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South-Bauchi West TAM System

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The 27 or so lects grouped into the SBW sub-group of Chadic languages (Shimizu, 1978) are spoken in the South of the Bauchi state (Nigeria) stretching from Bauchi to the south of the state over less than 100 kms. Among them, only *Zaar* is relatively less unknown (Caron, 2002; Schneeberg, 1971, 1974) and is often used to characterise the whole SBW group.

These languages or dialects are obviously closely related when their basic vocabulary is compared. However, various elements tend to set *Zaar* (Saya) and *Gùùs* (Sigidi) apart :

- From a socio-linguistic and historical point of view : the name *barawa* used by Shimizu to name the group is not acknowledged by the *Zaar* (Sayawa) and *Gùùs* (Sigidi) people. If all the *barawa* agree to be closely related and all originate from the same area, viz. the Buli and Zaranda hills near Bauchi, the *Zaars* say they came from Bornu through Zaria ; they say they settled in the hills South of Tafawa Balewa after some cohabitation with the Angas, Pyem and Jarawa.
- *Zaar* and *Gùùs* have three tone levels, the others only two.²
- *Zaar* and *Gùùs* have a very elaborate and profusive TAM system when compared to the other languages.

All these elements single out the SBW group of languages for what Petr Zima has called a laboratory for the study of language evolution. This gives us an opportunity to first describe the extraordinary variation among languages that are so small in terms of number of speakers, and so close in terms of geographical and genetic proximity, and then to try and account for this variation.

In order to do so, we have picked one language from the Geji, Polci and Zeem clusters (resp. *Bùù*, *Nyámzàk* and *Cààrí*) and two from the Dass and Saya clusters : *Bàráázà* (Baraza) and *Zòdí* (Dott) for Dass ; *Gùùs* (Sigidi) and *Zaar* for Saya.

¹ CIL 17. Prague 24-29 juillet 2003

² Hi is marked with an acute accent ; Lo with a grave ; Mid is left unmarked. List of abbreviations : AOR, Aorist ; COMPL, Completive ; CONT, Continuous ; DAT, Dative ; GEN, genitive ; H, Hi tone ; HAB, Habitual ; ICOMPL, Incompletive ; INFL, Inflection ; L, Lo tone ; M, Mid tone ; p, plural ; PCW, Proto-Chadic West ; Pro, personal mark ; R, Rising tone ; s, singular ; S, Subject ; SBW, South-Bauchi West ; SUBJ, Subjunctive ; TAM, Tense-Aspect-Mood ; V, nonimplosive voiced obstruent ; Vb: Verb ; VN : Verbal Noun.

1. SBW Classification³

Language clusters			Languages	(Dialects)
Sub-group North				
Geji	viii	10	Migang	(Booluu)
		11	Pelu	
		12	Gyannzi	(Gèèjì)
	ix	13	Buu	(Zàràndaa)
Polci	x	14	Zùl	
		15	Barang	(Baram)
		16	Dìir	(Baram Dutse)
	xi	17	Bili	(Bùlì)
		18	Nyámzax	(Laṅas)
		19	Lundur	
		20	Posi	(Polci)
Sub-group South				
Zeem	xii	21	Zeem	
		22	Tule	(Tulai)
		23	Chaari	
	xiii	24	Dokshì	(Lushi)
Dass	xiv	25	Dikshi	(Bàraza)
		26	Bandas	(Dùr)
	xv	27	Bòodli	(Zumbul)
		28	Wangdày	(Wandí)
		29	Zòdì	(Dwàt)
Saya	xvi	30	Zàksi	(Zàkshì : around Kundum)
		31	Bòt	(Boto : northern part of Gindiri; not far from Mai Juju)
		32	Zaarə	(Zari in: Padan Zari, Bangwon Zari)
		33	Sigidi	
	xvii	34	Zaar of Kàl	
		35	Zaar of Gàambar	
		36	Lèère	
		37	Zaar of Lùsa	

2. TAM systems

All SBW's TAM systems conform to the same structure : conjugation is expressed in a pre-verbal morpheme which includes a person mark. The verb itself is not touched by TAM, with two exceptions : floating tones (or tone proagation) and the occasional use of Verbal Nouns for Continuous and Future. When the subject is nominal, the personal mark is dropped and a variant of the TAM marker appears alone.

What can be noted though is the common existence of a 'zero' TAM (H. Jungrathmayr's '*Grundaspekt*'), where only the bare Pro is used to conjugate the verb. We have chosen to name this TAM Aorist when it is opposed to the couple Completive + Incompletive, and Completive when it is opposed to an Incompletive only. We have named Continuous the TAM with a locative structure involving Pro's having the form of subjects of non-verbal predicates, and a Verbal Noun.

³ Shimizu 1978, p. 13

2.1. Bùù (Zaranda)

	AOR	COMPL	CONT	FUT	SBJV
1S	à	àá	ámí VN	àm	tà
2S	kè	ká	kí VN	kèm	kè
3S	tè	tá	tí VN	tèm	tè
1P	mè	màá	mí VN	mòm	tèn Vb(-ní)
2P	kè Vb-ní	kàá Vb-ní	kí VN-ní	kìm VN-ní	kè Vb-ní
3P	sè	sàá	sí VN	sèm	sè Vb(-ní)

The *Bùù* TAM system is characterised by the use of the plural marker **-ní** suffixed to the Verb and Verbal Noun in the 2P. In the subjunctive, **-ní** can be used for the 1P and 3P as well.

- **Aorist.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ».
- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + á ». With a noun subject, the marker is **ap**. Achievement of the process (perfect) is expressed by the addition of **ʔi** at the end of the Verb Phrase. The Negative Completive is formed with the negative marker **wèè** at the end of the sentence. **ʔi** and **wèè** are in complementary distribution.
- **Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + í », followed by a Verbal Noun. With a noun subject, the marker is **đó**. The Negative Incompletive is formed with the discontinuous marker **đáá ... wèè**. Ex : **kí đáá VN ... wèè** (2S), etc.
- **Future.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + m », followed by a Verbal Noun. With a noun subject, the marker is **nóm**. The Negative Future has two variants : one is expressed through the Negative Incompletive ; the other uses a discontinuous marker **kám ... wèè** : **kí kám VN ... wèè** (2S), etc.
- **Subjunctive.** The form with a noun subject is **tè**. The paradigm of the Subjunctive is very similar to that of the Aorist. The only difference appears in 1S and 1P. This can be explained by the incorporation of **tè**. Its position indicates that it may be a complementiser. The Negative Subjunctive has two forms. With a noun subject they are (1) **S fáá Vb** and (2) **S bə Vb ... wèè**. With pronominal subjects, **bàà** and **bə** form new paradigms :

	NEG SBJ (1)	NEG SBJ (2)
1S	ḡâ	bàà ... wèè
2S	ḡì	bìì ... wèè
3S	ḡè	bə ... wèè
1P	ḡân Vb-ní	bàn ... wèè
2P	ḡì Vb-ní	bìì Vb-ní ... wèè
3P	ḡè Vb-ní	bàs ... wèè

2.2. Dir

	COMPL	ICOMPL	CONT	FUT
1S	à H	á	ám dàn	âr kè
2S	kè H	kó	kó dàn	kóró kè
3S	yàà H	yáá b́	yàx dàn	yààr kó yaa b́ar kè
1P	mù L	mú -R	mì dàn	múr kè
2P	kè L- -nè	kó -R	kèn dàn	kórè kè
3P	wù H	wú	wú dàn	wúr kè

Negation is expressed with **yáŋ h̀̀** at the end of the sentence.

- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ». It is followed by a floating L tone in 1p and 2p. The plural. **-nè** is suffixed to the verb in 2P. (NB : contrary to *Bìù*, **-nè** appears in this context only.) Achievement of the process is expressed by the addition of **ẁ̀** at the end of the Verb Phrase.
- **Incompletive.** It is restricted to the expression of habits and future events. The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø » and bears a H tone. With noun subjects, the form is **b̀̀/̀̀à**. A **b́** variant appears between the subject pronoun and the verb in the 3S.
- **Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern of a locative construction « Pro + **dàn** + VN » using the pronominal paradigm of non-verbal predicate subjects.
- **Future.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **rókè** ». With a noun subject, the future marker is **b̀̀ar**.

2.3. Nyámzàk (Langas)

	COMPL	ICOMPL	CONT	FUT I	FUT II
1S	à	á	àm ṕ	nàà	à rógè
2S	kè	káá	kè ṕ	kàà	kàà rógè
3S	yáá	yáá	yáx ṕ	yáà / yáá d̀̀	yáá r̀̀gè
1P	mè H-	máá	mì ṕ	màà	màà rógè
2P	gè H-	gáá	gèn ṕ	gàà	gàà rógè
3P	wù	wáá	wùr ṕ	wàà	wàà rógè

The negation is formed with **ràŋ** at the end of the sentence.

- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ». Its functional values are those of general past, subjunctive, and default TAM for state verbs (i.g. "love"). Perfect is expressed by the addition of **ẁ̀** at the end of the Verb Phrase.
- **Incompletive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **aa** », except for 1S where the vowel is short. With a noun subject, its form is **d́**.
- **Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern of a locative construction « Pro + **ṕ** + VN » using the pronominal paradigm of non-verbal predicate subjects.
- **Future I** is derived from the Incompletive through apotony : H > L. With a noun subject, its form is **d̀̀**. The 1S /n/ in **nàà** is probably etymological.

- **Future II** is a more recent derivation from the Incomplete through the insertion of the **régè** morpheme, as can be seen from the 1S à **régè**. With a noun subject, its form is **règè**.

2.4. Cààrí (Danche)

The survey of Cààrí was very short and the data collected is not very reliable. However, since Cààrí is the only surviving language of the Zeem subgroup, the other three (Zeem, Tule and Dokshi) being extinct, we have decided to include it here to give some idea of its TAM system.

	AOR	COMPL	ICOMPL	FUT
1S	mó	áá	àmó	mír
2S	ká	káá	àká	kír
3S	tó	táá	tóká	tír
1P	mè	màà	mèká	m ^y éérì
2P	kè	kàà	kèká	k ^y éérì
3P	tè	tàà	tèká	t ^y éérì

2.5. Bàráázè (Baraza)

	COMPL	ICOMPL	HAB	SUBJ
1S	á	ámáá	ám tó	nàà H-
2S	kó	káá	kó tó	nókè H-
3S	yèè	yàá/yàà H-	yèè tó	nóyèè H-
1P	mù	màá/màà H-	mù tó	nómè H-
2P	kù	k ^w áá/kwàà H-	kù tó	nókù H-
3P	kì	k ^y áá/k ^y àà H-	kì tó	nókì H-

- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ». The Perfect is expressed by the addition of **ḃá** at the end of the Verb Phrase. It is in complementary distribution with the negation **ḃáá ... bà**. Iteration is expressed by the addition of the combination **róó ḃá** at the end of the Verb Phrase.
- **Incomplete.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + aa ». In the Continuous, the same inflexion is followed by a Verbal Noun instead : **ḃàù**, "slaughter" > **ḃàù-tè**, "slaughter-ing".
- **Habitual.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + tó ».
- **Subjunctive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « nḃ + Pro ». It takes a Lo tone and is followed by a floating Hi tone. The Subjunctive is substituted for the Completive in [+Foc] contexts.

Negation is expressed with **ḃáá ... bà**, both for the Completive and the Incomplete. The TAM markers being the same, the difference is in the predicate : a verb for the Negative Completive, and a VN for the Negative Incomplete.

NEG COMPL & ICOMPL	
1S	ám dǎá ... bà
2S	kó dǎá ... bà
3S	yèè dǎá ... bà
1P	mə ⁴ dǎá ... bà
2P	kù dǎá ... bà
3P	kì dǎá ... bà

2.6. Zòdì (Dott)

	COMPL	ICOMPL	FUT
1S	a	ám	máá
2S	ú	k ^y áà	kíí
3S	Ø	t ^y áà	Ø
1P	mà	màà	màn
2P	kò	k ^w àà	kòn
3P	tì	tàà	tìn

- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ». The Perfect is a combination of the Completive + **CaK** at the end of the Verb Phrase. The habitual is marked by **da** inserted between the Completive subject pronouns and the verb.
- **Incompletive.** Except for 1S, the inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + àà ». It is followed by a VN. With a noun subject, the Incompletive mark is **à**.
- **Future.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + VV » in the singular and « Pro + n » in the plural. With a noun subject, the Future mark is **níí**.

2.7. Gùùs (Sigidi)

2.7.1. Aspect

	AOR	COMPL	ICOMPL	HAB
1S	ma	map	məkap + H	məka / mak + H
2S	ka	kap	kəkap + H	kəka / kak + H
3S	tʃa	tʃap	tʃikap + H	tʃika / tʃak + H
1P	mà	màp	məkàp + H	məkà / màk + H
2P	kà	kàp	kəkàp + H	kəkà / kàk + H
3P	tʃà	tʃàp	tʃikàp + H	tʃikà / tʃàk + H

- **Aorist.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + a ». With a noun subject, the marker is **a**.

⁴ The variation **u** / **ə** for the vowel of the 1P inflexion is a phonological phenomenon quite common in SBW languages. **i/ə** is a weak vowel that replaces the others in conditions that need to be further studied.

- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **ap** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **ap**.
- **Incompletive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **kap** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **kap** followed by a floating Hi tone.
- **Habitual.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **ka/ak** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **ak**, followed by a floating Hi tone.

2.7.2. Tense

	IMMEDIATE PST	RECENT PST	REMOTE PST	FUT
1S	maa	mam +H	mósên	mə +H
2S	kaa	kam +H	kásên	kə +H
3S	ʈʂaa	ʈʂam +H	ʈʂísên	ʈʂi +H
1P	màà	màm +H	màsên	mè +H
2P	kàà	kàm +H	kàsên	kè +H
3P	ʈʂàà	ʈʂàm +H	ʈʂísên	ʈʂì +H

- **Immediate Past.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **aa** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **aa**.
- **Recent Past.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **am** », followed by a floating Hi tone. With a noun subject, the marker is **am**.
- **Remote Past.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **sên** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **âsên**.
- **Future.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **Ø** », followed by a floating Hi tone which differentiates it from the Subjunctive. With a noun subject, the marker is **və**.

2.7.3. Mood

	Subjunctive	Counterfactual
1S	mə	mâs
2S	kə	kâs
3S	ʈʂi	ʈʂîs
1P	mè	màs
2P	kè	kàs
3P	ʈʂì	ʈʂîs

- **Subjunctive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **Ø** ». With a noun subject, the markers are **gu** for the singular and **gi** for the plural.
- **Counterfactual.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + **s** ». With a noun subject, the marker is **âs**. The mark appears both in the conditional and in the main clauses, and it functions like the Hausa **dàà...dàà**.

2.8. Zaar (Saya)

2.8.1. Verb classes

Zaar has 2 verb classes : Middle (M) and Hi (H), which can be observed in the Completive. The M class includes both 1- and 2-syllable verbs. A variant appears with some TAM (sp. the plural Incompletive) and depends on the [+/-V] nature of the initial

consonant of the verb : [+V] = nonimplosive voiced obstruent. For short, we call the Completive form ‘simple’, and the other one ‘complex’. This is probably a complex case of tone propagation from the TAM markers to the verb.

Verb class	H	M ; +V	M-2syl ; +V	M ; -V	M-2syl ; -V
Simple (=lexical)	súú	bwaa	daambár	taar	tuurá
Complex (=modified)	súú (R)	bwàà (L)	dàambár (LH)	tààr (F)	túurá (FH)
	<i>love</i>	<i>choose</i>	<i>disturb</i>	<i>clear</i>	<i>push</i>

2.8.2. Aspect

	Aorist	Compl	Icompl	Punctiliar	Concomitant	Continuous
1S	mə	máá	m ^y áá	miyii/myii	myáánaa	miyá / m ^y aa
2S	kə	káá	k ^y áá	kiyii/kyii	kyáánaa	kiyá / k ^y aa
3S	á	àà	tʃáá	yii	tʃáánaa	tʃiyá / tʃaa
1P	mó	màà	m ^y áá	màayi	m ^y áánaa	mìyá / m ^y áá
2P	kó	kàà	k ^y áá	kàayi	k ^y áánaa	kìyá / k ^y áá
3P	tó	tàà	tʃáá	tàayi	tʃáánaa	tʃiyá / tʃáá

- **Aorist.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + Ø ». It has a narrative functional value. The verbs appear with a high tone on their first syllable in the 1st and 2nd persons of the singular. In the 3rd person singular and in the plural, they appear in the complex form.
- **Completive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + áá ». The form of the verb is the simple form.
- **Incompletive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yáá ». The verb appears in the simple form in the singular, and in the complex form in the plural.
- **Punctiliar.** The meaning is both punctiliar and iterative. The closest equivalent is the periphrastic Hausa ‘*yi ta*’. The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yii ». The verb appears in the simple form.
- **Concomitant.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yáá + naa ». The verb keeps the simple form.
- **Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yi + ká + VN ».

2.8.3. Tense

	Future	Remote Past	Recent Past	Immediate past
1S	ma	mətá	mənáá	míí
2S	ka	kətá	kənáá	kíí
3S	wò	áta	ánáa	ájí
1P	má	mətà	mənàà	mìì
2P	ká	kətà	kènàà	kìì
3P	tá	tètà	tènàa	tʃìì

- **Future.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + a ». The verb appears in the simple form in the singular, and the complex form in the plural.
- **Remote Past.** The Remote Past refers to events which occurred more than two days ago. The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + ta ». The verb keeps the simple form.
- **Recent Past.** The Recent Past refers to events which occurred on the previous day. The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + náá ». The verb keeps the simple form.
- **Immediate past.** The Immediate Past refers to events which occurred earlier the same day. The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yi ». The first syllable of the verb receives a low tone.

2.8.4. Mood

	Subjunctive	Conditional	Counterfactual
1s	mè	m ^y áá	mí/míyí
2s	àà	k ^y áá	kí/kíyí
3s	tè	yáá	tjí/yí/tjíyí/tíyí
1p	mè + L	m ^y áá	mì/mìyì
2p	àà + L	k ^y áá	kì/kìyì
3p	tè + L	yaá/tjaá	tjí/tjíyì/tíyì

- **Subjunctive.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + low tone ». In the plural, a low tone is added to the 1st syllable of the verb.
- **Conditional.** The inflexion follows the pattern « pronoun + yáá ». In the 1st and 2nd person singular, the verb takes a high tone on the 1st syllable. In the other persons, the verb appears in the complex form
- **Counterfactual.** The inflexion follows the pattern « pronoun + yí ». The verb appears in the complex form. The Counterfactual is introduced by yáàn, if and is used in contexts that would be translated by a *dàà ... dàà* Hausa construction.

2.8.5. Composition

Compound aspects

The three basic aspects (Perfect, Imperfect, Aorist) cannot be combined.

	Perfect Punctiliar	Imperfect Punctiliar	Imperfect Continuous	Punctiliar Continuous
1s	mááyí	m ^y ááyí	m ^y ááyíyá	míyíyíyá
2s	kááyí	k ^y ááyí	k ^y ááyíyá	kíyíyíyá
3s	àáyí	tjááyí	tjááyíyá	yíyíyá
1p	màáyí	m ^y ááyí	m ^y ááyíyá	míyíyíyá
2p	kàáyí	k ^y ááyí	k ^y ááyíyá	kíyíyíyá
3p	tàáyí	tjááyí	tjááyíyá	tíyíyíyá

- **Perfect Punctiliar.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + áá + yí ». All verbs following the yí punctiliar morpheme have a simple form. This is true for all combinations.
- **Imperfect Punctiliar.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + yàá + yí ».
- **Imperfect Continuous.** The structure of the inflexion is « Pro + yàá + yí + ká ». yí + ká is realised [yíyá]. The verb appears in the form of a Verbal Noun.
- **Punctiliar Continuous.** The structure of the inflexion is « Pro + yíi + yí + ká ». yí + ká is realised [yíyá]. The verb appears in the form of a Verbal Noun. This combination is not common and Zaar speakers prefer to use the Imperfect continuous instead.

Tense and aspect

	Future Punctiliar	Future Continuous	Remote Past Perfect	Remote Past Imperfect	Remote past Punctiliar	Remote Past Continuous	Recent Past Perfect
1s	mayi	mayiyá	máátá	mə́táyáá	mətáyí	mətáyiyá	máánáá
2s	kayi	kayiyá	káátá	kə́táyáá	kətáyí	kətáyiyá	káánáá
3s	wòyi	wòyiyá	àátá	átáyáá	átáyí	átáyiyá	àánáá
1p	máyi	máyiyá	màátá	mə̀táyáá	mətáyí	mətáyiyá	màánáá
2p	káyí	káyiyá	kàátá	kə̀táyáá	kətáyí	kətáyiyá	kàánáá
3p	táyí	táyiyá	tàátá	tə̀táyáá	tətáyí	tətáyiyá	tàánáá

	Recent Past Perfect	Recent Past Imperfect	Recent past Punctiliar	Recent past Continuous	Immediate Past Perfect	Immediate Past Continous
1s	máánáá	mə́náyáá	mənáyí	mənáyiyá	mááyí	míyiyá
2s	káánáá	kə́náyáá	kənáyí	kənáyiyá	kááyí	kíyiyá
3s	àánáá	ánáyáá	ánáyí	ánáyiyá	àáyí	áyiyá
1p	màánáá	mə̀náyáá	mənáyí	mənáyiyá	màáyí	mìyiyá
2p	kàánáá	kə̀náyáá	kənáyí	kənáyiyá	kàáyí	kìyiyá
3p	tàánáá	tə̀náyáá	tənáyí	tənáyiyá	tàáyí	tìyiyá

- **Future Punctiliar.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + a + yi ». The verb keeps the simple form.
- **Future Continuous.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + a + yi + ká ». The verb is in the form of a Verbal Noun.
- **Remote Past Perfect.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + áá + tá ». The verb is in the complex form.
- **Remote Past Imperfect.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + ta + yáá ». The verb appears in the simple form in the singular, and in the complex form in the plural. (cf. Imperfect).
- **Remote past Punctiliar.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + ta + yi ». The verb keeps the simple form. This combination is associated to the **ḃógoró / ṅòḃíyà** dialect by the Lusa speakers. They prefer to use the Recent Past Imperfect.
- **Remote Past Continuous.** The inflexion has the structure : « Pro + ta + yi + ká ». The verb is in the form of a Verbal Noun.
- **Recent Past Perfect.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + áá + náá ». The verb appears in the complex form.
- **Recent Past Imperfect.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + náá + yáá ». The verb appears in the simple form in the singular, and in the complex form in the plural. (cf. Imperfect).
- **Recent past Punctiliar.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + náá + yi ». The verbs keep the simple form (cf. Imperfect). This combination is associated to the **ḃógoró / ṅòḃíyà** dialect by the Lusa speakers. They prefer to use the Recent Past Imperfect.
- **Recent past Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + náá + yi + ká ». The verb is in the form of a verbal noun.
- **Immediate Past Perfect.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + áá + yi ». The first syllable of the verb receives a low tone.
- **Immediate Past Imperfect.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yii + yáá ». The verb appears in the simple form in the singular, and in the complex form in the plural. (cf. Imperfect).
- **Immediate Past Continuous.** The inflexion follows the pattern « Pro + yi + yi + gá ». The verb appears in the form of a verbal noun.

Mood and aspect

	Recent Past Counterfactual	Remote Past Counterfactual
1s	mínaa	míta
2s	kínaa	kíta
3s	tínaa	títa
	tʃínaa	tʃíta
1p	mìnàà	mìtà
2p	kìnàà	kìtà
3p	tìnàà	tìtà
	tʃìnàà	tʃìtà

3. Comments

Just looking at the number of paradigms, the situation varies from 3 different paradigms (Zodi) to 13 or more if combinations are included (Zaar). Zaar and Guus, in this respect, side together against the other languages. From now on, all that will be said concerning Zaar holds for Guus as well. Zaar's main innovations lies in the presence of 3 past tenses, and a great number of aspects.

The diversity can be explained by the development from a basic opposition between a \emptyset TAM, and an Incomplete. The Incomplete is generally formed with **-aa**, although in Dir, the contrast between Compl and Incompl is tonal. At this stage, the functional value of the opposition is not differentiated from the point of view of tense, aspect and mood. Each morpheme is a mixture of functional values. The \emptyset TAM combines narrative, past, perfect and subjunctive functions (cf. Nyamzak Completive). The Incomplete is basically non-past (present and future), progressive and habitual. Depending on the language, either can be used as the default TAM to conjugate state verbs.

Then, new TAM's appear to convey a specification that is absent in the original system. The Continuous is formed through a locative construction. Other TAM's are made through the integration of particles that are prefixed (Subj : *Bùù, Bàráázà*) or more generally suffixed (Zaar pasts ; Buu and Dir future). These restrict the functional value of the original TAM's. The Completive for example can be reduced to the expression of the subjunctive (Zaar), or the narrative and conjugation of state verbs such as 'want/like' (Buu). The Incomplete can be reduced to the expression of the habitual, although the negative Incomplete is generally still used to negate the Future, and sometimes alternates with a specific Negative Future TAM.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to go back on *Zaar*. The morphological and functional status of *Zaar* TAM's as compared to the others look very odd. The basic process at work in the evolution of the *Baraawaa* languages has been pushed a step further in its case : proliferation of TAM's ; possibility of multiple combinations ; development of past tenses. As was mentioned in the introduction, this goes with the appearance of a third tone level (may be an infra-low tone linked to +V consonants). This can be explained by the history of the Zaars. Their population far exceeds that of the other languages : over 125,000 for Zaar ; less than 600 for those that are still well spoken (i.e. B'oto, Zodi, Zaranda, Dir, Baraza), a handful for those that are dying (Luri, Zeem, Zumbul, Tulai, Lushi). They have mixed with and incorporated alien populations (Angas, Pyem, Jarawa, Boi, etc.), whose existence is still acknowledged in the identity of clans. But what is remarkable is that, far from becoming a communication language characterized by its morphological pidgin-like simplification, this has led to a process of phonological, morphological and functional complexification. A case study for R. Nicolai's « Nouveau programme »⁵ ? In any case, Zaar must definitely be set apart from the other SBW languages.

⁵ Cf. in this volume, R. Nicolai, "Contact et genèse: ouvertures et perspectives pour un "Nouveau Programme" de recherche sur l'évolution des langues".

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