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ON THE VERBAL SYSTEM IN LANGI
A BANTU LANGUAGE OF TANZANIA (F.33)*

Margaret Dunham
Université de Paris 3, LACITO-CNRS

ABSTRACT
This paper presents the Langi verbal system and the various ways in which tense, aspect and mood are encoded. Through the description of the structures and uses of the various forms, it attempts to demonstrate how the different conjugations fit together to form a coherent whole, morphologically and semantically, and how in some cases the system has been influenced by surrounding Cushitic languages.

RESUME
Cet article présente le système verbal du langi et les différents moyens mis en œuvre pour encoder le temps, l’aspect et le mode. A travers la description des structures et emplois des diverses formes, il tente de démontrer comment les conjugaisons diverses forment un système cohérent, sur les plans morphologiques et sémantiques, et comment, dans certains cas, le système a été influencé par les langues couchitiques environnantes.

1 Introduction
Langi2 (Rangi in Swahili) is a Bantu language spoken by approximately 300,000 people in the Kondoa Region of Tanzania. It is of interest linguistically as its speakers have long been surrounded by non Bantu-speaking communities. In this presentation I will posit that this has not been without incidence on the language, as evidenced by certain areal features.

This paper presents the verbal system of Langi as it is spoken in the towns of Kondoa and Pahi. Through the description of the structures and uses of the

* I thank the following for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper: Christiane Paulian, Zlatka Guentchéva, Denis Creissels, Dave Odden and an anonymous reviewer at SAL. I am also indebted to Derek Nurse and Maarten Mous for pointing out (as well as providing) various articles of interest for this study.

2 This language is relatively unknown to linguistics: when I began studying it in 1996, the only published work dated from 1916 (by Otto Dempwolf). The data presented here is all first hand, and was gathered during fieldwork I carried out in Tanzania during my doctoral studies, the funding for which was provided by the LACITO-CNRS. Oliver Stegen of SIL has started working on the language recently; so far he has presented a paper on the vowel system at CALL (Leiden) in 2000, and has published a paper on derivation (2002). A monograph on Langi is in press: Dunham (forthcoming).
various forms, I will attempt to demonstrate how the different conjugations fit together to form a coherent whole, morphologically and semantically. I will begin with a brief presentation of the three types of elements which enter into verbal constructions in Langi: verb forms, copulative verbs and infinitival forms. I will then proceed to present the conjugations attested in the language.

1.1. Verb forms. The verb form in Langi, and in Bantu languages in general, is composed of several elements. These elements are not all necessarily present in a given verb form, but always appear in a fixed order. In Langi, a verb form may contain up to seven elements, which can be represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>negative pre-pfx</td>
<td>subject pfx</td>
<td>TAM-TAM</td>
<td>object, reflexive</td>
<td>RAD extensions</td>
<td>TAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimal forms contain only a radical and a suffix. This corresponds to the imperative (see section 2.18 below):

(1) **dɔma**

- dɔm -a
- go -IMP2SG

Maximal forms contain seven elements:

(2) **siviiyɔsɔmɛrɔ tukɔ**

- si- va- iyɔ- va- som -er -a tukɔ
- P.PFX- SP2- PROG- OBJ2- read -APPL -PROG NEG

Position 1. The first element in the verb form is the negative pre-prefix *si*. Its presence negates the verb form. Negative forms are generally accompanied by the

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3 Abbreviations: ADV: advisory; APPL: applicative extension; ASS: associative extension; aux: auxiliary; CAUS: causative extension; CONN: connective; COP: copula; DEC: decisional; DEICT: deictic; DEM: demonstrative; DET: determinative; DP: dependant nominal prefix; HAB: habitual; IMP: imperative; INF: infinitive; INJ: injunctive; INV: inevitable; IP: independant nominal prefix; lit: literally; LOC: locative suffix; n/a: not applicable; NAR: narrative; NEG: negative; NEUT: neutral extension; OBJ: object marker; PASS: passive extension; pers.com.: personal communication; PFT: perfect; PFV: perfective; PERS: personal pronoun; PFX: prefix; PL: plural; POSS: possessive; P.PFX: negation pre-prefix; PRES: presentative; PROG: progressive; RAD: radical; REFL: reflexive; REL: relator; SFX: suffix; SG: singular; SP: subject prefix; STAT: stative extension; SUB: subjunctive; TAM: tense-aspect-mood marker; V: verb. Numbers in the glosses refer to the noun classes.

4 Tones will not be marked on the examples. Tonal distinctions in Langi, particularly at the grammatical level, are so restricted that not marking them in this study does not affect the analysis.
adverb *tuku* at the end of the sentence. This is the only negative marker in the verb form, the suffix, for example, is never modified. We will see in sections 2.20 and 2.21 that imperatives and subjunctives are negated in a different manner.

**Position 2.** The second element in the verb form is the subject prefix. With the exception of imperatives, where the person is marked in the 7th position, a subject prefix in the second position is obligatory. The subject prefixes most frequently encountered in this paper will be the person prefixes. Below is a table showing the prefixes as they appear when followed by a consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ni-</td>
<td>tu-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>u-</td>
<td>mu-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>va-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When followed by a vowel, the forms vary somewhat, the prefix vowel either drops (as in example (2) above) or elides, depending on the articulatory nature of the two vowels in contact, and also on the nature of the following morpheme. In general, when the prefix vowel is altered, the following vowel is lengthened. The rules governing vowel contact may be found in Dunham (forthcoming).

The subject prefix for the 1st person singular has several distinct variants: it is *ni*- in verb forms, but when prefixed to the copula -rɪ, is *nde*- in the affirmative and *ndu*- in the negative:

(3) **ni kadʒəŋgaumba** “I built a house.”

*ni- ka- dʒəŋ* -a *ŋ- umba*

SP1SG- NAR- build -NAR IP9- house

(4) **nde ri muhindʒa, sinduri mutavana tuku** “I’m a girl, I’m not a boy.”

*nde- ri mu- hindʒa si- ndu- ri mu- tavana tuku*

SP1SG- COP IP1- girl P.PFX- SP1SG- COP IP1- boy NEG

The subject prefix for the 3rd person singular is *a* (Ø before a vowel) in all cases except preceding the habitual marker -σ- where it is *y*:

(5) **akadʒəŋgaumba** “He built a house.”

*a- ka- dʒəŋ* -a *ŋ- umbo*

SP1- NAR- build -NAR IP9- house

(6) **yəddoma ndʒərii** “He goes on the path.”

*y- σ- dom -a n- dʒəri- i*

SP3SG- HAB- go -HAB IP9- path -LOC
Position 3. The third position contains tense-aspect-mood markers. These will be largely discussed in the following sections. In brief, conjugations in the verb forms are determined by the elements present in the third and the seventh positions (in the case of the imperative and the subjunctive, by a null marker in the 3rd position). In example (3) above, one can see that I have given the same gloss (NAR) to the elements found in what corresponds to the 3rd and 7th positions of the verb form. In the representation of the verb form (at the beginning of this section), there are two sets of elements in the 3rd position as one TAM marker, to, may combine with other TAM markers in this position. This phenomenon will be discussed below, in section 2.8.

Position 4. This position contains object and reflexive markers. Object marking is relatively limited in Langi, and is mostly, but not exclusively, reserved for beneficiaries. See for example (2), (36), (37), (81). The reflexive marker (-i-), roughly speaking, indicates that the situation applies to the subjects themselves, and is widely encountered in Langi. See for example (18), (19), (72), (102).

Position 5. This position contains the verb radical. The most common structure in Langi is -CVC-, many other structures are encountered however, such as -VC-, -VCVC-, etc.

Position 6. This position contains extensions, which modify the valency of the verb. The most common are the applicative (2), (18), the passive (100), (104) and the causative (43). Several extensions may be present in a given verb form (18), (104).

Position 7. This position also contains tense-aspect-mood markers, which, in combination with those in the third position, determine the conjugation of the verb form. These will be described in detail below.

1.2 Other predicative elements. The other elements which enter into Langi conjugations, alone or as part of verbal constructions, are the copulas -rr and -id3a on one hand and infinitival forms on the other hand. In this section I will present them as they are used independently, in section 2 we will see how they enter into verbal constructions.

The copula -rr. The copula -rr always carries a subject prefix, and in certain cases is inflected for the perfect aspect. On its own, not in a verbal construction, it serves as predicative center with certain nominal determiners, certain types of
spatial localizations, etc. In this case it is negated in the same manner as verb forms, i.e. with the pre-prefix \( \text{si} - \):

(7) \( \text{ŋ} \text{ŋ} \text{g} \text{ɪ} \text{r} \text{i} \text{n} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \text{nd} \text{ə} \text{s} \text{i} \text{ɪ} \text{r} \text{i} \text{b} \text{ɪ} \text{t} \text{ʊ} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \text{b} \text{ɪ} \text{ʊ} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \) \( \text{“}\text{The dress is red, it isn’t grey.”}\)

When the copula is followed by the connective \( \text{na} \) it denotes possession. In this case, when negated, the copula is replaced by the negative copula -\( \text{si} \):

(8) \( \text{twaar} \text{t} \text{ɪ} \text{n} \text{a} \text{m} \text{p} \text{e} \text{s} \text{a} \) \( \text{“}\text{We had money.”}\)

(9) \( \text{twaasi} \text{t} \text{ɪ} \text{n} \text{a} \text{m} \text{p} \text{e} \text{s} \text{a} \text{t} \text{ʊ} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \) \( \text{“}\text{We didn’t have any money.”}\)

In verbal constructions, we shall see that -\( \text{r} \text{ɪ} \) combines with infinitives and with inflected verbs.

**The past copula -\text{id} \text{z} \text{a}**. \( \text{id} \text{z} \text{a} \) is a past tense copula. It always bears a subject prefix. On its own, it denotes a durative (as opposed to a punctual) situation in the past:

(10) \( \text{twi} \text{d} \text{z} \text{a} \text{v} \text{ɪ} \text{m} \text{b} \text{i} \) \( \text{“}\text{We used to be singers.”}\)

(11) \( \text{kwi} \text{d} \text{z} \text{a} \text{t} \text{ɪ} \text{f} \text{a} \text{k} \text{a} \text{h} \text{a} \text{n} \text{d} \text{z} \text{i} \text{v} \text{i} \) \( \text{“}\text{There used to be woods just right here.”}\)

(12) \( \text{sikwi} \text{d} \text{z} \text{a} \text{k} \text{ɪ} \text{f} \text{a} \text{k} \text{a} \text{t} \text{u} \text{k} \text{ʊ} \) \( \text{“}\text{There didn’t used to be woods.”}\)

**Infinitival forms.** The infinitival forms found in verbal constructions show two structures, either \( \text{RAD-a} \) or \( \text{kʊ-RAD-a} \), where \( \text{kʊ-} \) is the class 15 prefix which marks all verbo-nominal forms of verbs. The choice between the form with or without the class 15 prefix is based upon how closely bonded, semantically, the two verbal elements are. In Hadermann (1996: 159), the author mentions that in the languages under study the infinitive sometimes lacks a prefix. She puts this down to morphological factors (whether or no the radical is vowel initial), but
says the conditioning may also depend on the syntactic status of the verbo-
nominal form within the utterance.

In Langi the difference is independent of the radical initial, and is fully
distinctive. For example, there are two future tenses (which will be examined in
detail in section 2.19), distinguished by the presence/absence of the class 15
prefix:

(13) **sakaata turi** “We are about to hunt.”
    sakaat -a tu- rɪ
    hunt -SFX SP1PL- COP

(14) **kusakaata turi** “We will hunt.” (At some indeterminate time in the future.)
    ku- sakaat-a tu- rɪ
    IP15- hunt -SFX SP1PL- COP

In (13) the form corresponds to an immediate future, something that is
about to happen, in (14) to an indeterminate future.

The same structural distinction is found for example when the infinitival
form functions as direct object:

(15) **vɔsaka vina** “They always want to dance / they adore dancing.”
    va- ɔ- sak -a vĩn -a
    SP2PL- HAB- want -HAB dance -SFX

(16) **vɔsaka kuvin** “They want to dance.”
    va- ɔ- sak -a ku- vĩn -a
    SP2PL- HAB- want -HAB IP15- dance -SFX

In example (15), wanting to dance is part of the subjects’ personality, it is a
permanent feature, whereas in (16) it is a passing fancy. We will see more
examples of this phenomenon in section 2.10.

Now that we have had a look at the different elements involved, let us turn
to the conjugations in which they are used.

2 **Conjugations**

Below is a list of the conjugations I have attested in Langi. Where
applicable, negative forms are indicated by the pre-prefix in parentheses (si-) or,
where the pre-prefix does not apply, by the independent form following the
affirmative form(s) to which it applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(si-)SP-iyɔ-RAD-a</td>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>PROG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 In compound forms, each component has its specific abbreviation (such as cop for ‘copula’).
It can be seen from this list that the Langi verbal system, like those of most Niger-Congo languages (Welmers 1973: 344), makes use of both ‘simple’ verb forms and verbal constructions. Several features however are atypical in comparison to Proto-Bantu or even to most East African Bantu languages. The most striking is the future formation infinitive + auxiliary which contradicts Greenberg’s (1966: 84) claim that verb-object (VO) languages show the order auxiliary + infinitive. However, Langi is not alone in presenting such atypical word order, it is also found in several other Bantu languages, such as Mbugwe

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6 This form is identical to the Advisory. They are only distinguished by the context in which they are used (narratives vs. direct speech), and not for example by tone: the tones are identical.

7 On the presence vs. absence of kʊ-, see the discussion on examples (13) through (16) above.

It is highly probable that the counter-universal structures in Langi were calqued on surrounding Southern Cushitic languages, the most likely candidates being Burunge and Alagwa (Mous, pers. com.). Further indication of influence from these languages can be seen in the fact that there are no clear distinctions between degrees of past in Langi. We will see in the following paragraphs that many conjugations can only incidentally be interpreted as past tenses, and that in most cases the past is indicated by a distinct copula, which precedes the verb form. This situation is contrary to what is found in most Bantu languages (although comparable to what is found in Standard Swahili, Nurse 2000a: 249), as well as in Proto-Bantu, but closely resembles Southern Cushitic where aspectual distinctions are much more central than temporal ones (Nurse 2000b: 524). Furthermore, the only clear temporal distinctions are expressed in verbal constructions, whereas most aspectual and modal distinctions are expressed directly in the verb form.

2.1 Progressive: (si-)SP-iy-RAD-a. The progressive indicates a process which is on-going at the time of speech. It is often used to signify that one is in the middle of doing something, and therefore unable to respond to a demand.

(17) niiyolwusika “I’m talking”
   ni- iy- lus -ık -a
   SP1SG- PROG- talk -NEUT -PROG

(18) siiyoseya kiitu tuku, iyokiritıkanan
   si- a- iy- sey -a ki- ntu tuku
   P.PFX - SP1- PROG- say -PROG IP7- thing NEG
   a- iy- k₉ i- r -ır -ık -an -a
   SP1 - PROG- k- REFL- think -APPL -NEUT -ASS -PROG
   “He isn’t saying anything, he’s thinking.”

---

8 Or at least in the dialect spoken in the towns of Kondoa and Pahi. I have been told by Nurse that Stegen has found several distinct pasts, however, as Stegen’s aim is to establish a ‘pan-Langi’ orthography, he has not distinguished between the various dialects.

9 This consonant is inserted to avoid the merging of the two vowels. It is not part of the reflexive or the radical, the form in the infinitive is kwirıkanan ‘to think’.
The progressive is never used with stative verbs. For a state current at the time of speech, either the habitual, the perfect or the perfective is used. For example the verb *kočfa* ‘to be afraid’ is usually conjugated in the habitual (*nkočfa ndžoka* ‘I am afraid of snakes / I fear snakes’), whereas the verb *køvtha* ‘to be bad’ is usually conjugated in the perfect (*naavtha* ‘I am bad’).

### 2.2 Habitual: (si-)SP-σ-RAD-a.

The habitual is mostly used to describe situations that are characteristic of an extended period of time, to express recurrent events, statements of general truth. It is used for example to describe what one does in life, but, contrary to the progressive, does not stress that something is on-going at the time of speech.

The habitual shares many features with the perfect (see below), the difference being that the habitual does not refer to an earlier situation, and is mostly used with dynamic verbs, whereas the perfect is commonly used with both dynamic and stative verbs.

(20) **noorima** “I farm / I’m a farmer.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ni-</th>
<th>σ-</th>
<th>rim</th>
<th>a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP1SG-</td>
<td>HAB-</td>
<td>farm</td>
<td>-HAB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(21) **ntsùŋgula yoorya ndʒuu** “The hare eats beans.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IP9-</th>
<th>t̪tsùŋgula</th>
<th>r̪-</th>
<th>σ-</th>
<th>ry</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IP-</td>
<td>HAB-</td>
<td>SP9-</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>-HAB</td>
<td>IP10-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22) **sinoctereka tuku** “I don’t cook / I’m not the one who cooks in our house.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>si-</th>
<th>ni-</th>
<th>σ-</th>
<th>ter</th>
<th>-êk</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P.PFX-</td>
<td>SP1SG-</td>
<td>HAB-</td>
<td>cook</td>
<td>-NEUT</td>
<td>-HAB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(23) **sivoctema lukwi tuku** “They are not cutting wood.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>si-</th>
<th>va-</th>
<th>σ-</th>
<th>tem</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P.PFX-</td>
<td>SP2-</td>
<td>HAB-</td>
<td>cut</td>
<td>-HAB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following example, a stative verb usually inflected in the perfective is inflected in the habitual, to show sarcasm:
(24) **toto̱ nga** “We know / we are knowing (we’re not stupid).”

```
tu- o- taŋ -a
SP1PL- HAB- know -HAB
```

2.3 **Perfect:** (si-)sp-a-RAD-a. This form is certainly the reflex of the (tentative) Proto-Bantu ‘preterite ipf.’ (-á- -a) (Meeussen 1967: 109), however, as its values are closer to what Comrie calls the perfect (Comrie 1976: 52-65), I have chosen the label which will have meaning for the largest number of readers.

The interpretation of the perfect is linked to the type of verb: stative vs. dynamic. When used with stative verbs, the time reference is the present, as in:

(25) **vitʃiŋgə vyaað̪əha** “The beads are beautiful.”

```
vi- (ʃiŋgə vi- a- bɔh -a
 IP8- bead SP8- PFT- be.beautiful -PFT
```

(26) **aya maðʒi siyaahəla tuku** “This water is not cold.”

```
aya ma- dʒi si- ya- a- hɔl -a tuku
 DEM6 IP6- water P.PFX- SP6- PFT- be.cold-PFT NEG
```

When used with dynamic verbs, the perfect refers to a present situation which results from a preceding process, the latter having produced a state which is either still current or the effects of which are still felt:

(27) **mwaana aakula**

```
mu- ana a- a- kɔl -a
 IP1- child SP1- PFT- grow -PFT
```

“The child has grown.” (One deduces that he used to be short.)

(28) **naaðɔma kaayii yaavɔ**

```
ni- a- dɔm -a Ø- kaayə -i i- a- vɔ
 SP1SG- PFT- go -PFT IP9- house -LOC DP9- DET- POSS3PL
```

“I have been to their house (already, therefore I don’t want to go back).”

(29) **sinaaðɔma kaayii yaavɔ tuku**

```
si- ni- a- dɔm -a Ø- kaayə -i i- a- vɔ tuku
 P.PFX- SP1SG- PFT- go -PFT IP9- house -LOC DP9- DET- POSS3PL NEG
```

“I haven’t been to their house (but would like to go).”

2.4 **Perfective:** (si-)sp-a-RAD-ire. This conjugation can also be traced back to Proto-Bantu, however it is not clear whether it is the reflex of Meeussen’s ‘recent pf.’ (-a- -jdé) or his ‘pret. pf.’ (-á- -jde) (Meeussen 1967: 113), in neither case do the tones correspond (the pattern in Langi is usually -á- -jde, but may vary according to context).

The perfective denotes a completed situation. Contrary to the perfect, it does not refer to a past situation:
(30) mwaana aakurire “The child grew.”
  mu- ana a- a- kui₁⁰ -iře
  IP1- child SP1- PFV- grow -PFV

(31) kuri sidžaalumiremusuŋgaati tuku “The dogs didn’t bite the rich man.”
  Ø- kuri si- dʒi- a- lum -iře mu- suŋgaati tuku
  IP10- dog P.PFX- SP10- PFV- bite -PFV IP1- rich.man NEG

The perfective can be used with all types of past adverbs, ‘yesterday’ as well as ‘last year’:

(32) idʒɔ, naadomire na łudʒii “Yesterday I went to the watering hole.”
  idʒɔ ni- a- dɔm -iře na lu- dʒi -i
  yesterday SP1SG- PFV- go -PFV CONN IP11- watering.hole -LOC

(33) mwaaka waałɔkire, twaadomire na aruʃa
  mu- aka u- a- lɔk -iře tu- a- dɔm -iře na aruʃa
  IP3- year SP3- PFV- pass -PFV SP1PL- PFV- go -PFV CONN Arusha

“Last year, we went to Arusha”

One could be tempted to consider the perfective a ‘past tense’. In my opinion, however, the emphasis is on the completed aspect rather than on the fact that it is past. This is supported by the use of the perfective in conditional phrases such as:

(34) kɔnɪ naadomire kaayii, rya ndɛrɪ
  kɔnɪ ni- a- dɔm -iře Ø- kaayay-i ry -a ndɛ- rɪ
  if SP1SG- PFV- go -PFV IP9- house -LOC eat -SFX SP1SG- COP

“If I go home, I will eat.” (lit. “If I went home, I will eat”.)

2.5 Anterior perfect: (si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-a. The anterior perfect has the same aspectual values as the perfect but refers to a situation which takes place prior to another situation, which is necessarily in the past. The structure of this form is unusual, as in Bantu verb forms a TAM marker must be prefixed to a radical, not to another TAM marker. According to my informants, the verb is simply ‘doubled’:

(35) fatuma aa aatumama hantu ali uudʒire
  Fatuma a- a a- a- tumam -a
  Fatuma SP3SG- PFT SP3SG- PFT- work -PFT
  ha- ntu Ally a- a- dʒi- iře
  IP16- place Ally SP3SG- PFV- come -PFV

“Fatuma was working when Ally came.”

₁₀ /l/ is pronounced [r] before /i/.
When they left, I hadn’t started the work you gave me.

“Where were the children? I hadn’t seen them.”

A possible explanation is that these structures, as well as those presented in the following section, at one point contained an auxiliary which has since been deleted.

2.6 Anterior perfective: (si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-ire. The anterior perfective has the same aspectual values as the perfective but, as for the anterior perfect in the preceding section, refers to a situation which takes place prior to another, past situation.

When we appeared, then Ally left (lit. passed).”

This form is imbricated. Imbrication affects verbs inflected in the perfective, generally those bearing certain extensions, where, roughly speaking, the extension and the suffix merge. The outcome varies both according to the extension and to the radical final consonant. Other examples can be found in (41), (74), (94). For more information on imbrication, see Bastin (1983) and Dunham (forthcoming).
We had met, then (after which) I started running off to the store.

2.7 Inevitable: sp-endo-RAD-a. Verbs in this conjugation refer to a situation which the speaker considers will happen in the near future and which is inevitable. The marker endo is probably a grammaticalized form of the verb kweenda ‘want, love’. This is quite frequent in Bantu languages, to the point that Bernd Heine includes it in his catalogue of probabilistic predictions that can be made about African languages:

(v) If a language develops a future tense marker then most likely it will use either of the motion verbs ‘go (to)’ or ‘come (to)’ or a verb of volition ‘want’. (1997: 2)

As will be seen from the following examples, Langi has retained the notion of volition, but in the sense where when something ‘wants’ to do something, it means that that something is bound to happen. This type of value is found for example in Moore (Raphael Kaboré, pers. com.), a Gur language spoken in Burkina Faso, where when one says ‘it wants to rain’, it means that the clouds are so full that it is bound to rain, or ‘the glass wants to fall’ meaning that if the glass is not moved it will fall from the table.

(40) mpaka mnënya tundopata habari
    mpaka mnënya tusendo pat a Ø habari
until Mnenya SP1PL INV get -SFX IP10 news
“All the way to Mnenya we are bound to get the news.”

(41) ma ha mpitʃi yeendo kwatwa
    ma ha m- pitʃi r- endo kwat -w -a
then here IP9 hyena SP9 INV touch -PASS -SFX
“This, here, the hyena is going to get caught.”

(42) kintu mundɔrya ni waari
    kintu mu- endɔ12 ry -a ni u arir
IP7 thing SP2PL INV eat -SFX PRES IP14 porridge
“What you are going to eat is porridge.” (Whether you like it or not.)

12 Preceeded by the vowel /u/, the marker’s initial /e/ drops.
(43) akafumya ṣgo dzaatʃwe na ḱndɔkɔɔwa
a- ka- fum -y -a ṣ- go dʒi- a- tʃwe
SP1- NAR- exit -CAUS -NAR IP10- clothes DP10- DET- POSS3SG
na a- ḱndɔ- k- ɔw -a
CONN SP1- INV- k- wash -SFX
“She took off her clothes (in order) to wash.”

2.8 Decisional: sp-tɔ-RAD-a. It is highly probable that -tɔ- is a grammaticalized form of a full verb (Güldemann 2003: 185), as is the case for ḱndɔ. Contrary to ḱndɔ however, it is difficult to say which full verb it stems from. Language-internally, the only likely source is kʊtʊla “take”. I have been unable to find any examples of other Bantu languages where ‘take’ has been grammaticalized, however the phenomenon is widely attested in the languages of the world (Hagège: 1975, Sebba: 1987, Li and Thompson: 1974, Lord: 1993, Ozanne-Rivierre: 2004). Contrary to what is found in Langi, in most of the cases described, the verb ‘take’ is serialized and tends to undergo a gradual reanalysis as a preposition or a case marker. The one example I have found that is somewhat similar to Langi is in the Polynesian Outlier language, Pileni. According to Åshild Næss (2004: 242), two constructions use the verb toa ‘take’, with different semantic and syntactic properties: one where toa introduces an object argument, and another where it contributes a volitional or inceptive meaning to the clause, similar to the English ‘to take to V-ing’.

One other possibility is that the form derives from a verb ‘to leave’ or ‘to go’ (in Langi kʊ-tamany a and kʊ-dɔma respectively) followed by an infinitive. Botne (1999: 484) mentions two Bantu languages where a marker -to- is found, in the first case it is derived from ‘to leave, to go’:

Ntomba C.66 (Gilliard 1928): to-kos-e ‘va prendre’
in the second case it is derived from ‘come’ + ku-inf:

Lozi S.34 (Gorman 1950): mu-to-ng-a ‘come (Pl) and get (it)’.

Hadermann (1999: 454-455) mentions one case where a marker -too- is found, and also posits its origins in a verb ‘to go’: “En nkengo (C.61), une des formes du futur comporte la marque -too-, qui pourrait refléter une séquence ancienne -ta-ko- où -ta- remonterait à un verbe “aller”.”

In the examples I have found in Langi, the use of tɔ signifies that the speaker is about to/has decided to/intends to undertake an action voluntarily:
A particularity of the decisional marker is that it can follow other TAM markers in the 3rd position of the verb form, for example:

**habitual + decisional**

When the decisional is combined with the habitual marker, the speaker indicates that a decision has been taken, and that it is in the process of being carried out:

(46) **naatɔkɔɔwa lʊdzii**

\[ ni- a- tɔ- k- ow -a lʊ- dži -i \]

“I’m going to wash in the watering hole.” (Despite contrary orders.)

**perfect + decisional**

Here the speaker indicates that a decision was taken, and has already been carried out:

(47) **naatɔkɔɔwa** “I still went and took a bath.”

\[ ni- a- tɔ- k- ow -a \]

**progressive + decisional**

Here, too, the use of the marker ɪɔ seems to add a level of intention or decision to the basic verb, but, as the form is in the negative, to indicate that the decision is not in the process of being carried out:
(48) **mbula yɛɛvaa, ava vadala siviyɔtɔrɪma tuku**

m- bula r- va -a  
Ip9- rain Sp9- HAB- beat -HAB  
ava va- dala si- va- iyɔ- tɔ- rim -a tuku  
Dem2 Ip2- woman P.Pfx- Sp2- Prog- Dec- farm -Prog Neg  
“It’s raining, the women are not going to farm.”

**inevitable + decisional**

When *ɛndɔ* and *tɔ* are combined, the resulting values are inevitability and intention/decision:

(49) **nɔ uṭfiku yɛɛndɔtɔrỳa ndʒuŋ**

nɔ u- tʃiku r- ɛndɔ-tɔ- ry -a n- dʒuŋ  
Rel Ip14- night Sp9- Inv- Dec- eat -Sfx Ip10- bean  
“It’s at night (that) he goes and eats beans.” (Even though he knows he’s bound to be caught).

(50) **hapana kundɔtɔkɔwa**

hapana ku- ɛndɔ-tɔ- k- ɔw -a  
Neg Ip15- Inv- Dec- k- wash -Sfx  
“Do not go and wash anyway.” (Despite our orders).

From these examples it can be seen that the inevitable *ɛndɔ* and the decisional *tɔ*, show rather atypical behavior. This leads me to hypothesize that they entered the Langi tense/aspect/mood system more recently than the other markers we have seen thus far, such as the anterior or the progressive, for example.

The first distinctive feature of *tɔ* and *ɛndɔ* is that the corresponding full lexical verbs are still in common use (with reservation however concerning the origins of *-tɔ*, see above):

(51) **tɔol idihwa** “Take some white sorghum.”

tɔol -a i- diihwa  
take -Imp2sg Ip5- sorghum

(52) **simba kɪntu yɛɛnda ni mahɔŋge** “The lion, what he loves is steak.”

Ø- simba kr- ntu r- a- ɛnd -a ni ma- hɔŋge  
Ip9- lion Ip7- thing Sp9- Pft- love -Pft Pres Ip6- steak

I would further hypothesize that *tɔ* was grammaticalized before *ɛndɔ* as the latter, in its full form, is still attested as the first verb in a verb combination. For example:
Furthermore, *tɔ* can combine with other markers in the 3rd column.

In my opinion, the value common to these two verbs, *kweɛnda* “want, love” and *kʊɔ̃ala* “take” (?) which led to their grammaticalization, and which was lacking in the Langi verb system, is that of showing the speaker’s involvement, or attitude towards the state of affairs expressed in the clause. This type of “attitude” marker is described by Maarten Mous for Ma’a (2003: 116, 129, 131). A further similarity between the markers mentioned by Mous and the Langi *tɔ* is their possibility of combining with other pre-radical TAM markers.

2.9 Narrative: (si-)sp-ka-RAD-a. This conjugation is identical in structure to what I have dubbed the ‘advisory’ (see below, section 2.22). A similar state of affairs was attested by Meeussen (1967), who mentions three distinct conjugations with *ka* (motional, inceptive and subsecutive) and notes: “The relationship between -ká-, -ka- and an often attested near homophone formative with meaning “and (he did...)” (subsecutive) is not clear.” (p. 109)

In Langi, the narrative and the advisory are never used in the same speech context: the narrative, as its name indicates, is only used in narration, whereas the advisory, and the injunctive (with the suffix -ɛ) is always addressed to someone, even if the advice concerns a third person.

The narrative is never used as the first verb form in a text, the time frame is always previously established, either by the traditional introduction *aḥɔ kale* “Once upon a time...” or by a preceding verb form. Once the time frame is established, the successive events are presented in the narrative, most often separated by *ma* “then”:

(54) **ma akadɔma na ludʒii** “Then she went to the watering hole.”

```plaintext
ma a- ka- dɔm-a na lu- dʒi -i
then SP1- NAR- go -NAR CONN IP11- water -LOC
```

(55) **ma ıkawuluka na dʒira ŋgo** “Then it flew away with those clothes.”

```plaintext
ma ɪ- ka- wul -uk-a na dʒi- ra ŋ- go
then SP9- NAR- fly -SEP -NAR CONN DP10- DEM IP10- clothes
```

Verbs inflected in the narrative are usually translated by a preterit in English, in Langi however it cannot be considered a ‘past tense’ as in itself, it carries no reference to time, but is dependant on a separate form. In this respect,
the narrative is comparable to the ‘aorist’ described by Guentchéva (1990: 107) for Bulgarian, and Robert (1996: 377) for Wolof. Robert states: “L’Aoriste est une forme verbale qui n’indique pas de repérage temporel. (...) Les événements à l’Aoriste n’ont pas par eux-mêmes ni lieu ni temps ; ils s’inscrivent dans un cadre situationnel prédéfini à l’aide d’une autre conjugaison.”

2.10 Narrative present: sp-ṛ (ku-)RAD-a. In this construction, the verb radical following the copula may or may not carry the infinitive prefix ku-, depending on how closely, semantically, the subject is bound to the lexical verb. In example (56), the lion is coming of his own free will, he could choose not to, thus the verb carries the infinitive prefix. In example (57), the hare is struggling to get by and can do nothing about it, thus the prefix is absent. See also examples (13)-(16).

This conjugation is only attested in narratives. It is used when there is a break in the narration, either in time or in space:

(56) haha simba ṭṛ ṭu ṭa nɔ ḋι ana mpitʃi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>now</th>
<th>IP9-</th>
<th>simba</th>
<th>ṭ-</th>
<th>ṭ-</th>
<th>ku-</th>
<th>udʒ</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nɔ</td>
<td>ḋi</td>
<td>ana</td>
<td>m-</td>
<td>pitʃi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>meet</td>
<td>-SFX</td>
<td>IP9-</td>
<td>hyena</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“This now the lion is coming to meet the hyena.”

This example is taken from a story. The preceding sentences present the lion and the hyena, the narrative present is then used to signify that the speaker has finished the introduction and is entering the narrative present.

(57) ntʃʊŋgula ṭṛ kwet “The hare is struggling (to get by).”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n-</th>
<th>tʃʊŋgula</th>
<th>ṭ-</th>
<th>ṭ-</th>
<th>kwet</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IP9-</td>
<td>hare</td>
<td>SP9-</td>
<td>COP</td>
<td>struggle</td>
<td>-SFX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here too, the hare has been introduced as part of the story in the preceding sentences, example (57) serves to describe the state the hare is in in the narrative present.

2.11 Narrative past progressive: ku-RAD-a sp-a-ṛ. Unfortunately I have only one example of this construction in my data, and it is elicited, however it is also mentioned in Nurse (2003: 97). There is further mention of this same construction, in this order (infinitive + copula) as well as in the inverse order.

13 This story and others may be read and listened to on the LACITO Archive Project website: http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/archivage/index.html.fr
14 It must be noted that this is a common problem when one works on a language that has not been previously described.
(copula + infinitive) in Mous (2000: 475, however his examples were given by Nurse\textsuperscript{15}). According to Mous, the change in word order is probably due to emphasis (pers. com).

\textbf{(58) kuse\text{\ae}kma \text{\text{-}ru} maka aka\text{\text{-}and a} \text{\text{-}ra} }

\begin{verbatim}
ku-sek -a tu- a- \text{\text{-}ra} \\
IP15- laugh -SFX SP1PL- PFT- COP \\
ma \text{-}uh\text{-}u \text{-}Ø- maka a- ka- and -a \text{\text{-}rr} -a \\
then DEM1 IP1a- guy SP1- NAR- start -NAR cry -SFX
\end{verbatim}

“We were laughing then this guy started to cry!”

Despite the scarcity of data, I have given this example as it shows counter-universal word order (infinitive + copula) (see the general introduction to section 2).

\subsection*{2.12 Dynamic past progressive: \textit{sp-a-ri} \textit{sp-iyo-RA\text{-}D-a}}. This structure is also only attested in elicitation, in one example. However, it confirms that the copula -\textit{ri} is largely productive in verbal constructions, both with and without the perfect marker, and both preceding and following the lexical verb.

\textbf{(59) twa\text{\ae}rk toose\text{\ae}ka “We were laughing.”}

\begin{verbatim}
tu- a- \text{\text{-}ri} tu- \text{-}o- sek -a \\
SP1PL- PFT- COP SP1PL- HAB- laugh -HAB
\end{verbatim}

\subsection*{2.13 Dynamic past habitual: \textit{sp-a-ri} \textit{sp-o-RA\text{-}D-a}}.

\textbf{(60) twa\text{\ae}rk twiipyose\text{\ae}ka “We were (in the process of) laughing.”}

\begin{verbatim}
tu- a- \text{\text{-}ri} tu- \text{-}o- sek -a \\
SP1PL- PFT- COP SP1PL- PROG- laugh -PROG
\end{verbatim}

From examples (58)-(60), it seems that the copula inflected in the perfect situates a process in the past. We will see in the following sections that when the lexical verb is stative, as opposed to dynamic, the copula -\textit{id3a} is used.

\subsection*{2.14 Stative past habitual: (si-)\textit{sp-id3a} \textit{sp-o-RA\text{-}D-a}}.

This construction is made up of a verb inflected in the habitual preceded by the copula -\textit{id3a}, which serves to place the situation in the past. The aspectual values of the main verb are kept:

\textsuperscript{15} There seems to be some confusion in the translation in Mous (“We are buying”), it should read as it appears in Nurse (2003) “We were laughing”.


(61)  twiidʒa  tɔɔkɪmba  hantu  tɔɔyɛnda,  haha  tɔɔtɪdʒa
      tu- idʒa  tu- ɔ-  k-  ḳɪmb -a
  SP1PL- COP  SP1PL- HAB-  k-  sing -HAB
  ha- ntu  tu- ɔ-  yɛnd -a  haha  tu- ɔ-  trɪdʒ -a
  IP16- place  SP1PL- HAB-  walk -HAB  now  SP1PL- HAB-  run  -HAB
  “We used to sing while walking, now we run.”

(62)  twiidʒa  tɔɔkikala  Kondoa  ma  tʊkasaama  na  London
      tu- idʒa  tu- ɔ-  k-  ikal -a  Kondoa
  SP1PL- COP  SP1PL- HAB-  k-  reside -HAB  Kondoa
  ma  tu- ka-  saam -a  na  London
  then  SP1PL- NAR-  migrate -NAR  CONN  London
  “We used to live in Kondoa, then we migrated to London.”

(63)  hantu  nɔɔkikaala  amɛrɪcani\textsuperscript{16}
      ha- ntu  ni- ɔ-  k-  ikaal -a  amɛrɪca -ni
  IP16- place  SP1SG- HAB-  k-  reside -HAB  America -LOC
  siniidʒa  nɔɔtʊmama  benki  tʊkʊ
      si- ni- idʒa  ni- ɔ-  tʊmam -a  Ø-  benki -i  tʊkʊ
  P.PFX- SP1SG- COP  SP1SG- HAB-  work -HAB  IP9-  bank -LOC  NEG
  “When I lived in America I didn’t use to work in a bank.”

2.15 Stative past perfect: SP{idʒa} SP-a-RAD-a. In this construction the copula is
combined with verbs inflected in the perfect aspect. The latter keeps its aspectual
values, but is placed in the past:

(64)  niidʒa  nɛɛnda  trɪdʒa  na  tʃuuri  “I used to like to run in the morning.”
      ni- idʒa  ni- a-  end -a  trɪdʒ -a  na  kr-  uri
  SP1SG- COP  SP1SG- PFT-  love -PFT  run -SFX  CONN  IP7- morning

(65)  mwaasʊ  wiidʒa  waavarɪka
      mu- asu  u- idʒa  u-  a-  var -tk -a
  IP3- sun  SP3- COP  SP3- PFT-  shine -NEUT -PFT
  “When the sun was shining.” (in response to: “When did you usually eat?”)

(66)  ira  siku  iidʒa  yaabɔha  “That day was beautiful.”
      ira  Ø-  siku  r-  idʒa  r-  a-  boh -a
  DEM9  IP9-  day  SP9- COP  SP9- PFT-  be.beautiful -PFT

\textsuperscript{16}  This locative suffix is borrowed from Swahili.
2.16 Stative far past perfect: sp-a-idʒa sp-a-RAD-a. This is one of the rare cases where one finds distinctions between degrees of pasts in Langi. The only other case is shown below (section 2.17 vs. 2.18). I unfortunately have only one example of this conjugation, and no examples where this conjugation is in the negative.

(67) **wɔɔkati naadʒa mʊdudi, naadʒa naadudaŋa sana**

    u- ɔɔkati  nɪ- a- idʒa mʊ- dudi  
    IP14- moment  SP1SG- PFT- COP  DP1- small

    nɪ- a- dʒa nɪ- a- dudi  -a sana  
    SP1SG- PFT- COP  SP1SG- PFT- be.small -PFT very

“When I was small I was very small.”

2.17 Stative past perfective: sp-idʒa (si-)sp-a-RAD-ire. As for the stative past perfect, verbs in the stative past perfective refer to situations which were current in the past:

(68) **wiidʒa waatɛete**¹⁷ waami “You used to have a corral.”

    u- idʒa  u- a- tɛt  -ire  u- ami  
    SP2SG- COP  SP2SG- PFV- have -PFV  IP14- corral

(69) **niidʒa siniiʃyɛŋe na mama wiu tuku**

    nɪ- idʒa  sɪ- nɪ- a- i- fy  -an  -ire  
    SP1SG- COP  P.PFX- SP1SG- PFV- REFL- ressemble -ASS -PFV

    na Ø- mama  u- a- itu  tuku  
    CONN  IP1a- mother  DP1- DET- POSS1PL  NEG

“I used to not look like our¹⁸ mother.”

We shall see in example (72) below that in the stative far past perfective, it is the copular verb which carries the negative pre-prefix.

2.18 Stative far past perfective: (si-)sp-a-idʒa sp-a-RAD-ire.

---

¹⁷ This verb is defective, it only appears in the perfective, where it shows an irregular form of imbrication. A comparable verb for ‘have’ is found in Chaga (M.-L. Montlahuc, pers. com.), where it is also defective (although to a lesser extent than in Langi).

¹⁸ Family members (and homes) are never possessed in the singular in Langi.
(70) vaadʒa vaateete udʒusi wɔɔruta\textsuperscript{19}
va- a- idʒa va- a- tɛt -irɛ
sp2- pft- cop sp2- pfv- have -pfv
ʊ- dʒusi ʊ- ʊ- rut -a
ip14- profession pp14- rel- pull -rel
“They used to be blacksmiths.” (lit. “They used to have the profession of
pulling.”)

(71) uhu musiŋa hantu aadʒa mududi,
uhu mu- siŋa ha- ntʊ a- a- idʒa mu- dudi,
dem1 ip1- child ip16- place sp1- pft- cop dp1- small
aadʒa iiʃɛeŋe na iyo waavo
a- a- idʒa a- a- i- fy -an -irɛ
sp1- pft- cop sp1- pfv- refl- resemble -ass -pfv
na ů- iyo ű- a- vɔ
conn ip1a- mother dp3- det- poss3pl
“When this child was small he looked like their mother.”

(72) ava vasiŋa hantu vaadʒa vadudi
ava va- siŋa ha- ntʊ va- a- idʒa va- dudi
dem2 ip2- child ip16- place sp2- pft- cop dp2- small
siʋaadʒa iiʃɛeŋe na iyo waavo tuku
si- va- a- idʒa va- a- i- fy -an -irɛ
P.pfx- sp1- pft- cop sp2- pfv- refl- resemble -ass -pfv
na ů- iyo ű- a- vɔ tuku
conn ip1a- mother dp1- det- poss3pl neg
“When these children were small they didn’t used to look like their
mother.”

As can be seen from the examples in the preceding five sections, in
accordance with its use independently, verb constructions with the past
copula always refer to durative as opposed to punctual situations.

2.19 Future: (ku-)RAD-a sp-r1. This form denotes either an immediate or an
indeterminate future, depending on the presence or absence of the class 15 prefix
ku-. I have grouped the two forms together for practical reasons: in several cases,

\textsuperscript{19} Relative forms apparently share the same TAM markers as the habitual, only the prefix
differs (the pronominal prefix is used as opposed to the subject prefix).
such as in the negative or the interrogative, only one form is possible, presenting
the two forms together saves the need to go back and forth between sections.

The prefixless form denotes an immediate future, something that is about to
take place:

(73)  **jëya arî** “He is about to sleep.”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jëy} & \quad -a \quad a- \quad \text{rr} \\
\text{sleep} & \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP1-} \quad \text{COP}
\end{align*}
\]

(74)  **mutî wiya urr** “The tree is about to fall.”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mu-} & \quad \text{tr} \quad \text{wiy} \quad -a \quad \text{u-} \quad \text{rr} \\
\text{IP3-} & \quad \text{tree} \quad \text{fall} \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP3-} \quad \text{COP}
\end{align*}
\]

The prefixed form is used to denote an indeterminate future:

(75)  **mutî kuwiya urr** “The tree will fall (some day).”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mu-} & \quad \text{tr} \quad \text{kù-} \quad \text{wiy} \quad -a \quad \text{u-} \quad \text{rr} \\
\text{IP3-} & \quad \text{tree} \quad \text{IP15-} \quad \text{fall} \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP3-} \quad \text{COP}
\end{align*}
\]

The prefixed form is also used whenever a time or place is mentioned:

(76)  **kùkerà tùrî mutû lâmûtûndó** “We will cut the tree tomorrow.”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kù-} & \quad \text{kèr} \quad -a \quad \text{tu-} \quad \text{rr} \quad \text{mu-} \quad \text{tr} \quad \text{lâmûtûndó} \\
\text{IP15-} & \quad \text{cut} \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP1PL-} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{IP3-} \quad \text{tree} \quad \text{tomorrow}
\end{align*}
\]

(77)  **kùdôma arî na dôdôma** “He will go to Dodoma.”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kù-} & \quad \text{dôm} \quad -a \quad a- \quad \text{rr} \quad \text{na} \quad \text{dôdôma} \\
\text{IP15-} & \quad \text{go} \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP1-} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{CONN} \quad \text{Dodoma}
\end{align*}
\]

(78)  **mwaarînû kûvàsûmêra arî vâsîngâ kîtûbû ûlîi**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mu-} & \quad \text{arînû} \quad \text{kù-} \quad \text{va-} \quad \text{sôm} \quad -\text{er} \quad -a \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{rr} \quad \text{va-} \quad \text{sîngâ} \\
\text{IP1-} & \quad \text{teacher} \quad \text{IP15-} \quad \text{OBJ2-} \quad \text{read} \quad -\text{APPL} \quad -\text{SFX} \quad \text{SP1-} \quad \text{COP} \quad \text{IP2-} \quad \text{child} \\
\text{kì-} & \quad \text{tabû} \quad Ø- \quad \text{ùlî} \quad -i \\
\text{IP7-} & \quad \text{book} \quad \text{IP9-} \quad \text{school} \quad -\text{LOC}
\end{align*}
\]

“The teacher will read a book to the children at school.”

In conditional phrases, the prefixless form is used in the apodosis, probably
to indicate that the action/event/state will immediately follow the fulfillment of
the condition:
(79) **kɔnɪ naaɗɔmɪrɛ kaayii, rya ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ nɪ- a- dɔm -iɛ ɗ- kaaya -i ry -a ndɛ- ɗ

if SP1SG-PFV- go -PFV IP9- house -LOC eat -SFX SP1SG-COP

“If I go home, I will eat.”

(80) **kɔnɪ wɪmbirɛ, nɪ vɪna ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ u- a- ɪmb -iɛ nɪ vɪn -a ndɛ- ɗ

if SP2SG-PFV- sing -PFV PERS1SG dance -SFX SP1SG-COP

“If you sing, me, I will dance.”

The prefixed form is used however when there is an object marker in the verb form, certainly in part because of possible confusion between the object prefix and the infinitive prefix (in the following example, both *ku*):

(81) **kɔnɪ wɪmbirɛ kukuvɪnɪra ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ u- a- ɪmb -iɛ ku- ku- vɪn -ɪr- a ndɛ- ɗ

if SP2SG-PFV- sing -PFV IP15- OBJ2SG-dance -APPL -SFX SP1SG-COP

“If you sing, I will dance for you.”

To the best of my knowledge, this constituent order (*verb + copula*) is limited to a very small number of Bantu languages. Among these languages, I believe a distinction must be made between those which accept SOV order and those with strict SVO order. In the first category are found languages from Guthrie’s zones B.40-50 and H.10-H.30. These have been studied by Hadermann (1996) who states:

“La deuxième construction que nous avons analysée est celle où l’infinitif est antéposé à un verbe auxiliaire. Dans cette structure l’infinitif est généralement introduit par le préfixe locatif mu- et l’ensemble traduit l’aspect progressif du procès verbal en question. Donc, contrairement à ce qui se passe dans les constructions à verbe redoublé, le morphème locatif (ou sa trace) propre au temps du progressif (cf. la reconstruction *PV-di-mu-NV*) n’apparaît pas dans la forme verbale conjuguée mais dans la forme nomino-verbale antéposée. Cette caractéristique est un signe du fait que la structure “infinitif + auxiliaire” est issue de la séquence “auxiliaire + infinitif” mais à un moment où celle-ci pouvait encore s’interpréter en “verbe + complément[nomino-

verbale]”. Puis, il y a eu antéposition du complément, ceci probablement pour des raisons d’emphase. De nouveau, l’existence de l’ordre SOV dans les langues en question a sans doute facilité l’antéposition du locatif infinitival. Au moment où la structure emphatique “(S) Loc-Inf Aux” devient une structure non marquée, un processus de grammaticalisation peut se déclencher et le locatif infinitival sera réinterprété en noyau verbal, suivi d’un verbe-auxiliaire “être” (p. 167).
The second category are languages with strict SVO order which nevertheless show constructions where the infinitival form precedes the auxiliary. In this category are found for example the closely related Gusii (E.42) and Kuria (E.43). In Gusii, the forms with an auxiliary (the copula \(-re\)) following a main verb correspond to what I call a narrative present (Whiteley 1960: 57) (tones not marked):

(82) \textit{nk\o\text{\ss}genda}^{20} \textit{nde} boono korigia embori ‘Now I’m going looking for the goat.’

When the auxiliary carries the verbal prefix \(-a\)-, the form corresponds to what I call a narrative past progressive:

(83) \textit{nkorema naare} boono \textit{ngotimoka nde} ‘I’ve been hoeing and now I’m resting’

In Kuria, the forms with an auxiliary following the main verb correspond to something between what I call present progressive and habitual (Whiteley 1955: 92):

(84) \textit{ngok\o\text{\ss}ra are} emeremo kira urusiku ‘He’s working every day.’

(85) \textit{nkorema nde} boono \textit{nkumunya nde} ‘I’m hoeing and am resting.’

In Mbugwe (F.34) the situation is slightly different. All the tenses that make use of an auxiliary in combination with an infinitive show the order verb-auxiliary, in other words, the order never varies, contrary to what is found in Gusii, Kuria and Langi. In Mbugwe, three different auxiliaries may follow the main verb: the present progressive \(-kende\), the future \(-je\) (which is the verb \textit{ja} ‘come’ conjugated in the optative, marked by the suffix \(-e\)) and the habitual \(-anda\) (Mous 2000: 471):

(86) \textit{mbula o- tova e- kende na ngulu} \\
9:rain 15- rain 9- PRES.PROG with 9:force

‘The rain falls with force.’

(87) \textit{ora ko- je} \textit{mohogo} \\
15:eat 1PL- come:SBJ 3:cassava

‘We will eat cassava.’

(88) \textit{ora w- anda nsiye?} \\
15:eat 2SG- HAB 9:fish

‘Do you eat fish?’

\footnote{The class 15 prefix is \textit{ko}-, these forms most certainly bear the cliticized focus marker \textit{n(i)}- (Nurse and Muzale 1999).}
One feature shared by Gusii, Kuria, Mbugwe and Langi is that they have long been surrounded by communities speaking non Bantu languages, where the object precedes the verb (Nurse 2000b: 525-6), which seems to indicate that this phenomenon is areal (Dahl: 2001)\textsuperscript{21}. Furthermore, the adoption of these structures may well have been facilitated by internal factors. In Langi, the order \textit{infinitive + copula} is only attested in main clause affirmatives, in all other cases the order \textit{copula + infinitive} is found:

\begin{verbatim}
(89)   nadi  urĩ dômă “When will you go?”
       nadi  u-   rĩ  dôm  -a
       when SP2SG- COP  go -SFX

(90)   Ṋombe  siirt  nwa  madʒi  yɔsĩ  tuku “The cow will not drink all the water.”
       Ō- Ṋombe  sī-  r-  Ṋw -a  ma- dʒi  ya-  ɔsĩ  tuku
       IP9-  cow  P.PFX- SP9- COP drink -SFX IP6-  water DP6-  all  NEG

(91)   ni  mwaařimu  no  arĩ  sômã  kitabu
       ni  mū-  arĩmu  nɔ  a-  rĩ  sôm -a  kĩ-  tabu
       PRES IP1-  teacher REL SP1-  COP read -SFX IP7-  book
       “It is the teacher who will read a book.”

(92)   kuudʒa  arĩ  kɔnĩ  arĩ  reetã  tʃaakurya
       ku-  udʒ -a  a-  rĩ
       IP15-  come -SFX SP1-  COP
       kɔnĩ  a-  rĩ  reet -a  kĩ-  a-  kʊ-  ry -a
       if  SP1-  COP bring -SFX IP7-  DET-  IP15-  eat -SFX
       “He can come if he brings food.” (lit. “He will come if he is bringing food.”)

(93)   hantu  urĩ  turɪra,  kuniʃana  urĩ  naalɔkĩrẹ
       ha-  ntʊ  u-  rĩ  tul  -ɪr  -a
       IP16-  place SP2SG- COP appear -APPL -SFX
       ku-  nĩ-  sãn -a  u-  rĩ  nĩ-  a-  lɔk -ɪrɛ
       IP15-  OBJ1SG-  find -SFX SP2SG- COP SP1SG- PFV- leave -PFV
       “When you appear, you will find me gone.” (lit. “When you will appear...”)
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{21}“Areal linguistics is traditionally concerned with similarities between geographically contiguous languages, in particular when they cannot be ascribed to a common proto-language.”
We also saw that constituent order in Langi can change in other circumstances, namely for reasons of emphasis, such as in example (58).

### 2.20 Imperatives: RAD-sfx.

Imperatives are characterized by the absence of both subject prefixes and pre-radical TAM markers. There are three affirmative imperative forms in Langi, distinguished by their suffixes:

(94) 2sg **doma** “go!”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dom</td>
<td>-a</td>
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<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>-IMP2SG</td>
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(95) 1pl **pale** “let’s count!”

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pal</td>
<td>-ε</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>count</td>
<td>-IMP1PL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(96) 2pl **reki mburi** “leave the goat!”

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rẹk</td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m-buri</td>
<td>-IMP2PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leave</td>
<td>-IMP2PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goat</td>
<td>-IMP2PL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three negative imperative forms, apparently interchangeable: *apa kʊ-RAD-a, hapana kʊ-RAD-a* or *kʊ-RAD-a tʊkʊ*. These forms are impersonal, equivalent to the English “no V-ing” or “do not V”. They are composed of a verb in the infinitive preceded by either *apa* or *hapana* (the latter form is borrowed from Swahili and appears to be replacing the former). The third possible negative form is composed of a verb in the infinitive accompanied by the adverb *tʊkʊ* placed at the end of the sentence.

(97) **apa kutɪrdʒa** “No running.”

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apa</td>
<td>kʊ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trɪrdʒ</td>
<td>-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(98) **hapana kʊyɛndə ndʒɪrii** “No walking on the path.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hapana</td>
<td>kʊ-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yɛnd</td>
<td>-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-dʒɪra</td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(99) **taata antɛheɛre kʊɛrɛma kɪdundii tʊkʊ**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ø- taata | a-a-N-
| teh     | -ɛr-irɛ |
| ip1a- father | sp1- pfv- obj1sg-listen | -appl pfv- |
| ku- rɪm | -a kr-dunda-i tʊkʊ |
| ip15- farm | -sfx ip7- hill-loc neg |

“Papa told me: do not farm in the hills.”
2.21 Subjunctive: sp-RAD-ε. The subjunctive mood is marked by a Ø TAM marker in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} position, combined with the suffix -ε. Contrary to the imperative, the verb bears a subject marker in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} position. This mood is used to express wishes, orders, obligations, etc. Whereas the imperative is necessarily addressed to someone, this is not the case for the subjunctive.

(100) \textit{uloolwe} “that you marry/you should marry/I want you to get married…”
\[ u\-\ lool\-w\ -\epsilon \]
sp2sg- marry -pass -subj

(101) \textit{adʒɛŋgɛ numba} “that he build a house”
\[ a\-\ dʒɛŋɛ\-ɛ\ \ j\-\ umba \]
sp1- build -subj ip9- house

(102) \textit{tiilaʁɛ kirumɛ} “that we show each other our magic”
\[ tu\-\ i\-\ la\-\ ir\-\ ε\ \ kr\-\ rumɛ \]
sp1pl- refl- show -appl -subj ip7- magic

(103) \textit{mʊmpɛɛʁɛ madʒi} “that you give me water”
\[ mʊ\-\ ɲ\-\ hɛɛr\-\ ε\ \ ma\-\ dʒi \]
sp2pl- obj1sg- give -subj ip6- water

The subjunctive mood does not have its own negative form, it shares that of the imperative. Furthermore, many negative subjunctive forms are rendered by verbs with negative meaning, such as \textit{kudiræ} ‘to not go’:

(104) \textit{adiriwɛ} “that she be made to not go”
\[ a\-\ dir\-\ i\-\ w\-\ ε \]
sp1- not.go -caus -pass -subj

2.22 Advisory: sp-ka-RAD-a. This form bears what is commonly called a distal marker, \textit{ka}, in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} position. This marker is thought to derive from a verb meaning ‘go’ (see Botne 1999 for a comprehensive study of the marker -ka-). In Langi, the distal imparts the notion of movement, even though the direction is not always itive. These forms are used to denote advice or weak orders:
(105) \textit{tukarëta mpembe ma džikavikirwa ra myoda}

\textit{tu- ka- reët -a m- hembé}

\textit{SP1PL- ADV- bring -ADV IP10- horn}

\textit{ma dži- ka- vi -r -w -a ra mi- oda}

then \textit{SP10- ADV- put -APPL -PASS -ADV DP4- DEM IP4- potion}

“We must bring horns, and the horns must be filled with potion.”

(106) \textit{ukatahira madzi vi, ukavudza na kaayii}

\textit{u- ka- tah -r -a ma- dži vi}

\textit{SP2SG- ADV- fetch -APPL -ADV IP6- water only}

\textit{u- ka- udž -a na Ø- kaaya -i}

\textit{SP2SG- ADV- come -ADV CONN IP9- house -LOC}

“And then put -APPL -PASS -ADV DP4- DEM IP4- potion

“We must bring horns, and the horns must be filled with potion.”

(107) \textit{vukakwa vaɔsi “Elders must be found.”}

\textit{va- ka- sak -w -a va- ɔsi}

\textit{SP2- ADV- find -PASS -ADV IP2- elder}

2.23 Injunctive: \textit{SP-ka-RAD-ε}. Combining the distal marker with the suffix \(-\varepsilon\), these forms denote forceful orders. \(-\varepsilon\) is the only pre-radical TAM marker attested in combination with the subjunctive suffix \(-\varepsilon\).

(108) \textit{uka uka ukalɔɔlwe ni mambëya vaa waarì}

\textit{uk -a uk -a u- ka- ɔɔl -w -ε}

\textit{come -IMP2SG come -IMP2SG SP2SG- INJ- marry -PASS -INJ}

\textit{ni mambëya va- a u- arrì}

\textit{PRES Mambeya DP2- DET IP14- porridge}

“Come, come, you must be married to Mambeya vaa Waari.”

(109) \textit{tukanëye “We must go sleep.”}

\textit{tu- ka- nëy -ε}

\textit{SP1PL- INJ- sleep -INJ}

3 Conclusion

The Langi verbal system is similar to most Bantu, and indeed Niger-Congo languages in that it makes use of both ‘simple’ verb forms and verbal constructions. However, it seems to have adopted certain areal features, which probably originated through contact with the neighboring Cushitic languages, Alagwa and Burunge. Langi also seems to have adopted a new system of
distinctions within the verbal paradigm, favoring aspectual oppositions over temporal ones, as evidenced by the fact that temporal distinctions are expressed through verbal constructions whereas aspectual and modal distinctions are expressed directly on the verb form. Langi thus contributes to the study of how language contact, or perhaps more importantly, language enclavement, can lead to the adoption of grammatical elements, and even to a change in word order.

REFERENCES


