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

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

B. CARON
Llacan*

1. Introduction

Zodi, called Dott by Shimizu (78 : 13), belongs to the Southern Bauchi group of the West Chadic-B sub-branch (SBW) of Chadic (Afroasiatic). Zodi\(^1\) 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: Wakili, Kuletod, Galaadiima, Aibaar, Sarrarri, Cirooma, andodi. Hausa and Fulɓe are spoken in the other wards: Kaggidama, Sabaongar, Gobirawai, and Hardo. They call their language fɛrɔm zodi, 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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\(^1\) 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 Zodi 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 = ü/ı̂a; low (Lo=L) tone = a/a; falling tone = ü/ı̂a; rising tone = ü/ı̂a. We have preferred to use the IPA instead of Hausa spelling conventions to transcribe Zodi sounds. i.e. Hausa c is ç; j is dʒ. 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>p</th>
<th>p̂</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>t̂</td>
<td>t̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>ts</td>
<td>ts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>k̂</td>
<td>k̂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m̃</td>
<td>m̃</td>
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<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
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<td>d</td>
<td>d̂</td>
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<td>d̂</td>
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<td>nd</td>
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<td>nd̂</td>
<td>nd̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>dz</td>
<td>dz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɗ̃</td>
<td>ɗ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɗ̃</td>
<td>ɗ̃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dẑ</td>
<td>dẑ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>ŝ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŝ</td>
<td>ŝ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f̂</td>
<td>f̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>f̂</td>
<td>f̂</td>
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<tr>
<td>fs</td>
<td>fs</td>
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<tr>
<td>ĵ</td>
<td>ĵ</td>
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<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ƞ</td>
<td>ƞ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r̂</td>
<td>r̂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r̂</td>
<td>r̂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l̂</td>
<td>l̂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l̂</td>
<td>l̂</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 ; éh, fowl = ?a, ?u, ?éh. The voiced lateral fricative [l̃] 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: [kóx̃] = kók̃, arm, wing, branch; [kaax̃i] < 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 [x̃]: [kaax̃i] < kaak-ti, praising. At the end of an utterance, it is pronounced [q] or [ʔ].

The tendency to labialise consonants in front of short /a/ is not as systematic as in Zaar for example: gon, here = [gwón-gón]. g, ƞg, l, r, m, n and ƞ are palatalised in front of /u/ and /e/.

2.2 Vowels

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>short</th>
<th>long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>aa</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>aa</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\(^2\):
### 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: *póri*/*póri*, *do*; *cí*cíni, *eat*; *tábáti*/*tábátni*, *get up*, *grow up*, *migrate* (Hausa *tashi*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 syll.</th>
<th>L (56%)</th>
<th><code>fee</code></th>
<th>turn round</th>
<th>H (13%)</th>
<th><code>féé</code></th>
<th>tell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 syll.</td>
<td>HL (20%)</td>
<td><em>kátir</em></td>
<td>run</td>
<td>LL (8%)</td>
<td><em>taka</em></td>
<td>swallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 syll.</td>
<td>LH (6 ex.)</td>
<td><em>tábáti</em></td>
<td>stand up</td>
<td>HH (3 ex.)</td>
<td><em>súkáti</em></td>
<td>mix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s what I shall eat with we will win

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original vb.</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
<th>Zodi</th>
<th>derived vb.</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
<th>Zodi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>come out</td>
<td><em>fita</em></td>
<td><em>ta</em></td>
<td>get out</td>
<td><em>fitar</em> (da)</td>
<td><em>tá</em>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get down</td>
<td><em>sauka</em></td>
<td><em>fji</em></td>
<td>take down</td>
<td><em>saukar</em> (da)</td>
<td><em>fjir</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climb</td>
<td><em>hau</em></td>
<td><em>tswaa</em></td>
<td>take up</td>
<td><em>hawar</em> (da)</td>
<td><em>tswar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide (int.)</td>
<td><em>bóye</em></td>
<td><em>fun</em></td>
<td>hide (tr.)</td>
<td><em>búyar</em></td>
<td><em>fúndar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get spoil</td>
<td><em>bóta</em></td>
<td><em>mal</em></td>
<td>spoil</td>
<td><em>bótar</em> (da)</td>
<td><em>mádlar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pour</td>
<td><em>zuba</em></td>
<td><em>gat</em></td>
<td>pour away</td>
<td><em>zubar</em></td>
<td><em>gândar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td><em>zauna</em></td>
<td><em>suk</em></td>
<td>sit down</td>
<td><em>zaunar</em> (da)</td>
<td><em>súkdar</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some verbs have the form of a causative, without any obvious original verb to be associated with: *mándar*, *sell*; *síndar* *bring*; *ndár*, *róddar*, *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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tuendu</th>
<th><em>ñet</em></th>
<th><em>ñetti</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td><em>ñet</em></td>
<td><em>ñetti</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td><em>waá</em></td>
<td><em>waati</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swallow</td>
<td><em>taka</em></td>
<td><em>takaati</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get up, etc.</td>
<td><em>tábáti</em></td>
<td><em>tábáttí</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>márabá</th>
<th>ú</th>
<th><em>ñetti</em></th>
<th>taa</th>
<th><em>ñetti</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>greetings</td>
<td>with coming</td>
<td>3pl.+Cont. coming</td>
<td>Welcome !</td>
<td>they are coming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ar  gu  Tába  footi  kí  mu  (...)  
3sg. that already (Aux.) telling 2sg. Comp.  
he who has already told you that (...)
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 bartí</td>
<td>LLL bartiti</td>
<td>LLL bartiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH bikít</td>
<td>LLL bikatti</td>
<td>LHL bikátti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH dokál</td>
<td>LLL dokálti</td>
<td>LHL dokálti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH físee</td>
<td>LLL fífeeti</td>
<td>HLL fífeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH gjómáti</td>
<td>LLL gjómáti</td>
<td>HLL gjómáti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH kwákál</td>
<td>LLL kwákálti</td>
<td>HHL kwákálti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH súkát</td>
<td>LLL sukáttí</td>
<td>HHL súkáttí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Numerals

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>sup-ceffí-nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>rop</td>
<td>sup-ceffí-rop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>maakó</td>
<td>sup-ceffí-maakó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>wópsa</td>
<td>subii-rop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>nantám</td>
<td>subii-rop- ceffí-nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>maamak</td>
<td>subii-maakó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>wusúr-maakó</td>
<td>subii-wópsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>wusúpsa</td>
<td>subii-nantám</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>náturópsa</td>
<td>subii-sup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>sup</td>
<td>dúbúá</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ordinals are made with the preposition ú preceding the cardinal number, which appears in the definite form, viz suffixed with an -i: ú rofí, second; ú maakóy, third, etc. ú kana, ú párkó, first, is an exception. kana is to be compared to Zaar kén, 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. masl), 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’; ban 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 zii ‘iron’, lit. ‘metal of black’; qom ú laari ‘copper’, lit. ‘metal of red’; peedi ú bari ‘sunlight’, lit. ‘sun of white’; ñar ú bari ‘moonlight’, lit. ‘moon of white’; rab-ú-qi ‘food’, lit. ‘thing of food’4). It is used to introduce complements of nominal predicates

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4 In the compound rab-ú-qi, the genitive link [ʔú] has lost its initial [ʔ].
(twáksi ū aróm gu... ‘angry with the thing that...’ ; parti sálláma ū gádós ‘greeting his wife’, lit. ‘doing greeting of wife-his’) and of prepositional phrases: a dum ū 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 galôm for the singular, and džilâm for the plural. It can be used pronominally:

áp! áý galôm 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:

dīi ma bān aróm galôm ndi
Neg 1pl know thing some Neg

We don’t know anything

bukáá mbárti džilâm
after day some

after a few days

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

díí a tába patti galôm arámi gu máślâm slam mbi
Neg 1sg already get some thing that spoil+1sg heart Neg

I never got anything that made me sad (lit. spoilt my heart).

5.5 Quantifiers

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

kóóno a gyamlati.
everyone Cont laughing

Everybody is laughing.

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

kógée dženi
kégée džen nantami
each day+def each day five+def
every year every five year

The global quantifier kúm, all, has both adjectival uses

kúm aróm gu jálám mak ...
all thing that bother+1s Perf ...

all the things that bothered me...

and pronominal uses:

miní sálla miní
kířísta kúm tida máání sóg
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>distal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>woní</td>
<td>here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinants</td>
<td>sg (táá) goní</td>
<td>this (cow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl (táá) dgoní</td>
<td>these (cows)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>sg goní/goní</td>
<td>this one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl wúrdjóní</td>
<td>these 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; larí, red; júúdí, blue; zíí, black; bári, big; boli, sweet; dasrí, ugly; dokání, wet, unripe; limí, deep; mámbari, new; jíndí, cold. The unusual adjective mbaa, big, is found in the expression mbaa lwaar, big spirits.

6.2 Participles

Participles are derived from verbs with the suffix -(n)í —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>fáni</td>
<td>heat up</td>
<td>fáni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzú</td>
<td>fill</td>
<td>dzúyní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kúti</td>
<td>circle</td>
<td>kútní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kóyan</td>
<td>be dry</td>
<td>korííí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mása</td>
<td>be narrow</td>
<td>masáyní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndórañ</td>
<td>get old</td>
<td>ndórañí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngýóó</td>
<td>ripen</td>
<td>ngýóyní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pusáñ</td>
<td>remain</td>
<td>pusáñí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ros</td>
<td>rot</td>
<td>rosííí</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some participles cannot be linked to a verb: fopláñí, void; ndzoñí, sour; qgwañí, crooked; soorí, evil, mad; sokí, [swoyší], 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).


ma dal táñlla ú limí

I+Aura cross river of deep

I crossed a deep river.

6.3.2 Predicative adjectives

Predicative adjectives use the non-verbal predicate ni⁵ (‘be’) with the order Noun + Adjective + ni:

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

The negative uses the particle **ndì**:

\[
\text{läy dëg ni ndì, bòrí ni}
\]

\[
\text{cow+def black be Neg. white be}
\]

*The cow is not black, it is white.*

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

\[
\text{läy nìì ziì pòdì nìì bari}
\]

\[
\text{cow+def be+of black tree+def be+of big}
\]

*The cow is black, the tree is big.*

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

\[
kò kò nìì ìlìì òò ammáá ma fá ...\]

\[
\text{2sg 2sg be+of knowledge well but 1pl Top ...}
\]

*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.

\[
màndàrám kokón bréédi ya?\]

\[
\text{give+me dry bread Perf}
\]

*Give me some dry bread!*

#### 6.4.2 Predicative participles

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

\[
bréédi nì kokáinì bréédi dìì kòkàn ndì\]

\[
\text{bread+def be dry bread+def Neg dry Neg}
\]

*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>ú</td>
<td>kíí</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>kwaà</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:
They will touch the cow.

However, the same suffix can appear with other tenses, such as the Aorist used with stative verbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a ndák-ni jím ú bani} & \quad \text{1s+Aor like-ni food of hot} \\
I \text{ like hot food.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jím goní ban-ni soosé é} & \quad \text{food this hot-ni really} \\
This \text{ food is too hot.}
\end{align*}
\]

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{súkdí Ø lwaáski ú arám gu mbakán a párti.} & \quad \text{rabbit Aor. get angry of thing Comp he-goat Cont. doing} \\
\text{Rabbit got angry about what He-goat was doing.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mbakán ní tá-ní} & \quad \text{he-goat Fut enter-ni} \\
\text{He-goat will enter.}
\end{align*}
\]

### 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].

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{min Ø tá [hah]} & \quad \text{people Aor come out Perf} \\
\text{people came out}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ti féé sárkín-yááki [yah]} & \quad \text{they-Aor tell (traditional title) Perf} \\
\text{they told the war chief}
\end{align*}
\]

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{baa sáy min Ø pór maanți [yax] ndí.} & \quad \text{Neg until people Aor do war Perf Neg} \\
\text{it doesn’t mean that people make war}
\end{align*}
\]

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{in yaan si Ø kap paq^6 too [...]} & \quad \text{if one that Aor take Perf well [...]}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{if one agrees, well [...]}
\end{align*}
\]

#### 7.1.2.2 Habitual

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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yaan da rós a maanți ú tóó mat ndí} & \quad \text{one Hab go at war of hand empty Neg} \\
\text{People don’t go to war empty-handed (Hau. «akan koyar da yara harbi »)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{da can also appear with the Future :}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{súyúy gu tínt da pór apa} & \quad \text{like this that 3p-Fut Hab do again} \\
\text{that’s the way they will go on doing (Hau. «haka ne za su yi ta yis»)}
\end{align*}
\]

^6 When utterance final, the [q] can be replaced by the glottal stop [ʔ].
da is related to the adverb adə, 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. -(š)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>gam</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl ko</td>
<td>gəŋ</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>-ko</td>
<td>ko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl sán</td>
<td>gasán</td>
<td>sán</td>
<td>-sán</td>
<td>sán</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

- 3 kinship terms (baa, husband; kon, son; tjënsi, 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. -nii</td>
<td>tjënii</td>
<td>baaniì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg. -nìnggee</td>
<td>tjënìnggee</td>
<td>baanìnggee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg. -nós</td>
<td>tjënás</td>
<td>baanás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl -nìsma</td>
<td>tjënìsma</td>
<td>baanìsma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl -nìnggán</td>
<td>tjënìnggán</td>
<td>baanìnggán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl -nàsàŋ</td>
<td>tjënàsàŋ</td>
<td>baanàssàŋ</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 tyâa, 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 ari, which is to be compared to the word aróm, thing.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>sg</th>
<th>to sündåríi ya?</th>
<th>they brought (it) to him</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>to sündåríi sàŋ ya?</td>
<td>they brought (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>sg</td>
<td>taa sündåríi</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>taa sündåríi sàŋ</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>sg</td>
<td>tən sündårnìi</td>
<td>they will bring (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>tən sündårnìi sàŋ</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>ñín</th>
<th>gin</th>
<th>Õ</th>
<th>múusá</th>
<th>zeyláání.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>name</td>
<td>1s.poss</td>
<td>Equ</td>
<td>Musa Zailani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My name is Musa Zailani.

or with the non-verbal predicates ni or sàŋ:

---

7 The relation with the polysemic adə 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 bus, on top of; a gas, under; a dalá, across; a kaá, behind; a dum, a kanaa, in front; aasi, inside; a ndai, outside; a bii, near, etc.

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

8.1.3 Existence, location & possession
The non-verbal predicate afa 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 afa
yes Yanzu Loc
Yes, there’s Yanzu

súkú ú dofor ládabí afa
staying of formerly respect Loc
In older days, there was respect.

Location:

ám a bái raf gú ám afa
1sg 1sg know place Rel 1sg Loc
(only) I know where I am

Possession:

ám afa ú ’yerüm wúredʒu [...]
1sg Loc of friend Rel+pl.
I have friends who [...]

tí afa ú wúni galám
3pl Loc of young some
they have a small (one)

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

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

8.2.1 Non-verbal sentence
yee minás maní si afa ndí maní si doŋ sóŋi
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 báŋ yaan da rús a maŋti ú tóó 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 díi ... ndi replaces the Affirmative Perfect mark Cák.

\[
\text{díi ti pat gálba a bot ma ndi}
\]
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.

\[
\text{baa ní bákí ú bari ndi}
\]
Neg Ident. Festival of big Neg

It is not a big festival.

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

\[
\text{dón káda mini kən orɔm gasãŋ ndi}
\]
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 ni, and followed by the topic particles si for subjects and gu\(^8\) for other functions. With circumstantial complements (place, time, manner, cause) there appears the resumptive location particle ada.

Non-focused sentence:

\[
\text{wúni wu ñgin así gaa}
\]
child+def. pour milk into calabash

The girl poured milk into a calabash.

Focused subject

\[
\text{ni wún si wu ñgin así gaa}
\]
Ident. child Foc pour milk into calabash

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

Focused object

\[
\text{ni ñgin gu wúni wu asa gaa}
\]
Ident. milk Rel child+def. Pou into calabash

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

Focused circumstancial

\[
\text{ni así gaa gu wúni wu ñgin ada}
\]
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 finishes with a Hi tone, and a lengthening of final vowels.

\[
\text{(kóó) ú pár mákárántá hak?}
\]
(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:

ki afa ú 'yerímaa
2sg. Poss of friend+Quest

Did you have friends?

koda banni wurbi, waato sadâkē?
2pl.+Hab. Give+pl. money that is dowry+Quest

Did you give money, that is a dowry?

### 8.4.2 Wh- questions

**Žodi** questions words are: **nen**, *what*; **noo**, *who*; **gee**, *which one*; **geegoy** (*gee+goô*, *'day'+**def.**), *when* (*lit. which day*); **manî**, *how many*; **námi**, *how*; **șhēp nin / sherêm nin**, *why*. The same falling intoneme is used with Wh questions and yes/no questions. Questions words appear either in **in situ**, or in a focus construction.

#### 8.4.2.1 In situ constructions

**tamti ú nás saá ú bas gee fot tamti**?
pleasure of mother with of father which one exceed pleasure

*Between a mother’s joy and a father’s, which one is the best?*

máti gee manû?
wife 2s.+Poss how many

*How many wives do you have?*

ú wónnî námi goo gu ti [...]? 2s.+Aor feel+Pl. how day that 3pl.+Aor

*How did you feel the day that they [...]?*

wûn koni ýépni máássai ayo?
child boy buy+pl. pancake+def. where

*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: **sî** to question subjects, and **gu** to question the other syntactic functions. Circumstancial complements are characterised by the resumptive pronominal mark **afa**, followed by either the definite suffix **-ì** or the question mark **-oo**

##### 8.4.2.2.1 Subject

gyee sî fot tamtû?
which one Foc exceed pleasure+Quest

*Which one is the best?*

manû sî máś kî?
how many Foc die 2sg+Quest

*How many [children] did you lose? (lit. died [on] you)*

##### 8.4.2.2.2 Object

nên gu wûn koni çî?
what Rel child boy eat+Quest

*What did the child eat?*

##### 8.4.2.2.3 Circumstancials

ggegwey / ayo / námi / shyâp nin gu yep máássai aday / afaaw?
when / where / how / why Rel buy pancake afa+def. / afa+Quest

*When / where / how / why did he buy pancake?*

noo gu ko fot sùkì ko kóódaw?
who Rel 2sg. exceed staying 2sg. 2sg.+afa+Quest

*Who did you most stay with?*
8.5 Complex sentences

8.5.1 Relative clauses

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

```
Well, then the child did what he wanted.
```

```
Well, then the child did what he wanted.
```

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 / sürğa, when ; nze gu, before ; bukää, after ; shep, because, so that ; köögü, although) or borrowed from Hausa (say, then ; kafin, before ; tun, since ; don, 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 sì appearing between the subject and the verb of the protasis. The verb is generally in the Perfect, more rarely in the Continuous.

```
If they follow them, then [...]
```

```
If they follow them, then [...]
```

```
If it is not the day of fwak-fwak, well, then [...]
```

```
If it is not the day of fwak-fwak, well, then [...]
```

9 It is difficult not to relate this sì 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 *sāŋ* particle :

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{sāŋ} & \text{yáání} & \text{dìi} & \text{karaatū} \\
\text{Count.} & \text{People+anaph.} & \text{Neg} & \text{get education} \\
\end{array}
\]

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

9. **References**