RESULTS OF THE FIRST ADAGRAM SURVEY IN ADAMAWA AND TARABA STATES, NIGERIA

AdaGram

Dmitry Idiatov,[1] Mark Van de Velde[1], Tope Olagunju[2], Bitrus Andrew

[1] LLACAN, CNRS, Sorbonne-Paris Cité, INALCO
[2] Kwara State University
dmitry.idiatov@cnrs.fr
mark.vandevelde@cnrs.fr

inalco   cnrs

- short for: *Exploring Nigeria's linguistic wealth: grammatical analysis and linguistic documentation of the Adamawa languages*

- four year research project (2016-2019)

- funded by the City of Paris (program "Emergence(s)")

- new team: 2 CNRS researchers, four PhD students, one undergraduate student

Dmitry Idiatov (PI), Mark Van de Velde, Mirjam Möller, Jakob Lesage, Eveling Villa, Lora Litvinova, Tope Olagunju
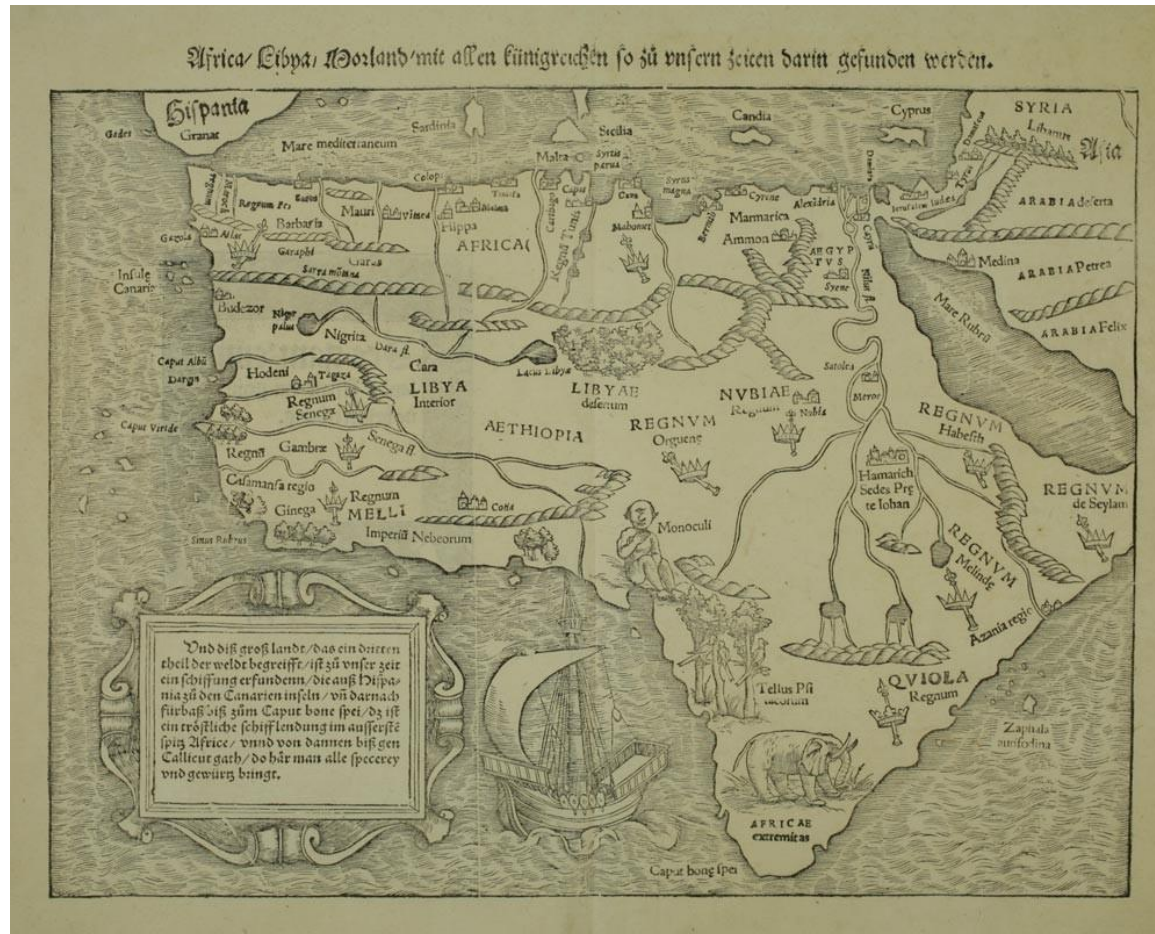
Why we came to Nigeria…

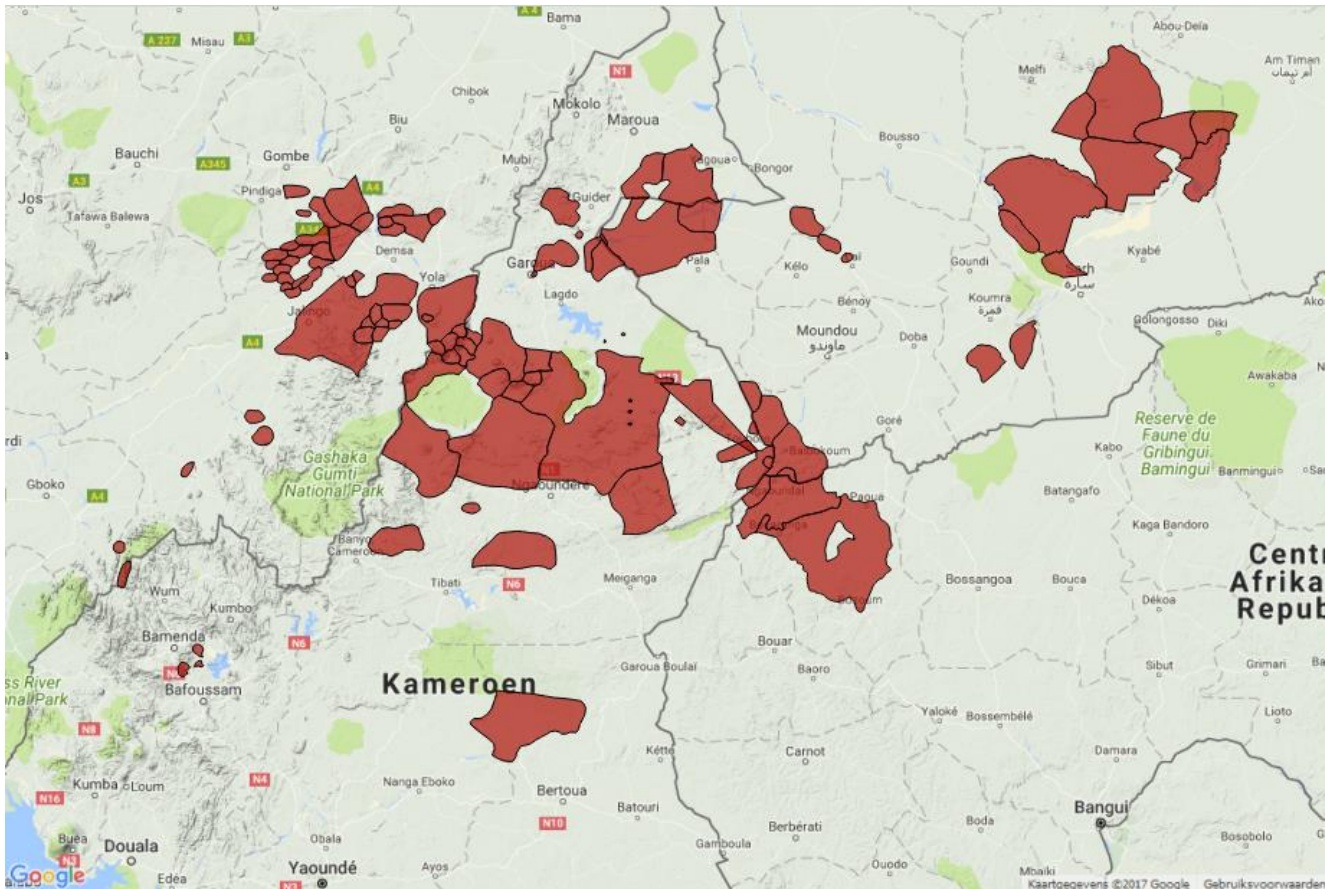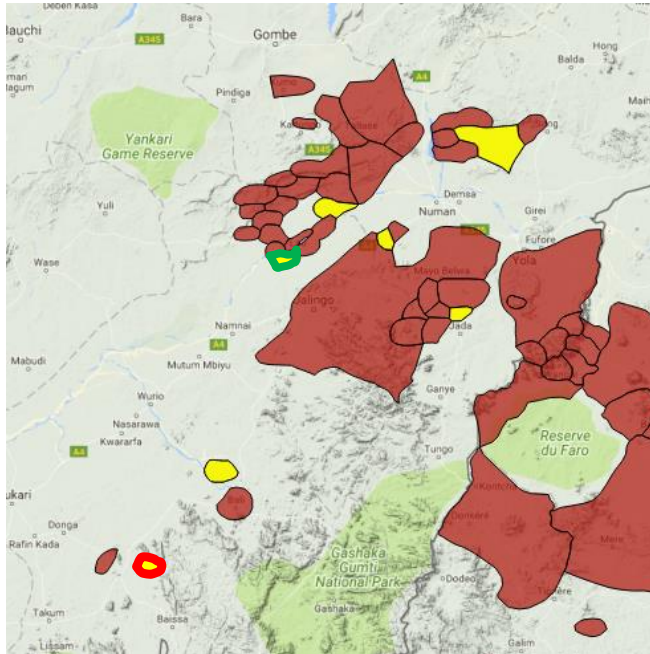| state of documentation	Nigeria #lgs		Africa #lgs		New Guinea Area #lgs		World #lgs	
grammar	88	**16.60%**	639	**29.59%**	375	**17.74%**	2344	**31.33%**
grammar sketch	75	**14.15%**	529	**24.50%**	517	**24.46%**	1817	**24.28%**
dictionary	16	**3.01%**	49	**2.26%**	25	**1.18%**	151	**2.01%**
specific feature	17	**3.20%**	117	**5.41%**	93	**4.40%**	274	**3.66%**
phonology	17	**3.20%**	80	**3.70%**	58	**2.74%**	287	**3.83%**
text			12	**0.55%**	24	**1.13%**	82	**1.09%**
new testament			1	**0.04%**	6	**0.28%**	11	**0.14%**
wordlist	236	**44.52%**	505	**23.39%**	728	**34.45%**	1708	**22.83%**
comparative	37	**6.98%**	107	**4.95%**	202	**9.55%**	456	**6.09%**
minimal	6	**1.13%**	13	**0.60%**	14	**0.66%**	58	**0.77%**
socling	7	**1.32%**	30	**1.38%**	18	**0.85%**	73	**0.97%**
socling	7	**1.32%**	30	**1.38%**	18	**0.85%**	73	**0.97%**
dialectology			10	**0.46%**	1	**0.04%**	15	**0.20%**
overview	29	**5.47%**	61	**2.82%**	46	**2.17%**	182	**2.43%**
ethnographic	2	**0.37%**	6	**0.27%**	6	**0.28%**	21	**0.28%**
bibliographical							1	**0.01%**
unknown							1	**0.01%**

(the statistics are courtesy of Harald Hammarström)

- The Adamawa languages of Nigeria: only 3 languages out of 43 (= 7%) have a grammar

- Adamawa languages are not an established family

Traditional "Adamawa":

- Bena-Yungur [ɓə́náː] (& Bena-Mboi group): Dmitry Idiatov & Mark Van de Velde
- Baa [bàː] (aka Kwa): Mirjam Möller
- Sam [sàm] (aka Kpasham): Eveling Villa
- Wam [w̃ə̃̀m] (aka Kugama): Lora Litvinova
- Wom [w̃ɔ̃̀m] (aka Kam): Jakob Lesage

Not "Adamawa":

- Fam [fám]: Tope Olagunju
- Lau [làw] Dmitry Idiatov & Mark Van de Velde
- Laka (of Lau) [làkà]: Dmitry Idiatov & Mark Van de Velde

- First initiative in AdaGram: a survey mission in July-August 2016

- Team:

Tope Olagunju   Bitrus Andrew

- Duration: 25 days in total, 5 villages, 5 languages

- **General goal**: gather basic lexical and grammatical data for a number of languages of the region about which almost nothing is known

- Find consultants, practical information and basic linguistic data for the **Wom** (Kam) and **Sam** (Kpasham) projects

- Gather basic lexical and grammatical data on two additional languages of which the genealogical classification is particularly doubtful: **Laka of Lau** and **Fam**

- Detailed instructions on the data to collect, workflow, recording, metadata, itinerary

- Basic sociolinguistic data on the language, contacts, pictures, GPS

- A lexical questionnaire in English and Hausa: 600 words (only the first 500 done)

- A grammatical questionnaire in English: 143 phrases/sentences to translate and some additional questions

- Audio recordings:
  - work in **batches**: writing everything down first, then record
  - record basic **metadata** about the recording in the recording itself
  - 2 **repetitions** in isolation, 2 **repetitions** in a **frame**
  - PL for nouns, IMP & PFV for verbs, etc.
  - equipment…

- Work with a group of speakers (but do the recordings with one person)

- Kpasham: July 23-31
- Lau (with the Laka Lau): July 31 - August 5
- Lau (with the Win Lau): August 5
- Mayo Kam: August 5-9
- Sabon Gida Duna: August 9-17

[sàm]

- What was available before:

    - wordlist ca. 350 words with audio

    Yoder, Zachariah (collector). 2009.. *Maya wordlists Kpasham (Adamawa)*, MPEG/X-WAV. PARADISEC. DOI: 10.4225/72/57029413DB1F7

    Blench, Roger. 2009 (ms). *The Maya [Yendang] languages*. URL: http://www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/AU/Yandang%20group/

- What became available after:

  - wordlist ca. 500 words with audio

  - ca. 140 phrases with audio

  - established contacts with the community

  - Eveling Villa is now working on the grammar and documentation of Sam for her PhD

Two communities in Lau:

- **Laka ward** of Lau (Hausa: *Angawan Lakawa*; formely *Garin Lakawa* 'Laka town')

- Lau proper

[làkà]

- What was available before:

-    The name of the language: **Laka, Lau, Laka of Lau, Lau Habe**. It is mentioned as an Adamawa language of the Mbum group on the basis of its name alone in:

Blench, Roger. 2012. *An atlas of Nigerian languages*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Kay Williamson Educational Foundation.

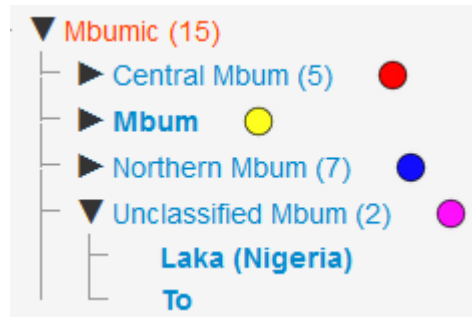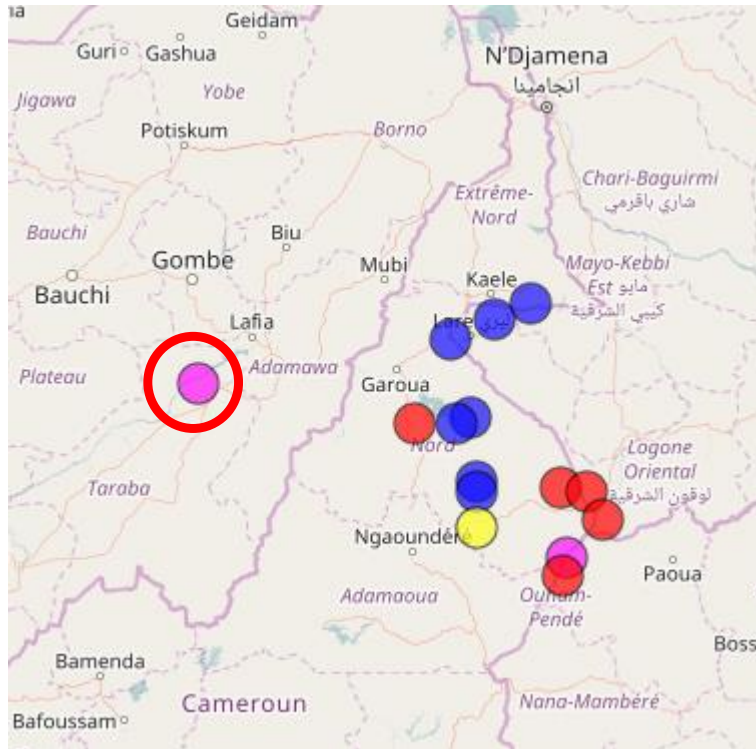**278.** Laka
2.A Lau, Lao Habe
3. Taraba State, Karim Lamido LGA, at Lau; Yola LGA; and mainly in Cameroon
4. 460 (1952); 500 (1973 SIL)
5. Adamawa–Ubangi: Adamawa: Mbum group
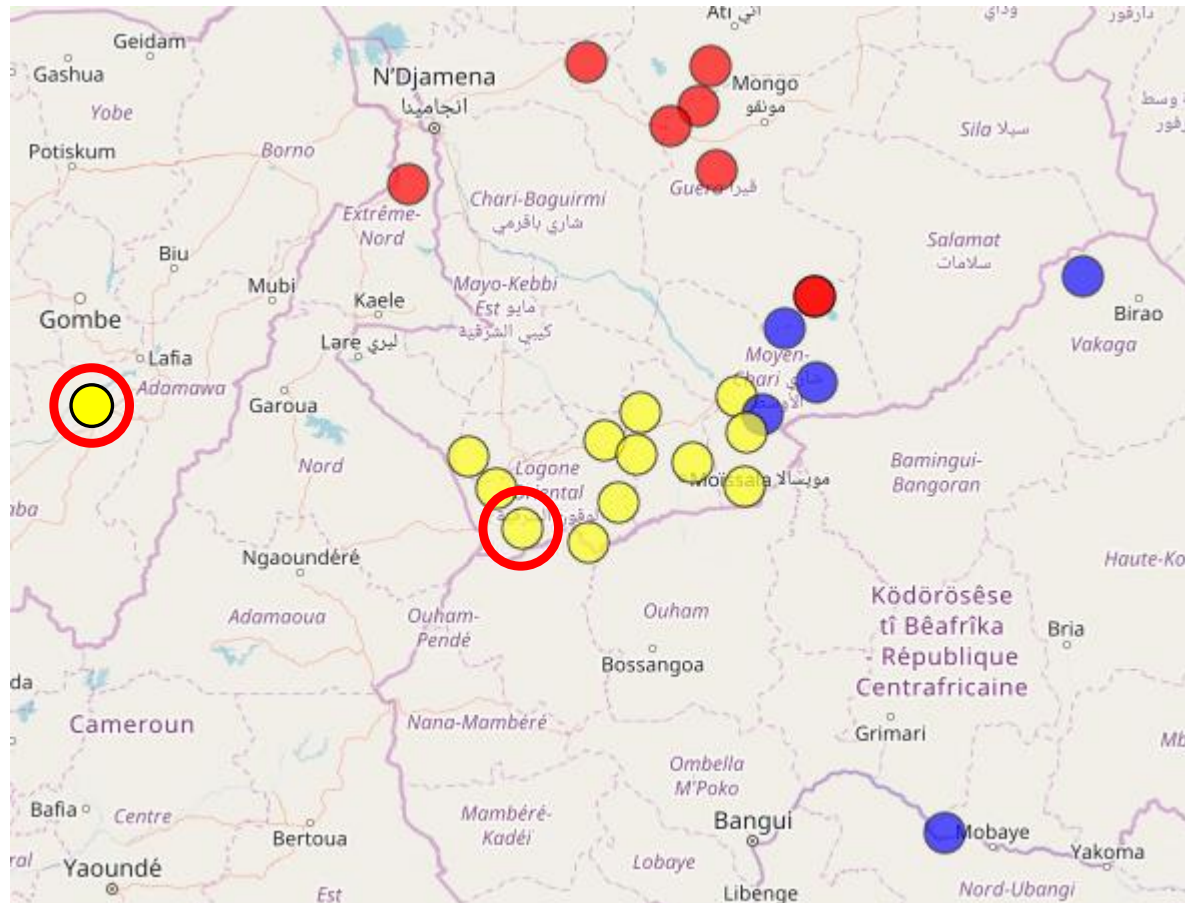
Lao Habe = Laka
Lau = Laka

Source: Glottolog.org

- Laka of Lau is the **Sara language Laka (Laga)** (Central Sudanic, SBB, Western SBB, Sara, Central Sara), the **only Central Sudanic language of Nigeria (!)**

- The list of **"varieties" of Laka** and some **Central Sara languages**

Laka "varieties"	Central Sara Languages
[kābá]	Kaba
[làkà]	Laka / Laga
[ŋgàmbáj]	Ngambay
[sàrà]	Sara
[mbájdòbà]	Mbay Doba = Mango [mge]

	Laka (Lau)	Laka (Chad)	Lau
animal	dā	/dā/	nɛ́́wkũ̄
cow	mã̀ŋgɨ̄	/màŋgɨ̄/	nâw
chicken	kũ̄nʤá	/kūnʤá/	zɨ̄w
man	ʤ̀ìŋgàw	/ʤ̀ìŋgàw/	j̃ìnɛ̀nwò
medicine	kũ̀mā	/kùmā/	gâj

Laokein, Nemian, Noel Gongoto, Dara Laobeul, Suzan Nangtolatam & John M. Keegan. 2015. *Lexique laga*. 4th ed. (The Sara Language Project). Cuenca: Morkeg Books. http://morkegbooks.com/Services/World/Languages/SaraBagirmi.

[làw]

- In Hausa, the inhabitants are called *Lau haaɓe* 'the indigenous of Lau' (from Fula *haaɓe* 'black servants, slaves, blacks (non-Fulani)')

- In the language itself, the town is Lau **[làw]** (lit. 'mud') and the inhabitants are **[w̄ĩ̄ lâw]** 'people of Lau' and the language is **[w̄ĩ̄ lâw mā̃]** 'the language of the people of Lau'

- Shimizu (1980:42) based on observations by Meek (1931:35) classifies the language of Lau as Jukunoid together with Bandawa, Minda and a number of other groups (but provides no data)

The people of Lau (and the surrounding towns of Bandawa, Kwinini, Minda, etc.), though located within twenty-five miles of Kona, do not speak Jukun as their mother tongue. Their language is of a primitive monosyllabic type, but the vocabulary shows a number of resemblances to Jukun, and their close association with the Jukun is evident from the number of religious cults which they share with the Jukun of Kona. The same remarks apply to the riverain Jen, who, like the Jukun, worship Ma as the

(Meek 1931:35)

- The Lau people consulted claimed to speak mutually intelligeable languages with the inhabitants of Kunini, Bandawa and Jeshi.

- Lau is probably Jukunoid, indeed.

- We later collected additional data with a speaker of Lau in Ilorin (Kwara State) that we still need to process.

[w̃ɔ̃m]

- What was available before:

  - wordlist ca. 150 words and some phrases

  Kleinewillinghöfer, Ulrich. 2015. (ms). *Some notes on Nyiŋɔm (aka Nyingwom or Kam)*. URL: https://www.blogs.uni-mainz.de/fb07-adamawa/files/2015/07/Kam-Nyingwom-notes.pdf

- What became available after:

  - wordlist ca. 500 words with audio

  - ca. 140 phrases with audio

  - established contacts with the community

  - Jakob Lesage is now working on the grammar and documentation of Wom for his PhD

[fám]

- What was available before:

  - wordlist ca. 70 words

  - a provisional classification of the language as Mambiloid.

  Blench, Roger. 2011 (ms). *Fam wordlist and etymological commentary*.

  Blench, Roger. 2012. *An atlas of Nigerian languages*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Kay Williamson Educational Foundation.

- What become available after:

  - wordlist ca. 700 words with audio

  - ca. 140 phrases with audio

  - list of the villages where Fam is spoken (it is not a single-village language as we used to think)

  - better understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of Fam

  - established contacts with the community

  - somewhat more certain about the classification of Fam as Mambiloid

  - Tope has written his BA term paper on the basic description of Fam

http://llacan.vjf.cnrs/AdaGram