Grammatical Cognates in the Dogon Diasystem

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Proto-Dogon is the hypothesised ancestral languages from which all of the modern Dogon languages emerged. Today the twenty-some distinct Dogon languages spoken across the Bandiagara region vary immensely with respect to number and animacy marking. However there is converging research (Heath 2022 & *various*; Zuk 2024; Prokhorov 2024) that Proto-Dogon made a distinction between animate and inanimate nouns. There is continuing discussion as to which modern Dogon languages best-preserve the archaic structures of Proto-Dogon: Yanda Dom (Prokhorov 2024), Najamba-Kindige (Hantgan, *Personal Communication*), or Jamsay and Donno So (Calame-Griaule 1956). This paper is a contribution to the conversation about the structures and etyma of Proto-Dogon.

By employing internal-reconstruction based upon the grammars of Heath (various), Prokhorov (2012), McPherson (2013), Dyachkov (*Under Review*), and the CLDF transformation of the Comparative Dogon Wordlist (Heath et al. 2023) we present several Pan-Dogon reflexes and the manner in which they diverged in function and form from inherited etyma throughout the language family (see table 1 below).

Table 1: Reconstruction of PD Grammatical Morphemes & Reflexes in 3 daughter languages

PD	Najamba	Tebul Ure	Tommo So
*bV́	bé	bú	bé
anim 3pl pro.	*3pl animate anaphoric pro.*	*3pl animate anaphoric pro.*	*3pl anaphoric pro.*
*mÚ	mó	-m	-m
an. deictic pro.	*anim. near-distal dem. pro.*	*deictic dem. pro.*	*human plural marker*
*kÚ	kó	kú	kó
inanim. deictic pro	*inanim. dem. pro.*	*inanim pro: 'it'*	*inanim. dem. pro.*
*gV	-	-gè	-gɛ/-gɔ
gram. deict. pro	-	*def. art. inanim. pl.*	*def. art.*

Our hypothesis is that Proto-Dogon did not overtly mark number on the noun, and this is line with a larger tendency for Niger-Congo identified by Creissels (*In prep*). Rather, in Dogon, as elsewhere in Niger-Congo we see the appearance of various singulative and plurative marking strategies across the system, generally emerging from the hitherto proposed, previously independent, deictic and personal pronouns.

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