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 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: Wakiili, Kuleto, Galaadiima, #ibaar, Säraráé, Cirooma, *ondí. Hausa and Fulɓe are spoken in the other wards: Káágááámá, Sá ámbón gí, Góóbiráááwá and Hárdo. They call their language jéróm 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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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 = ì/ìá; low (Lo=L) tone = à/àa; falling tone = à/à̊a; rising tone = à/àá. We have preferred to use the IPA instead of Hausa spelling conventions to transcribe Zodi sounds. i.e. Hausa c is ç; j is ɖ. 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></th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>tʰ</th>
<th>tʷ</th>
<th>ts</th>
<th>ʈ</th>
<th>k</th>
<th>kʰ</th>
<th>kʷ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>bʰ</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>dʰ</td>
<td>dʷ</td>
<td>dz</td>
<td>ɖ</td>
<td>ɡ</td>
<td>ɡʰ</td>
<td>ɡʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɓ</td>
<td>ɓʰ</td>
<td>ɗ</td>
<td>ɗʰ</td>
<td>ɗʷ</td>
<td>ɗz</td>
<td>ɗ̱</td>
<td>ɠ</td>
<td>ɠʰ</td>
<td>ɠʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m b</td>
<td>n d</td>
<td>n⁴</td>
<td>nᵈ</td>
<td>n⁵</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ṅ</td>
<td>ɳ</td>
<td>ɳʰ</td>
<td>ɳʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>fʰ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>sʰ</td>
<td>ʃ</td>
<td>ʃʰ</td>
<td>(h)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m v</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>ʒ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n⁰</td>
<td>ɲ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>rʰ</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>lʰ</td>
<td>lʷ</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></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; ʊ, of; ɛtɨ, fowl = ʔa, ʔʊ, ʔetɨ. The voiced lateral fricative [ɭ] is absent.

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

The tendency to labialise consonants in front of short /ɔ/ is not as systematic as in Zaar for example: gɔn, here = [gwɔn-gɔn]. ɡ, ɳɡ, ɭ, r, m, n and ɭ are palatalised in front of /v/ 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>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>aa</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 an -ni suffix (with a floating Hi tone) in agreement with plural subjects or objects: pör/pörni, do; cí/cíni, eat; tóbá/tóbáni, get up, grow up, migrate (Hau. tashi).

| 1 syll. | 1 (56%)  | fe | turn round | H (13%)  | fé | tell |
| 2 syll. | HL (20%) | kástir | run | LL (8%) | takaa | swallow |
| 2 syll. | LH (6 ex.) | tóbá | stand up | HH (3 ex.) | súká | mix |

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>fíta</td>
<td>tár</td>
<td>get out</td>
<td>fitar (da)</td>
<td>tár</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get down</td>
<td>sauka</td>
<td>tár</td>
<td>take down</td>
<td>saukar (da)</td>
<td>tár</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climb</td>
<td>hau</td>
<td>tswár</td>
<td>take up</td>
<td>hawar (da)</td>
<td>tswár</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide (int.)</td>
<td>ñoye</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
<td>hide (tr.)</td>
<td>ñuyar</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get spoil</td>
<td>ñita</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
<td>spoil</td>
<td>ñitar (da)</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pour</td>
<td>ñuma</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
<td>pour away</td>
<td>ñubar</td>
<td>ñódar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>zuna</td>
<td>sákád</td>
<td>sit down</td>
<td>zuunar (da)</td>
<td>sákád</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some verbs have the form of a causative, without any obvious original verb to be associated with: mándar, sell; sándar bring; ndáar, ríddar, 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>original vb.</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
<th>Zodi</th>
<th>derived vb.</th>
<th>Hausa</th>
<th>Zodi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>fjet</td>
<td>tjeti</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>wáá</td>
<td>waati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swallow</td>
<td>takaa</td>
<td>takaati</td>
<td>get up, etc.</td>
<td>tóbá</td>
<td>tóbáti</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.

márábá ú fjetti taa fjetti
greetings with coming 3pl.+Cont. coming
Welcome ! they are coming

ar gu Tába footi kí mu (...) 3sg. that already (Aux.) telling 2sg. Comp.
he who has already told you that (…)

This suffix is incompatible with the Perfective.
because if he is telling 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 barti</td>
<td>LLL bartiti</td>
<td>LLL bartiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL dikar</td>
<td>LLL dikarti</td>
<td>LLL dikarti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH bikát</td>
<td>LLL bikatti</td>
<td>LLL bikatti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH dokál</td>
<td>LLL dokalti</td>
<td>LLL dokalti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH fífe</td>
<td>LLL fífeeti</td>
<td>HLL fífeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH gjómíti</td>
<td>LLL gjómíti</td>
<td>HLL gjómíti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH kwákál</td>
<td>LLL kwakalti</td>
<td>HHL kwákalti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH súkát</td>
<td>LLL sukatti</td>
<td>HHL súkätti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Numerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>nam</th>
<th>sup-ceffi-nam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>rop</td>
<td>sup-ceffi-rop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>maakó</td>
<td>sup-ceffi-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</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>natúrópsa</td>
<td>subii-sup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>sup</td>
<td>dúbúú</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 -4: ú rófi, 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’; bàn 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 (qomm ú zii ‘iron’, lit. ‘metal of black’; qomm ú laari ‘copper’, lit. ‘metal of red’; peedi ú bari ‘sunlight’, lit. ‘sun of white’; ñar ú bari ‘moonlight’, lit. ‘moon of white’; rabsú-Øʃi ‘food’, lit. ‘thing of food’). It is used to introduce complements of nominal predicates

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4 In the compound rabsú-Øʃi, the genitive link [ʔu] has lost its initial [ʔ].
(twáksi ú aról gu,... ‘angry with the thing that...’; parti sǎlláma ú gadós ‘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 galóm for the singular, and džilóm for the plural. It can be used pronominally:

áp! áy galóm 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:

dii ma bá na aróm galóm ndi
Neg 1pl know thing some Neg

We don’t know anything

bukáa mbárti džilóm
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:

dii a tába pattí galóm arámi gu máášlóm 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 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 dženi kóógee džen nantámi
each day+def each day five+def

eyeveyr year
every five year

The global quantifier kúm, all, has both adjectival uses

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

all the things that bothered me...

and pronominal uses:

miní sállá miní kíístá kúm tída mááñí 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>hère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinants</td>
<td>(táá) goni</td>
<td>this (cow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>goni/gon</td>
<td>this one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.7 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; harr, red; jéúdi, blue; zií, black; bari, big; bolí, sweet; dasári, ugly; dokáni, wet, unripe; limí, deep; mámbári, new; jéindi, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>heat up</th>
<th>hot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dzu</td>
<td>fill</td>
<td>full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kút</td>
<td>circle</td>
<td>round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kóyan</td>
<td>be dry</td>
<td>koríni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mása</td>
<td>be narrow</td>
<td>masáyní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ndórañ</td>
<td>get old</td>
<td>ndórañi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngyóó</td>
<td>ripen</td>
<td>ngyóóyní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pusáñ</td>
<td>remain</td>
<td>pusáñi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ros</td>
<td>rot</td>
<td>rosíni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some participles cannot be linked to a verb: fojááñi, void; ndzoñi, sour; n'gwañi, crooked; soorí, evil, mad; sokí, [so沃y], honest.

6.3 Adjectival constructions

6.3.1 Attributive adjectives

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


I+Aor 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 .CONTENT_7:

Another construction uses .CONTENT_7, which is a contraction of .CONTENT_7 (‘be’) and the genitive link getContent.11 (‘of’), with the order Noun + .CONTENT_7 + Adjective :

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

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  CONTENT_7 only, without genitive link, and the word order Noun + Participle +  CONTENT_7. The negation uses the Negative Perfect of the corresponding verb. (cf. § 8.2.3)

6. 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>kíí</td>
<td>kyáá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg.</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>tyáá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>kon</td>
<td>kwa</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  CONTENT_7 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:

- **Aor**
  - ím gońí ban-ní sooséé
    - food this hot-ní really
    - This food is too hot.

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

- **Aor**
  - mbákŋáy níí tá-ní
    - he-goat Fut enter-ní
    - 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].

- **Perf**
  - min Ó tá [hah]
    - people Aor come out Perf
    - people came out
  - ti féé sárkín-yáạ́ki [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):

- **Perf**
  - baa sáy min Ó pór maaŋţí [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:

- **Perf**
  - in yaan si Ó kap paq6 too [...] if one that Aor take Perf well [...] if one agrees, well [...] 

#### 7.1.2.2 Habitual

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

- **Hab**
  - yaan dà rós a maaŋţí ú tóó mat ndí
    - one Hab go at war of hand empty Neg
    - People don’t go to war empty-handed (Hau. «akan koyar dà yara harbi »)

dà can also appear with the Future:

- **Hab+Fut**
  - sóyáy gu tín dà pór afa
    - like this that 3p-Fut Hab do again
    - that’s the way they will go on doing (Hau. «haka ne za su yi ta yív»)

---

6 When utterance final, the [q] can be replaced by the glottal stop [ʔ].
da is related to the adverb ada, 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.</td>
<td>-(š)m</td>
<td>gin</td>
<td>ám</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg.</td>
<td>kí</td>
<td>gee</td>
<td>kí</td>
<td>-kí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg.</td>
<td>ari</td>
<td>gas</td>
<td>ari</td>
<td>-tí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>gøm</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>-ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>gøŋ</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>-kø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>sání</td>
<td>gøsání</td>
<td>sání</td>
<td>-sání</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments :

- 3 kinship terms (baa, husband; kon, son; tʃéni, 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.</td>
<td>-ńí</td>
<td>ṭʃení</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg.</td>
<td>-ńíŋge</td>
<td>ṭʃeníŋge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg.</td>
<td>-ńás</td>
<td>ṭʃenás</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>-ńíma</td>
<td>ṭʃenímaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>-ńíŋgøn</td>
<td>ṭʃeníŋgøn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>-ńíŋgøn</td>
<td>ṭʃeníŋgøn</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 -ći which, with the Continuous tyáa, 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 arám, thing.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>sg</th>
<th>to sündarii ya?</th>
<th>they brought (it) to him</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>to sündarii saŋ ya?</td>
<td>they brought (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>sg</td>
<td>taa sündartií</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>taa sündartií saŋ</td>
<td>they are bringing (it) to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>sg</td>
<td>taa sündarníí</td>
<td>they will bring (it) to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pl</td>
<td>taa sündarníí saŋ</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>jìn</th>
<th>gin</th>
<th>Ő</th>
<th>múúsá</th>
<th>zeyláníí.</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 saŋ:

7 The relation with the polysemic ada of location is not clear (cf XXX)
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 dalšn, across ; a káá, behind ; a dum, a kanaa, in front ; aasi, inside ; a ndáŋ, outside ; a bii, near, etc.

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

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

súkti ú dosor lándabí ađa
staying of formerly respect Loc
In older days, there was respect.

Location :

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

Possession :

ám ađa ú ’yerám wúrdgu [...] 
1sg Loc of friend Rel+pl.
I have friends who [...] 

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

lok ađa ú vee ndi
king Loc of tail Neg
the king doesn’t have a tail

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

8.2.1 Non-verbal sentence
yee mins maní si ađa 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 rás a maangti 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 dîi ... ndi replaces the Affirmative Perfect mark C̄ak.

\[
\begin{align*}
dîi & \quad \text{ti} & \quad \text{pat} & \quad \text{gâlîba} & \quad \text{a} & \quad \text{bot} & \quad \text{ma} & \quad \text{ndi} \\
\text{Neg} & \quad \text{3pl.+Aor} & \quad \text{get} & \quad \text{victory} & \quad \text{at} & \quad \text{top} & \quad \text{1pl. Neg}
\end{align*}
\]

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.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{baa} & \quad \text{nì} & \quad \text{bâkî} & \quad \text{ú} & \quad \text{barî} & \quad \text{ndi} \\
\text{Neg} & \quad \text{Ident.} & \quad \text{Festival of} & \quad \text{big Neg}
\end{align*}
\]

It is not a big festival.

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

\[
\begin{align*}
dôn & \quad \text{káda} & \quad \text{mini} & \quad \text{kâ} & \quad \text{ârôm} & \quad \text{gasâq} & \quad \text{ndi} \\
\text{because Neg} & \quad \text{people+def} & \quad \text{take} & \quad \text{thing} & \quad \text{3sg.+Poss Neg}
\end{align*}
\]

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 afa.

Non-focused sentence:

\[
\begin{align*}
wûnî & \quad \text{wu} & \quad ñgïn & \quad \text{asi} & \quad \text{gaa} \\
\text{child+def.} & \quad \text{pour} & \quad \text{milk} & \quad \text{into calabash}
\end{align*}
\]

The girl poured milk into a calabash.

Focused subject

\[
\begin{align*}
nì & \quad \text{wûn} & \quad \text{si} & \quad \text{wu} & \quad ñgïn & \quad \text{asi} & \quad \text{gaa} \\
\text{Ident. child} & \quad \text{Foc} & \quad \text{pour} & \quad \text{milk} & \quad \text{into calabash}
\end{align*}
\]

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

Focused object

\[
\begin{align*}
nì & \quad ñgïn & \quad \text{gu} & \quad \text{wûnî} & \quad \text{wu} & \quad \text{asa} & \quad \text{gaa} \\
\text{Ident. milk} & \quad \text{Rel} & \quad \text{child+def.} & \quad \text{Pou} & \quad \text{into calabash}
\end{align*}
\]

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

Focused circumstantial

\[
\begin{align*}
nì & \quad \text{asi} & \quad \text{gaa} & \quad \text{gu} & \quad \text{wûnî} & \quad \text{wu} & \quad ñgïn & \quad \text{afa} \\
\text{Ident. into calabash} & \quad \text{Rel} & \quad \text{child+def.} & \quad \text{pour} & \quad \text{milk} & \quad \text{Pro}
\end{align*}
\]

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.

\[
\begin{align*}
(kóó) & \quad ù & \quad \text{pûr} & \quad \text{mákárántá} & \quad \text{hák?} \\
\text{(or)} & \quad \text{2s.+Aor} & \quad \text{do} & \quad \text{school} & \quad \text{Perf}
\end{align*}
\]

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:

- **kí ada ú 'yerímaa**
  - 2sg. Poss of friend+Quest
  - *Did you have friends?*

- **koda bəni wurbi, waato sadáākê?**
  - 2pl.+Hab. Give+pl. money that is dowry+Quest
  - *Did you give money, that is a dowry?*

### 8.4.2 Wh- questions

**Zodi** questions words are: *nen*, *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

- **tæmti ú nás saá ú bas gee fot tæmti?**
  - 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 manú?**
  - wife 2s.+Poss how many
  - *how many wives do you have?*

- **ú wömni nómi 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: **si** to question subjects, and **gu** to question the other syntactic functions. Circumstantial complements are characterised by the resumptive pronominal mark **ada**, followed by either the definite suffix -i or the question mark -oo.

#### 8.4.2.2.1 Subject

- **gyee si fot tæmutû?**
  - which one Foc exceed pleasure+Quest
  - *Which one is the best?*

- **manû si más 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 cî?**
  - what Rel child boy eat+Quest
  - *What did the child eat?*

#### 8.4.2.2.3 Circumstancials

- **geegwey / ayo / nómi / shyáp nin gu yep máássa ada / adaw?**
  - when / where / how / why Rel buy pancake ada+def. / ada+Quest
  - *When / where / how / why did he buy pancake?*

- **nîu gu ko fot sûkî ko kóódaw?**
  - who Rel 2sg. exceed staying 2sg. 2sg.+**ada**+Quest
  - *Who did you most stay with?*
8.5 Complex sentences

8.5.1 Relative clauses

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

well then child boy+def. do thing Rel. Cont. wanting

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 'zdì' origin ('gu / suúsù', when; 'nèce gu, before; 'bukuáá, after; 'shep, because, so that; 'kóógu, although) or borrowed from Hausa ('say, then; 'kàfín, 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 si9 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 the king sits down, then [...] If the day breaks, [...] If it is not the day offwak-fwak, well, then [...] If I find people fighting, then [...] If the verb of the protasis is in the 1st person singular, the condition is expressed by a specific form of subject pronoun : 'ámáa :

The protasis can also be a non-verbal clause.

If it is not the day offwak-fwak, well, then [...]
Counterfactuals are introduced by the *səŋ* particle:

\[
\text{səŋ} \quad \text{yàááŋi} \quad \text{dī} \quad \text{pat} \quad \text{karaatú} \quad \text{ndi} \quad \text{áy} \quad [...] \\
\text{Count.} \quad \text{People+anaph.} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{get} \quad \text{education} \quad \text{Neg} \quad \text{excl.} \quad [...] \\
\]

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

9. **References**