Dott, aka zo i (Chadic, West-B, South-Bauchi):
Grammatical notes, vocabulary and text
Bernard Caron

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Zodî, aka Dott (Chadic, West-B, South-Bauchi): Grammatical notes and vocabulary

B. CARON
Llacan*

1. Introduction

Zodî, called Dott by Shimizu (78 : 13), belongs to the Southern Bauchi group of the West Chadic-B sub-branch (SBW) of Chadic (Afroasiatic). Zodî¹ is the ethnonym of a group of people living in the village of Dott, and 7 of the 11 wards ruled over by its chief. The 7 wards are: Wâkilî, Kuleetô, Galaadîima, ɓaaar, Sâraâri, Cirooma, ɓondî. Hausa and Fulɓe are spoken in the other wards: Kâgâdaâma, Saâbongari, Gôôbirâawâ and Hârdo. They call their language jêrâm zodî, the language of the Zodis. The Zodis started converting to Islam in the 60’s, and are now mainly Muslims, with few Christians and Animists among them. The language borrows heavily to Hausa, both in the vocabulary (25 % of our lexical entries) and in the grammar (conjunctions, auxiliaries, topicalization particles). However, it has retained the essential of its typical SBW character.

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This paper is the result of 3 field trips to the village of Dott, of 3 to 4 days each, between 1998 and 2002. I want to express my deep gratitude to the Sarkin Dott, and to the Ubandoma, Ahmed A. Domas and his family. Ahmed has been an extremely patient and gifted language assistant, and has liberally given me his time and energy, driving me around on the back of his motorcycle on the paths of numerous villages, looking for mysterious Chadic languages way beyond the Zodî area. He and his family have made my stay in his compound in Dott a real pleasure. Many thanks to Ahmed’s brother, Nuhu A. Domas, for answering my unending questions.

Transcription system: Long vowels are indicated by double letters; high (Hi=H) tone = ăåă ; low (Lo=L) tone = åå; falling tone = åå ; rising tone = åå. We have preferred to use the IPA instead of Hausa spelling conventions to transcribe Zodî sounds. i.e. Hausa ç is ç ; j is ç. However, outside the consonant chart, for the sake of legibility, we have kept the letter y to transcribe IPA j.
2. Phonology

2.1 Consonant phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Short</th>
<th>Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k̩</td>
<td>k̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d̪</td>
<td>d̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dz</td>
<td>dz</td>
<td>dz̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>s̪</td>
<td>s̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>f̪</td>
<td>f̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>m̪</td>
<td>m̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>n̪</td>
<td>n̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>l̪</td>
<td>l̪̩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l̪̩</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in Hausa, all Zodi words begin with a consonant and vowel-initial words in the transcription are preceded by a glottal stop: a, at; u, of; éhi, fowl = ?a, ?u, ?éhi. The voiced lateral fricative [b̃] is absent.

/k/ has many allophones whose distribution is not clear: it is pronounced [k] in initial position, [γ] in intervocalic position: [bayohárka] ≈ ba ko bárka, [he] greeted you, lit. gave you welcome, but cf. [bukáá], after. It is pronounced x when followed by a nasal: [kɔŋ] = kɔŋ, arm, wing, branch; [kaax̪i] ≈ kaak-ni, praise-pl; cf [makaaka?] < ma kaak Cak, thank you (lit. we+Aor. praise Perf., Hau mun gode). It is pronounced [k], sometimes [q̃] when followed by other consonants, except in the context a_t where it is pronounced [x]: [kaax̪i] < kaak-ti, praising. At the end of an utterance, it is pronounced [q] or [ʔ].

The tendency to labialise consonants in front of short /o/ is not as systematic as in Zaar for example: gon, here = [gwɔn-gɔn]. g, ŋ, l, r, m, n and ŋ are palatalised in front of /v/ and /e/.

2.2 Vowels

Zodi has a six-vowel system, all of them except for /o/ occurring short and long, with no nasals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short</th>
<th>Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>̩</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pending a deeper phonological analysis, we have chosen to account for diphthongs as a sequence vowel+glide: aw; ay; oy; uy; ay. These sequences don’t appear in the stock Zodi lexicon. They occur only in loan-words from Hausa, or result from suffixation with -i(i) morphemes.

2.3 Tones

Zodi has two levels of tone (Hi, Lo), plus a rising tone (Lo-Hi) and a falling tone (Hi-Lo).

3. Verbal morphology

3.1 Verb classes

Zodi has one and two-syllable verbs, with various tone schemes:

---

2 Uvular stop.
3 There is 1 verb borrowed from Hausa with HHL tones: káránta, read.
3.2 Verb plurality

Verb plurality is not consistently marked in Zodi. Verbs and verbal nouns sometimes take a -ni suffix (with a floating Hi tone) in agreement with plural subjects or objects: pór/pórni, do; có/cíni, eat; tóóbé/tóóbéni, get up, grow up, migrate (Hausa: tashi).

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 s Foc</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>tóó</td>
<td>ada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it’s what I shall eat with</td>
<td>1pl+Fut</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>Pro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ú  tóóbé  ma  tóóbéni  ú  looti

2sg+Aor.  grow up  1pl+Aor  migrate  of  far

you grew up  we came from far

This suffix is incompatible with the Perfective.

3.3 Verbal extensions

One verbal extension was identified, elicited with Hausa grade 5 ‘causative’ verbs. It is fairly common in the small corpus we used. The form is -r with a Hi tone suffixed to CV verbs, and -dar with a Hi-Lo tone scheme suffixed to CVC verbs.

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>original vb.</td>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>Zodi</td>
<td>derived vb.</td>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>Zodi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>come out</td>
<td>fita</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>get out</td>
<td>fitar (da)</td>
<td>tár</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get down</td>
<td>sauka</td>
<td>jí</td>
<td>take down</td>
<td>saukar (da)</td>
<td>jír</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climb</td>
<td>hau</td>
<td>tswaa</td>
<td>take up</td>
<td>hawar (da)</td>
<td>tswár</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide (int.)</td>
<td>ñoye</td>
<td>fun</td>
<td>hide (tr.)</td>
<td>ñuyar</td>
<td>ñúndar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get spoil</td>
<td>ñata</td>
<td>mal</td>
<td>spoil</td>
<td>ñatar (da)</td>
<td>ñádár</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pour</td>
<td>zuba</td>
<td>ñat</td>
<td>pour away</td>
<td>zubar</td>
<td>ñádár</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>zauna</td>
<td>suk</td>
<td>sit down</td>
<td>zaunar (da)</td>
<td>súndar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some verbs have the form of a causative, without any obvious original verb to be associated with: mándar, sell; súndar bring; ndár, róóddar, take to.

3.4 Verbal nouns

There exists two type of Verbal Nouns (VN) in Zodi. They both have -ti suffixes but they differ by their tones. The VN appearing in non-Continuous constructions have Lo tones:

- **say**: tʃet / tʃetí
- **put**: wáá / wáati
- **swallow**: tóóba / tóóbati
- **get up, etc.**: tóóbé / tóóbetti

In the Continuous, the tones depend on the number of syllables of the verb.

For one syllable verbs, the Verbal Noun takes a Hi tone on the first syllable. Compare the following examples contrasting continuous and non-continuous uses of the verbal nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>márábá</th>
<th>ú</th>
<th>tʃetí</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>greetings</td>
<td>with coming</td>
<td>3pl.+Cont. coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome!</td>
<td>3sg. that already (Aux.) telling</td>
<td>2sg. Comp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ar  gu  Táîba  footí  kí  mu  (...)
because if he is telling you that (...)  

- For two-syllable verbs, the -ti suffix does not alter the lexical tone of the verb in the continuous.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Form</th>
<th>Non-Continuous</th>
<th>Continuous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LL barti</td>
<td>fear</td>
<td>LLL bartiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL dıkar</td>
<td>roll</td>
<td>LLL dıkarti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH bikát</td>
<td>spin</td>
<td>LLL bikatti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH dokál</td>
<td>leer</td>
<td>LLL dokáti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL fífree</td>
<td>whistle</td>
<td>LLL fífeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL gjómíti</td>
<td>laugh</td>
<td>LLL gjómíti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH kwákál</td>
<td>cement</td>
<td>LLL kwákálti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH súkát</td>
<td>mix</td>
<td>LLL súkáti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Numerals

| 1 nam | 11 sup-cedii-nam |
| 2 rop | 12 sup-cedii-rop |
| 3 maakó | 13 sup-cedii-maakó |
| 4 wópsa | 20 subii-rop |
| 5 nantám | 21 subii-rop-cedii-nam |
| 6 maamak | 30 subii-maakó |
| 7 wusúr-maakó | 40 subii-wópsa |
| 8 wusúpsa | 50 subii-nantám |
| 9 natúrös | 100 subii-sup |
| 10 sup | 1000 dúhúú |

Ordinals are made with the preposition ú preceding the cardinal number, which appears in the definite form, viz suffixed with an -t : ú rofi, second ; ú maakóy, third, etc. ú kana, ú párko, first, is an exception. kana is to be compared to Zaar kénu, face, front, forward. párko is borrowed from Hausa.

5. Nouns

5.1 Gender

There is no morphological gender in Zodi.

5.2 Plural

In nouns, plurals are rare, lexical, and limited to humans : women (mwáti, sg. masi), children (méér, sg. wun). men (min) for example, is a collective noun. However, in the nominal system, plurality is marked in the indefinite, in deictics and relative pronouns.

5.3 Possessive NP + NP constructions

Possessive constructions in Zodi use the genitive link ú : lok ú zodi ‘king of Dot’ ; bón ú bas ú wun, ‘(the) house of (the) father of (the) girl’.

The genitive link ú is polyfunctional. Its use is not limited to possession, but expresses a more abstract link between two notions. It is used also for adjectival constructions(cf. infra XXX) and composition (qom ú zi ‘iron’, lit. ‘metal of black’ ; qom ú laari ‘copper’, lit. ‘metal of red’ ; peedi ú bari ‘sunlight’, lit. ‘sun of white’ ; qar ú bari ‘moonlight’, lit. ‘moon of white’ ; ráb-ú-ğî ‘food’, lit. ‘thing of food’4). It is used to introduce complements of nominal predicates

4 In the compound ráb-ú-ğî, the genitive link [ʔú] has lost its initial [ʔ].
(twáksi ú arí mú... ‘angry with the thing that...’ ; parti sálláma ú gádú ‘greeting his wife’, lit. ‘doing greeting of wife-his’) and of prepositional phrases : a dum ú lok 'in front of the king’.

5.4 Definiteness

5.4.1 Definite

The -i suffix in Zodi expresses a low level of definiteness and can be interpreted as a mark of individuation.

5.4.2 Indefinite

The indefinite determiner is galám for the singular, and džilám for the plural. It can be used pronominally :

áp! áy galám a gon!

excl. excl. some at here

Look, there’s one! (Hau : Ap! Ai ga wani nan!)

When used as a determinant, it can occur on the right of the noun :

díí ma bán arí mú galám ndi
Neg 1pl know thing some Neg
We don’t know anything

bukáa mbárti džilám
after day some
after a few days

or on the left. In this case, its becomes MH and it is followed by the definite (-i) form of the noun :

díí a tába patti galám arí mú gu máášíl sám mbi
Neg 1sg already get some thing that spoil+1sg heart Neg
I never got anything that made me sad (lit. spoil my heart).

5.5 Quantifiers

The distributive quantifiers are kóono (pro.), everybody ; kóógee (det.), each/every (for a thing).

kóono a gyamláti.
everyone Cont laughing
Everybody is laughing.

The determinant kóógee is followed by a noun phrase with the -i definite suffix :

kóógee džení kóógee džení nantámi
each day+def each day five+def

every year every five year

The global quantifier kúm, all, has both adjectival uses

kúm arí mú gu jáalá si mak ...
all thing that bother+1s Perf ...
all the things that bothered me...

and pronominal uses :

mini sálla mini kírísta kúm tida mááni sóy
people+of prayer people+of Christ all 3pl+Hab gather+pl. 3pl.+pl

Muslims, Christiants, all gather.
5.6 Deictics

Zodi uses proximal and distal deictics. Pronouns and determinants are sensitive to number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>proximal</th>
<th></th>
<th>distal</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adverbs</strong></td>
<td>woní</td>
<td>here</td>
<td>wáy</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determinants</strong></td>
<td>sg (táá)</td>
<td>this (cow)</td>
<td>(táá)</td>
<td>that (cow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl (táá)</td>
<td>these (cows)</td>
<td>(táá)</td>
<td>those (cows)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronouns</strong></td>
<td>sg góni</td>
<td>this one</td>
<td>gway</td>
<td>that one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl wúrdjóní</td>
<td>these ones</td>
<td>wúrdjway</td>
<td>those ones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Adjectives

Although there are a certain number of verbs with a stative meaning, the adjectival function is relatively well developed in Zodi, with adjectives proper and participles.

6.1 Adjectives proper

Adjectives are not uncommon in Zodi, and are represented beyond the class of colour terms: bári, white; laari, red; júdzi, blue; zíi, black; bará, big; boli, sweet; dasári, ugly; dokáni, wet, unripe; limí, deep; mámára, new; jindí, cold. The unusual adjective mbáa, big, is found in the expression mbáa lwaar, big spirits.

6.2 Participles

Participles are derived from verbs with the suffix -(n)i —often pronounced -(n)ay— and a MH(M) tone scheme:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ban</td>
<td>heat up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dzú</td>
<td>fill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kút</td>
<td>circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kóyán</td>
<td>be dry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mása</td>
<td>be narrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ndóráágní</td>
<td>get old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nggyóó</td>
<td>ripen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pusání</td>
<td>remain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ros</td>
<td>rot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some participles cannot be linked to a verb: folplíngí, void; ndzoñí, sour; ngwakáñí, crooked; soorí, evil, mad; sokí, [swoyá], honest.

6.3 Adjectival constructions

6.3.1 Attributive adjectives

The paratactic construction uses the Noun + Adjective: leemú báli, an orange (lit. lemon sweet); táá bári, a black cow (lit. cow black)

The analytic construction uses the genitive link ú and the word order Noun + ú + Adjective:


ma  dal  táalaá  ú  limí
1+Aor cross  river  of  deep
I crossed a deep river.

6.3.2 Predicative adjectives

Predicative adjectives use the non-verbal predicate ní5 (‘be’) with the order Noun + Adjective + ní :

---

5 This word is pronounced [ní] in sentence-final position and [ns] elsewhere.
This man is ugly.

The negative uses the particle ndí:

The cow is not black, it is white.

Another construction uses níi, which is a contraction of ni (‘be’) and the genitive link ū (‘of’), with the order Noun + níi + Adjective:

This same construction is used when the predicate is a quality expressed by a noun:

You, you are educated, well but as for us...

6.4 Participle constructions

6.4.1 Attributive participles

There exists only a paratactic construction, with the order Participle + Noun, using the short form of the participle.

Give me some dry bread!

6.4.2 Predicative participles

In the affirmative, predicative participles use the non-verbal predicate only, without genitive link, and the word order Noun + Participle + ní. The negation uses the Negative Perfect of the corresponding verb. (cf. 8.2.3)

the bread is dry  the bread is not dry

7. Pronominal paradigms

7.1 Subject pronouns

There are three basic paradigms: Aorist, Continuous and Future.

Other aspects (Perfect, Habitual) are marked by particles combined with the Aorist pronouns.

7.1.1 Basic TAM’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aorist</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Continuous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg.</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>máá</td>
<td>ám</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg.</td>
<td>úi</td>
<td>kíi</td>
<td>kyáà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg.</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>tyáà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>maa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>kon</td>
<td>kwaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>tin</td>
<td>taa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Continuous, the verb is replaced by a Verbal Noun (cf. § 3.4).

The Future often appears with -ni suffixed to the verb:
However, the same suffix can appear with other tenses, such as the Aorist used with stative verbs:

\[
\text{a ndák-ni } \text{Jim ú bani} \\
1s+Aor like-ni food of hot \\
I like hot food.
\]

\[
\text{Jim goni ban-ni sooséé} \\
food this hot-ni really \\
This food is too hot.
\]

With a nominal subject, the aspect morpheme appears alone: zero (Ø) for the Aorist, a for the Continuous and ní for the Future.

\[
súkúfí Ø lwáksi ú arámé gu mbákú ní pértí. \\
rabbit Aor. get angry of thing Comp he-goat Cont. doing \\
Rabbit got angry about what He-goat was doing.
\]

\[
mbákú ní tá-ní \\
he-goat Fut enter-ni \\
He-goat will enter.
\]

### 7.1.2 Derived TAM’s

#### 7.1.2.1 Perfect

The Perfect is a combination of the Aorist + CAk at the end of the Verb Phrase. The initial /C/ of the particle assimilates to the preceding consonant or becomes [h] when following a vowel. If the initial C of the particle has assimilated to a nasal, a lateral, a semi-vowel, or [h], the utterance-final /K/ is realised [h].

\[
\text{min Ö tá [hah]} \\
people Aor come out Perf \\
people came out
\]

\[
\text{ti féé sárki-n-yááki [yah]} \\
they-Aor tell (traditional title) Perf \\
they told the war chief
\]

/K/ is realised [x] when followed by a nasal (generally the negative particle ndí):

\[
\text{báa sáy min Ö pórm maańti [yax] ndí.} \\
Neg until people Aor do war Perf Neg \\
it doesn’t mean that people make war
\]

It is realised [q] when followed by any other consonant or when utterance final:

\[
\text{in yaan si Ö kap paq\textsuperscript{6} too [...] } \\
if one that Aor take Perf well [...] \\
if one agrees, well [...]
\]

#### 7.1.2.2 Habitual

The habitual is marked by da inserted between the Aorist subject pronouns and the verb.

\[
\text{yaan da rós a maańti ú toó mát ndí} \\
one Hab go at war of hand empty Neg \\
People don’t go to war empty-handed (Hau. «akán koyár da yara harbi »)
\]

\[
da \text{ can also appear with the Future:} \\
súyúy gu tin da pórm aña \\
like this that 3p-Fut Hab do again \\
that’s the way they will go on doing (Hau. «haka ne za su yi ta yi»)
\]

\textsuperscript{6} When utterance final, the [q] can be replaced by the glottal stop [ʔ].
da is related to the adverb afa, again. This adverb often appears redundantly with the Habitual, as in the example above.

7.2 Other pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object pronouns</th>
<th>Possessive pronouns</th>
<th>Nominal Predications</th>
<th>ICP</th>
<th>Independent pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg. -(s)m</td>
<td>gin</td>
<td>ám</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>ám</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg. kí</td>
<td>gee</td>
<td>kí</td>
<td>-kí</td>
<td>kí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg. ari</td>
<td>gas</td>
<td>ari</td>
<td>-tí</td>
<td>ari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl ma</td>
<td>góm</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl ko</td>
<td>gαŋ</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>-ko</td>
<td>ko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl sánj</td>
<td>gasánj</td>
<td>sánj</td>
<td>-sánj</td>
<td>sánj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

- 3 kinship terms (bāa, husband; kon, son; ṭēnsi, mother’s brother) have a special genitive paradigm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive pronouns</th>
<th>uncle</th>
<th>husband</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1sg. -nūi</td>
<td>ṭēnūi</td>
<td>baanii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg. -nīngee</td>
<td>ṭēnīngee</td>
<td>baanīngee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg. -nós</td>
<td>ṭēnós</td>
<td>baansōs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl -nāma</td>
<td>ṭēnāma</td>
<td>baanāma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl -nāngan</td>
<td>ṭēnāngan</td>
<td>baanāngan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl -nāsāŋ</td>
<td>ṭēnāsāŋ</td>
<td>baanāsāŋ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ICP’s are suffixed to the verb, with frequent consonant assimilation. The 1st person singular is marked by a Hi tone on the last syllable of the verb.

NB: the 3rd person singular -tí which, with the Continuous ṭyāā, is the only survival of the common Chadic personal mark, under the form of the feminine pronoun. Elsewhere, the 3rd person mark is replaced by the word ṣōri, which is to be compared to the word ṣōrōm, thing.

- The Dative does not have a specific paradigm, but is only marked in the 3rd person by a -ī suffixed to the verb. It replaces the Direct Object 3rd person singular pronoun ari, and the 3rd person plural pronoun sāŋ, becomes Lo:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfect sg</th>
<th>tō sündarīi ya?</th>
<th>they brought (it) to him</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pl</td>
<td>tō sündarīi sāŋ ya?</td>
<td>they brought (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous sg</td>
<td>taa sündarīi</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl</td>
<td>taa sündarīi sāŋ</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future sg</td>
<td>tān sündārnīi</td>
<td>they will bring (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl</td>
<td>tān sündārnīi sāŋ</td>
<td>they will bring (it) to them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Syntax

8.1 Verbless sentences

8.1.1 Identification

Identification is expressed either with a zero predicate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>jīn</th>
<th>gin</th>
<th>Ọ</th>
<th>múúsá</th>
<th>zeylaáni.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>name</td>
<td>1s.poss</td>
<td>Equ</td>
<td>Musa</td>
<td>Zailani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*My name is Musa Zailani.*

or with the non-verbal predicates ni or sāŋ:

7 The relation with the polysemic afa of location is not clear (cf XXX)
You are the King of Dott.
Dauda Musa is the King of Dott.

8.1.2 Location

Location typically uses the non-verbal ni and prepositional phrases beginning with a, at : a bo(t), on top of ; a gas, under ; a dalá, across ; a káá, behind ; a dum, a kanaa, in front ; aasi, inside ; a ndáñ, outside ; a bii, near, etc.

kwálßá naa (<ni+a) bat téëbur
cup (<be +at) top table
The cup is on the table

8.1.3 Existence, location & possession

The non-verbal predicate ada is highly polysemic. From a basic locative meaning, depending on the semantic properties of the NP’s it is associated with, it will express existence, location or possession:

Existence :

ee yanzú ada
yes Yanzu Loc
Yes, there’s Yanzu

súkii ú dôfor láádáí adá
staying of formerly respect Loc
In older days, there was respect.

Location :

ám a ban rap gu ám ada
1sg 1sg know place Rel 1sg Loc
(only) I know where I am

Possession :

ám ada ú 'yerám wúreñu [...] 1sg Loc of friend Rel+pl.
I have friends who […]

ti ada ú wúni gólám 3pl Loc of young some
they have a small (one)

lok ada ú vee ndí
ing Loc of tail Neg
the king doesn’t have a tail

8.2 Negation

Negation is marked by the particle ndi/mbi at the end of the phrase or the sentence.

8.2.1 Non-verbal sentence

yeé mins maní si ada ndí maní si doñ sóni see people+3s. how many Foc Loc Neg how many Foc return 3pl.
He saw how many of his people were not there, how many had come back.

8.2.2 Verbal sentence

ú bôr yaan da rás a maañti ú tôö mat ndí
2sg+Aor know one Hab go at war with hand empty Neg
One doesn’t go to war empty-handed.
8.2.3 Perfect

In the Perfect, the discontinuous negation dìì ... ndì replaces the Affirmative Perfect mark Cak.

\[
\text{dìì ti pat gáiba a bot ma ndì}
\]
\[
\text{Neg 3pl.+Aor get victory at top 1pl. Neg}
\]

They have not overcome us.

8.2.4 Hausa loanwords

The negative marker baa (borrowed from Hausa) is often used at the beginning of negative phrases and sentences.

\[
baa nì baṣì ú bari ndì
\]
\[
\text{Neg Ident. Festival of big Neg}
\]

It is not a big festival.

In the same way, kàda is borrowed from Hausa for the negation of the subjunctive uses of the Aorist:

\[
dón káda mini kàn orùm gaṣìy ndì
\]
\[
\text{because Neg people+def take thing 3sg.+Poss Neg}
\]

So that people don't take his things.

8.3 Focus

The focused element is fronted, preceded by the identification predicate nì, and followed by the topic particles sì for subjects and gu⁸ for other functions. With circumstantial complements (place, time, manner, cause) there appears the resumptive location particle aṣa.

Non-focused sentence:

\[
wùni wù ǹgin asi gaa
\]
\[
\text{child+def. pour milk into calabash}
\]

The girl poured milk into a calabash.

Focused subject:

\[
nì wùn si wù ǹgin asi gaa
\]
\[
\text{Ident. child Foc pour milk into calabash}
\]

It's the girl that poured milk into the calabash.

Focused object:

\[
nì ǹgin gu wùni wù aṣa gaa
\]
\[
\text{Ident. milk Rel child+def. Pou into calabash}
\]

It's milk that the girl poured into the calabash.

Focused circumstancial:

\[
nì asi gaa gu wùni wù ǹgin aṣa
\]
\[
\text{Ident. into calabash Rel child+def. pour milk Pro}
\]

It's into the calabash that the girl poured milk.

8.4 Question

8.4.1 Yes/no questions

Yes/No questions have the same syntactic structure as declarative sentences. They are characterised by a falling intoneme at the end of the sentence, which is perceived only when the sentences finish with a Hi tone, and a lengthening of final vowels.

\[
(ǹkò) ú pàr màkàràntá hàk?
\]
\[
\text{(or) 2s.+Aor do school Perf}
\]

Did you go to school?

⁸ gu is also the relative complementiser (cf. infra).
When the sentence is not in the Perfect, aa or ee is added to the last word:

\[
kì aña ú 'yerímaa
\]
2sg. Poss of friend+Quest

Did you have friends?

\[
kdá bóní wurbi, waanto sadáâkè?
\]
2pl.+Hab. Give+pl. money that is dowry+Quest

Did you use to give money, that is a dowry?

8.4.2 Wh- questions

\[\text{Zodi} \text{ questions words are: } \text{nën, what; noo, who; gee, which one; geegoy (< gee+goo, 'day'+def.), when (lit. which day); maní, how many; nómi, how; shép nin / sherám nin, why. The same falling intoneme is used with Wh questions and yes/no questions. Questions words appear either in situ, or in a focus construction.}\]

8.4.2.1 In situ constructions

\[\text{tamti ú nás sáá ú bas gee fot tamti ?}
\]
pleasure of mother with of father which one exceed pleasure

\[\text{Between a mother’s joy and a father’s, which one is the best?}\]

\[\text{máti gee manú ?}
\]
wife 2s.+Poss how many

\[\text{how many wives do you have?}\]

\[\text{ú wómmi nómi goo gu ti } [...]?\]
2s.+Aor feel+Pl. how day that 3pl.+Aor

\[\text{how did you feel the day that they [...] ?}\]

\[\text{wún koní yépni máássai ayo ?}
\]
child boy buy+Pl. pancake+def. where

\[\text{Where did the boy buy the pancake?}\]

8.4.2.2 Focus construction

In the focus construction, the question word comes first in the sentence, followed by the focus markers: si to question subjects, and gu to question the other syntactic functions. Circumstantial complements are characterised by the resumptive pronominal mark aña, followed by either the definite suffix -i or the question mark -oo

8.4.2.2.1 Subject

\[\text{gyee si fot tamtí ?}
\]
which one Foc exceed pleasure+Quest

\[\text{Which one is the best?}\]

\[\text{manú si más kí ?}
\]
how many Foc die 2sg+Quest

\[\text{How many [children] did you lose? (lit. died [on] you)}\]

8.4.2.2.2 Object

\[\text{nén gu wún koní cói ?}
\]
what Rel child boy eat+Quest

\[\text{What did the child eat?}\]

8.4.2.2.3 Circumstancials

\[\text{geegwey / ayo / nómi / shyáp nin gu yep máássa aday / adaw ?}
\]
when / where / how / why Rel buy pancake aða+-def. / aða + Quest

\[\text{When / where / how / why did he buy pancake?}\]

\[\text{noo gu ko fot súktí ko kóódaw ?}
\]
who Rel 2sg. exceed staying 2sg. 2sg.+aða+Quest

\[\text{Who did you most stay with?}\]
8.5 Complex sentences

8.5.1 Relative clauses

The relative pronouns are **gu** for singular and **wúrdgu** for plural pivot nouns.

\[ \text{Well, then the child did what he wanted.} \]

\[ \text{Then, the girls who had found a husband did not return.} \]

8.5.2 Subordination

Subordination can be unmarked, with subordinate clauses as a mere topic interpreted as a condition, cause or temporal clause according to the context. Conjunctions can be either of **Zodi** origin (**gu** / **súugu**, **when**; **nzee gu**, **before**; **bukkú**, **after**; **shẹp**, **because**, **so that**; **kódgu**, **although**) or borrowed from Hausa (**say**, **then**; **kafín**, **before**; **tún**, **since**; **dón**, **because**, **so that**). We will just illustrate this with conditionals.

Except for the 1st person singular, the condition (generally with a temporal meaning) is marked by **sí** appearing between the subject and the verb of the protasis. The verb is generally in the Perfect, more rarely in the Continuous.

\[ \text{If they follow them, then [...]} \]

\[ \text{If the day breaks, [...]} \]

\[ \text{If the king sits down, then [...]} \]

\[ \text{If it is not the day of fwak-fwak, well, then [...]} \]

In, borrowed from Hausa, is often added to the beginning of the protasis.

\[ \text{If I find people fighting, then [...]} \]

The protasis can also be a non-verbal clause.

\[ \text{If it is not the day of fwak-fwak, well, then [...]} \]

---

\[ ^{9} \text{It is difficult not to relate this sí to the Focus marker. This poses an interesting problem for general linguistics which, since Haiman, tends to consider conditionals as topics.} \]
Counterfactuals are introduced by the *sǝŋ* particle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sǝŋ</th>
<th>yàáṃí</th>
<th>dìì</th>
<th>pat</th>
<th>karaatú</th>
<th>ndì</th>
<th>áy</th>
<th>[...]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count.</td>
<td>People+anaph.</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>get</td>
<td>education</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>excl.</td>
<td>[...]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If people hadn’t got any education, well [...]*

9. **References**