of BC groups/ and synchronic forms Languages yet to be reconstructed but which present lexical correspondences identifiable as cognates.
- Data presented are purposively selected on observable similarities in sound and meaning and consideration that such lexical items very likely constituted part of Proto- Benue Congo vocabulary.
- Reconstructions are simply phonetic.
- Only the C1 position in BC stem are of interest here given that it is the more stable position relative to C2 in word stem .
- BC divisions already identified in scholarship are Oko, Ukaan, Akpes. Edoid, Defoid (Akokoid and Yoruboid) Nupoid, Ebiroid, Idomoid and Igboid. The reconstructions considered here are as follows:

2. Data

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Oko | Ibadan four hundred wordlist | } | proposed Akekoid and
PAKE (2011) |
| 2. A. Ukaan | Ibadan four hundred wordlist | | |
| B. Akpes | Ibadan four hundred wordlist | | |
| 3. Edoid, | Proto Edoid (PE) - Elugbe 1989 | | |
| 4. Defoid (Akokoid & Yoruboid) | Proto Yoruba-Isekiri-Igala – AKinkugbe (PYIG) 1983 | | |
| 5. Nupoid | Bankale (PN) (2006) | | |
| 6. Ebiroid | Bankale (PEB) (2006) | | |
| 7. Idomoid | Armstrong (1983) | | |
| 8. Igboid | Kay Williamson et al. (KW/RMB) (2013) | | |

Abbreviations

Groups / Languages/ Reconstructions

BCCW =	Benue-Congo Comparative Wordlist
PYIG =	Proto Yoruba Isekiri and Igala
PBC =	Proto Benue-Congo
BC =	Benue Congo
PBK =	Proto Benue-Kwa
PWS =	Proto West-Sudanic
PJ =	Proto Jukunoid
Nu. =	Nupe
Gw. =	Gwari
Gd. =	Gade

Nupoid

Authors

KW= Kay Williamson
Elu. = Elugbe
Ak. = Akinkugbe
RMB = Roger M. Blench
Arm. = Armstrong

Eb.	=	Ebira / Ebiroid	
Id.	=	Idoma	} Idomoid
El.	=	Eloyi	
Tiv.	=	Tiv	
Et.	=	Etulo	
Ar.	=	Arago	
Ige.	=	Igede	
Akw.	=	Akweya	} Yoruboid
Ekp.	=	Èkpeye	
Ogb.	=	Ogba	
Yor	=	Yoruba	
Iga.	=	Igala	
Oluk.	=	Olukumi ¹	
n.c.	=	non cognate	
reflx	=	reflexes	

3. Reconstructions

Labials *m *b

Catch *m

m Akpes, Edoid Oluk. n Ukaan Nupoid g Akokoid Ebiroid s Oko .

Water *m

m Akpes Ukaan Edoid Yoruboid (Ig., Oluk.)

Make *m

m Igbooid Ebiroid Akpes

(s oko z Nupoid n.c.)

Nose *m

*m oko , Igbooid \bar{L}/\tilde{V} Akpes $\tilde{e}cm/\tilde{V}$ Yoruboid bh (reflx b,r) Nupoid

Swallow *m /*d

m Ukaan, Edoid Yoruboid Nupoid

d Igbooid r Oko

Breast(s) *b / *p

b Oko, Ebiroid (loss of plosion) gb, m Akpes, Ukaan gb? m Yoruboid , Igbooid, Idomoid b Nupoid

p Oluk. (pɔjǎ) (cf yor. ɔpɔ)

Give birth *b

b Edoid b Yoruboid Oluk. m Nupoid Ebiroid

f Akokoid n.c

Plait*L

L Edoid

b Akpes, Akokoid Yoruboid

¹ Olukumi is considered Yoruboid here not by Akinkugbe (1978)

kp Igboid

Come *b

b Akpes Yoruboid Ebiroid El. Et. w Ukaan Yoruboid Iga. Oluk. Id.
(t Akokoid n.c.)
(k Oko n.c.)

Goat*bh

bh Edoid b Akpes Edoid Yoruboid. Ebiroid m oko Idomoid w Ukaan Igboid

Ashes *mh / *d,

mh Edoid w Oko
d Igboid (reflx t, d) t Nupoid, Ebiroid r Yoruboid n Akokoid (Nas -C2? see N in Edoid)
(h Akpes, Ukaan n.c.)

Alveolars

Housefly *t

t Ukaan Ebiroid s Akokoid Oluk Ebiroid ʃ Akpes ukaan (eʃoʔi-) Yoruboid z Nupoid (CV-ziNi) í Oko

Shoot *t / *L̄

t Yoruboid Idomoid
L̄ Yoruboid Akpes Akokoid
(b Oko n.c.)

Three *f

f Igboid t Oko Ukaan Yoruboid Nupoid Ebiroid Idomoid s Akpes

Hair *d

d Igboid t Akpes Edoid Nupoid w Ukaan s Akokoid r Oluk. j Ebiroid n Idomoid

Steal / thief *d / -i

d Ukaan Edoid j Yoruboid j Oko, Akpes, Ebiroid ʃ Ukaan z Oluk w Nupoid
(h Edoid n.c.)

Fire *dh

d Akpes n Oluk. r oko Ebiroid s Akokoid ŋ Ukaan

Animal/meat *r

r Yoruboid Akokoid, n Oko, Akpes, Ukaan, Nupoid, Idomoid, Igboid nh Edoid (nh reflx:n, ŋ, ɾ, ɽ)
1989)
(j Ebiroid u-je n.c.)

See *r / *m

r Akokoid Yoruboid, Oluk. Ebiroid l Iga. d: Et. dí
m Edoid El., Idomoid Oko (gb)?
(n.c h Ukaan j Akpes.)

Bird: *n

***n** Oko, Akp, Eb., Ako j Yorbd./ Oluk.
(k Ukaan, Oluk, l Nup. Edoid, (A-pI-) n.c.)

Sell *t

t Yoruboid, (s) Akokoid d Edoid, Igbooid n Ebiroid Ukaan

Four *n

n Oko akpes Ukaan Edoid Akokoid Nupoid r Yoruboid

Elephant *r>n/-ĩ / *d

d Oko Ig. CV- Ebiroid Id.

r Akokoid Yoruboid Oluk n Akpes Ukaan Edoid

Mouth *n

*n Oko, Akpes, Edoid, Nupoid, Yoruboid Igbooid Ebiroid ŋ Ukaan d Akokoid (odòrũ/ òrũ)

Tongue *dh > d, r

l Oko d Ukaan dh Edoid dž Akokoid, Yoruboid r Akokoid Ebiroid, d Igbooid

Palatals

Axe *ch:

d Oko, Ukaan, Yorubd, Olukumi

k Akpes, Yorubd, Nupoid Akokoid, Ebiroid z Edoid

(h Akokoid)

Buy *ch

d Akpes, Edoid, Akokoid r Oluk., Yoruboid j Oko, Ukaan s Nupoid Í Ebiroid

(p Oko, Akpes n.c.)

Roast *ch

t Akpes, Ukaan, Edoid, Akokoid h Oluk. (-hì), Ebiroid (hĬ) f Oko, Yoruboid s Akokoid Yoruboid
d Ig. (-dudu)

Tree *ch

g Yoruboid Oluk.

c Nupoid Igbooid (h), ƒ Ebiroid , Idomoid th Edoid (reflx)

t Oko Edoid Ebiroid Idomoid

(h Akpes , Ukaan Akokoid n.c.)

Velars

Corpse *k

k Akokoid Yoruboid Oluk. Nupoid Ebiroid x Akpes Ukaan (dh Edoid p Oko n.c.)

Die *k

k Akokoid Yoruboid h Akpes Akw. x Ukaan w Ig

g (dñ/-i) Oko Akpes Akokoid Nupoid Ebiroid

j, dñ Ukaan Yoruboid

z Oluk. weakening

ɸ, dh Edoid r Ebiroid El. Ig. Nupoid l Id.

Say (something) *k /*f

g: Oko, Nupoid ʄ: Akpes k Ukaan, Ig. , Ebiroid, Idomoid, Yala (Ik)
 t: Edoid dʒ: Akokoid
 f: Oluk.

Pound *g

g Yoruboid, gw Akokoid (gwū)

Eye *g

dʒ Yoruboid z Oluk. j Ebiroid Id.
 k El.
 (h Ig. n.c.)

Labial velars**Bone *kp**

kp Akokoid *no change*
 h Akpes Ukaan g Yor. (Ogũgũ), Oluk. (-gũgũ *voicing /V-V*)
 t̩ Ig. (-t̩ík^wù), Ebiroid (éʃ̩ókò)
 k Nupoid
 f Oko *loss of velar stricture/weakening: *kp > *p > f*

Horn *kp

kp oko *no change*
 k ukaan (ik̩n a-) Edoid
 p Ebiroid (ɔ̀pà̀nì) Akpes Ukaan
 ŋ Akokoid
 ɣ Oluk.
 t Nupoid

Kill *kp

w akpes Nupoid Ebiroid

Feaces *gb

b Akpes m /-ĩ

Arm *gbh /*b/-u

gbh Nupoid *reflexes: g^w g bw, w, b^w*
 b Oko, Akpes, , Yorbd, Ebiroid *loss of velar stricture*
 w Ukaan, Akokoid, PYIG, Oluk. *weakening possibly with *b as intermediate stage*
 b Edoid

4. Summary of Reconstructions**Labials *m *b**

*m Catch Water Nose Make
 *ɓ Plait Give birth Breast(s)
 *ɓ / *ɲ (Yoruboid)
 *b Come
 *bh Goat
 *mh /*ɗ, Ashes Swallow

Alveolars

*t Housefly Shoot
 *f Three
 *ɗ Hair
 *d Steal / thief
 *r /*m See, Animal / meat Elephant
 *t Sell
 *n Mouth Bird
 *dh Tongue Four Fire

Palatals

*ch Roast Tree Axe Buy

Velars

*k /*f Say (something) Die Corpse
 *g Pound Eye

Labial velars

*kp Horn Kill
 *gb Feaces
 *gbh /*ɓ/-u Arm

Proposed Proto-WBC Stem C1 Inventory

Manner	Labial	alveolar	palatal	velar	labial-velar
Nasals	m	n	ɲ		
Lenis nasal	mh				
Plosive	b	t d		k g	kp gb
Lenis Plosives	bh	dh	ch	gh	gbh
implosive	ɓ	ɗ ɗ			
Approximant (central)		r			
Approximant (Lateral)		l			

Table 1 Proto-WBC Comparative wordlist ^{2 3}

	Gloss	Okó	Akpess	Ukaan	Edoid	Akokod	Yoruboid	Nupoid	Ebiroid	Idomoid	Igboid
1	Animal /meat	Ī-nĒ	Æ-nambu	Æ-nam	E-nhamhi	Ō-ruja	Æ-rĒ ⁻ a ⁻ oluk. Ærā	na ⁻ ka ⁻	u-je	(cow) El. èndo/a Ig. Ènà Id. ènà	KW *ánVĈō Ekp. ónó óyá Ogb. ánu
2	Ashes	e wunu	u-hu ⁻ hu ⁻	Ū-huko	A-mhuNī	ě-ěě /ě-ndě	Ū-ri ⁻ ru ⁻ Iga. -lílú oluk. éúrú	V-tuNu	a-tĒtĒ		KW *dīnfō Ogb. ñto
3	Axe	ě-dě	a-kÆkÆ	Ý-dugo	A-zueNi	ě-hě/ě-ěgě /Æ-ěgÆ	Ý-keke/ÆdĪ (sey) ⁻ oluk. Ædō	gbakuN	Éra-ga		
4	Arm /hand cf. PWS. - búá, -búák-	Ý-ba	u-huakabě	u-wě	ghU-bě	Ý-wě	u-b'ě Iga. -wō oluk. -wō	C V-gbhĪě	Ībě		KW *ékáCà N Ekp. éká Ogb. 'Eká
5	Bird	énini	Æ-nama	Æ-kě ⁻	A-pI-	ě-ra ⁻	Æ-wÆ oluk. ejē /akŋ ^{wā}	CV-luki	Ūnomi		KW *énono Ekp. ono Ogb. ínono
6	Buy	ùija	úe	ù ⁻ a ⁻ ja ⁻	dÆ	úa	øa oluk. ra	Ōi	Īi		RMB *-zo Ogb. {zo}
7	Blood cf. PWS *gia	ÆLĒ ⁻	ěkĕn /ŋkweni	ě-dja	V-zia	Æ-jÆ/Æ-dñÆ	Æ-bjÆ yor. -džè Iga. -b'ě oluk. -zè	V-gīi	aĪa	El. Enji Id. òyi	KW *obādā Ekp. obālā Ogb. òbrā
8	Bone cf. PWS *-ku	Ofu	ohūě	oxwo [?] i-		é-kpī	yor. ogūgū Iga. -tĪk ^{wū} oluk. -gūgū	CV-kiukuNu	éj'ókò		KW *ómkpíkí/k pī Ekp. {úk'pó} Ogb. ók'pū
9	Breast(s) cf. PWS *-bi-PBC*bani	eba/ ireba	ŋmgbeè	e-ŋma [?]			yor. -mu oluk. p'jā	rī-6e	ire-ba	El. kwómè /í- Ig. emē /a Id. àme	Ekp. {émá} Ogb. érā
10	Come cf. PWS *ba	kiŋja	Ba	wag		ító	yor. -bō;wa Iga. -wa oluk. wá	6e	be	El. Bó Ig. wàri=wè Id. wa a Et. ba	KW *-bíáN Ekp. džá, {bá(ní)} Ogb. vyà
11	Catch	Ōija	Āuse	nÆÆ	Āu	ūū ⁻ /ěgu	Āu /ěu oluk. mu	ĎeNa	pa/glě		KW *-yó Ekp. wóto Ogb. yó
12	Corpse	e poro	ě-niohuhu	ěnioxĪ oxĪo	O-dhĒmhĒ	kuokuo ⁻ / ikuku	o-ku oluk. oku	-ku	o-ku		KW *ĵū Ekp. úzú Ogb. Ósū
13	Die cf. PWS - kú; pi	e fo	hu	xĪo	ghU	ku ⁻ /ku	ku oluk. uku	tiu	su	Akw. h'i	KW *ŋo o éyoo/wōNō éwoNō
14	Elephant	Æ-dagba	ě-ni	e-ni	E-ni	e-ri ⁻	Iga. -dágbá /Æ-ri ⁻ oluk. Ærī	CV-dagba	ě-děgba	Id. -dagbá	KW *éniNī Ekp. éñi Ogb. éñi
15	Eye cf. PJ *giP	ajÆ	Æjo				yor. d'zú Iga. -d'zú		-jī	El. kúyi =-ji /é- Ig. ẹhī /i-	KW

² Table consists of some items in the Revised Swadesh 100 wordlist and others found cognate across BC.

³ Blank spaces in the table indicate such data was not available at the time of investigation.

							oluk. -zú			Id. éyi	*éniNā Ekp. {ékpélé ɲɪ} Ogb. ́áɲá
16	Feaces	egbu ⁻	i-bië	a-ji ⁻	A-cīNi	Æ-mÆ	i-wi ⁻ /Æwi ⁻	V-biNi	e-mi		KW *ɪntɪ Ekp. ɪfɪ Ogb. ɪsɪ
17	Fire cf. PWS *na-	era	ida	ɪjā a-		ísó	oluk. ɪnā	ə-na	i-ra	Id. -lá Akw. -la	KW *itē /tō /tīō RMB *ɪsé
18	Four	ena	ini	na.ɪ	-niə	íné	oluk. mÆrÆ	gi-niə	ε-na		KW *imò Ekp. ɓimò Ogb. ɲʷáénò
19	Fish	a- jÆcÆ>	Æ-tÆë	Æ- nēmum ë	-chiīnhi	e-sé/i- xlē /i-kue	Æ-ja oluk. eza	V-jiīKĒN	i-seLi	Id. -béɲi lg. -jeɲi	KW *ájɔ Ekp. ózò Ogb. ázo
20	Goat	u-mu ⁻	Æ-bu	Æ-wĒ	e-bhĪĒ	a-ra ⁻ /ara	Æ-b'Ī oluk. eran ulè/obuko	ī-na	Æ-bĪ	El. emú/é Ig. ɛmɔ/i Id. éwu	KW *éwú Ekp. {ákpālánám á} Ogb. éwú
21	Give birth cf. PYIG *bi	-----	dʒwē	dʒoʷ	ɓiə	ʃúwɔ	yor. bimɔ oluk. biomɔ	mə	ma		KW *-ɲmɔ Ekp. mɔ (ɔ)ɲʷó Ogb. mɔ
22	Hair cf. PBC *titi PJ *dʒi	apī	itifi	ewuru	U-tĪN	isiri	oluk. -rū	V-tipi	ε-ji	El. -ɲí = kúnyí /i- Ig. Inyi Id. inyileí Akw. -ji	KW *dɔgɪɔ Ekp. {okázé} Ogb. {idùrù}
23	Housefly	iri	ɪnʃi	ɛʃoʷ i-		isisi	oluk. esisi	CV-ziNi	i-si-		KW *ɔgiɲi Ekp. ɔdʒidʒi Ogb. ágbódʒi
24	Hear cf. PJ *pwog	wɔ	kpās	kpiʷ	chuənhə	ʃɛ	yor. gbó oluk. gbɔ	wɔ	wɔ	Id. dʒɛ /pó Ige. dʒɛ	KW *-nɔ Ekp. nɔdʒɪ Ogb. nɔ
25	Horn	ekpani	ikòni	ikɔn a-	U-kpanhi	ɪɲwá	oluk. oyo	tótó	ɔ̀páni		
26	I cf. PWS *mi				mÆmhÆ		yor. -mi Iga. -mi oluk. -mi	Nu. -mi Gw. -mi Gd. Nam	-mi	Id. -mi El. -mi	KW *mmɪ Ekp. mɛ
27	Kill	ɛla ⁻	wei	ju	gbeGi	kpu	kpa oluk. kpá	Wu	wĪ	Tiv wúà	KW *-gbú Ekp. gbú Ogb. gbú
28	Make	e-sije	mÆ	kÆnÆ	Dhu	ke	ce	Zi	mÆ	El. Wó Ig. Hɔ Id. yá	KW *-mé Ekp. mé Ogb. mé
29	Mouth cf. PWS *-nu PBC *nuja	ono	onu	oɲmɔʷ	A-nuə	odòrū/ òrū	enu	Gd. -nu	irenu		KW *ónɔ Ekp. onɔ Ogb. ónɔ
30	Nose	ɛ- mudərÆ	i-Lu ⁻	ɛ-kĕnĕ	-chuveNi	o- juwĕ ⁻ /u- wĕ ⁻	i-ɛcmĪ ⁻ oluk. -mɔ / imú	V-bhĪ	a-Īi	Tiv -hiɲga	KW *émí Ekp. émi Ogb. ímì
31	One cf. PWS *le PJ *ji	ɔɔre	efi	ʃiiʷ		òlòí/ kiɲka	yor. -ni Iga. -ɲé oluk. ɔ-kā	CV-nhi	ɔ-ɲɪ, ɔ- ɲa	El. . -nyi = -ɲí Ig. ohè Id. èè	

32	Plait	wo Æ- pÆ/w ÆpÆ	běë	sis	ŁaNa	pā/ba	ba/di	tsiNi	za			KW *-kpá Ekp. kpá Ogb. kpà
33	Roast cf. PYIG *sũ	fija	tò	tõ	tõN	sũ/ tá	yor. fĩ Iga. -dudu oluk. -hiò	po	hĩ			KW *-c(V C)õ /s Ogb. ózo
34	See	egbe	jè	ha	minhi	rí/ gõ	yor. -rí Iga. -li oluk. - rí		re	El. má Id. ma Et. dí		KW *-pwo Ekp. {nètú} Ogb. hu
35	Steal	Ji	jotu	ʃedʒi	do *oji (thief)	dèdi/ háì	yor. dʒi oluk. -zĩ	wi	ji			KW *-jũĩ /jũ Ekp. sũ Ogb zĩ
36	Shoot	bÆ	Łā	fa	Ca	jĩ/jībè̄	Łī/ta	tsie	tñe	El. Tó Ig. da Id. tá		KW*-gbá(a) Ekp. gbá {ébé} Ogb.gbá
37	Say (something) cf. PWS *ka-	gi	ʃa	kaʹ	Ta	dʒé	Iga. kà oluk. fõ	giə	kare	Id. kà Yala(Ik) kà		
38	Swallow cf. PYIG m'i	rĩÆ	boii	mÉ	dhĕNÉ	ĩriromi /sirĕmi/t irĕmi /u-rĕmi	mī oluk. wĩ	miNÉ Gw. mi Gd monĩ	mĩnÆ			KW *-diwĕ RMB *dwe Ekp. dé
39	Three cf. PJ *tat(i)	Æ-ta	i-sas	ta:s	ÉÉ-chaGÉ	i- da/kida	yor. Æ-ta oluk. èta	Gu-ta	Æ-ta	El. -lá Ig. ita Id. ètá		KW *ĩ fió RMB *itó
40	Tree cf. PWS *-ti	o-ti	ĕ-hūnÆ	ĕ-hĩn	V-thaNÉ	ĕ-hĕ̄/u- ĕgĕ	e-gi oluk. idʒĩ	V- cigbiNa	ĕ-ĩÉ	Id. -tĩ		KW *ðce Ekp. {izà} Ogb. òhá
41	Water cf. PWS *-ni-	e-bi	i-mi	u-mĕ	a-miN	e-ĕī/u- dñī/	yor. o -mi Iga. -mi oluk. -mi	nuNĕĭa	e-Łi	El. embi Ig. enyi Id. ĕnjkpò		KW *mmĩdĩ Ekp. mĩní Ogb. mĩní
42	Pound	e fwīj̄ā	ĩlo	sĕ	wumhi	bu/gwū	gū	Tiu	tu			KW *-to Ekp. su Ogb. su
43	Sell	madñue a	Jai	nĕĕ	dÆGÉ	sa /ĭa /tĭa	ta oluk. ta	kuNu	Na			KW *d(VC)é Ekp. dé Ogb. ré
44	Three cf. PJ *tat(i)	Æ-ta	i-sas	ta:s	ÉÉ-chaGÉ	i- da/kida	yor. Æ-ta oluk. èta	Gu-ta	Æ-ta	El. -lá Ig. ita Id. ètá		KW *ĩfió RMB *itó Ekp. bító N Ogb. η̄'áétó
45	Tongue cf. PWS *-lima	Æ-larÆ	nda	Æ-mĩ	U- dhamhÉ	Æ- rǢ/i- rǢ	ĩ-b'á̄ oluk. n̄wá / úwá	a-giNtara	ira-rÆ			KW *idĩdĕCò Ekp. idō Ogb. íré

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