

## **The genetic position of Tima**

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*Tima is one of the many endangered languages of the Nuba Mountains, Sudan.. According to the classification by Joseph Greenberg, it forms a genetic unit together with Katla and Julud, known as the Katla cluster. According to the same classification, this cluster is part of the Kordofanian branch of Niger-Congo. Over the past few years, a team from the University of Cologne and the University of Khartoum has documented this language on the basis of a grant from the Volkswagen Foundation. The documentation has resulted not only in an extensive database documented with audiovisual means (including a lexicon, grammar, and annotated texts amongst others), it has also made clear that the genetic position of the Katla group needs to be reconsidered. In my presentation, I would like to show that Tima and the Katla cluster probably constitute an independent, early offshoot of Niger-Congo, rather than being part of Kordofanian, with remnants of (presumably) archaic Niger-Congo features; these include a (reduced) noun-class system as well as a range of verbal derivational markers several of which are cognate with Proto-Bantu.*