Nominal and Verbal Plurality in Chadic

Publications in African Languages and Linguistics

The aim of this series is to offer, at regular intervals, carefully worked out studies or collections of papers in African linguistics. In this way, it is hoped that important work can be brought to the attention of a wider linguistic audience including scholars who are not primarily concerned with African linguistics but who wish to keep abreast of recent advances in the fields of historical linguistics, theoretical phonology and linguistic typology, all of which, incidentally, tend to rely rather heavily on African language data. At the same time, the editors intend to include occasional volumes which offer general accounts of major language groups, hoping that such surveys will be of assistance not only to linguists working on African languages but also to those who specialize in other areas. Throughout the series an attempt will be made to strike a healthy balance between theory oriented and data oriented research.

Editors:
George N. Clements
Didier L. Goyvaerts

Advisory board:
John Goldsmith (Chicago)
Claire Grégoire (Tervuren)
Frank Heny (Middlebury, Vermont)
Larry M. Hyman (Berkeley)
William R. Leben (Stanford)
Thilo C. Schadeberg (Leiden)

Other books in this series:

1. Ivan R. Dihoff (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 1)*
2. Gerrit J. Dimmendaal. *The Turkana Language*
3. G.N. Clements and J. Goldsmith (eds.). *Autosegmental Studies in Bantu Tone*
4. Koen Bogers, Harry van der Hulst and Maarten Mous (eds.). *The Phonological Representation of Suprasegmentals*
5. Jonathan Kaye, Hilda Koopman, Dominique Sportiche and André Dugas (eds.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 2)*
6. Gerrit J. Dimmendaal (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 3)*
7. David Odden (ed.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 4)*
8. Paul Newman and Robert D. Botne. *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 5)*
9. Isabelle Haïk and Laurice Tuller (eds.). *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 6)*
10. Mary M. Clark. *The Tonal System of Igbo*
11. John P. Hutchison and Victor Manfredi. *Current Approaches to African Linguistics (vol. 7)*

Paul Newman

Nominal and Verbal Plurality in Chadic

Table of Contents

Preface

This book grew out of a comparative Chadic project that was originally focused on grammatical gender. As the work developed, it became clear that the treatment of gender divorced from number was descriptively and conceptually unsatisfactory, since agreement in Chadic tended to be a three-term system of which plurality was an essential component. So the book on gender that was supposed to be finished (and had even been announced by the publisher – to whom I express my apologies) kept being put off while necessary information on plurality was incorporated. Not surprisingly, the pastiche didn't work, with the result that the gender book kept getting worse rather than better. In the meantime, the further I delved into the study of plurality in Chadic, the more interested I became in this as an Afroasiatic as well as a Chadic phenomenon. Unlike the gender study, which, although extremely interesting, didn't seem to be contributing in a major way to our understanding of proto-Chadic, the study of plurality was leading to historical findings that struck me as empirically well supported as well as linguistically important, both within the family and cross-linguistically. And so I put the gender material aside – to be resurrected at a later date, I hope – and decided to produce a new work focused on Chadic plurality in its various aspects. This is the work presented here.

A comparative study of this sort, which analyzes data from a large number of individual languages, depends on the often unappreciated basic descriptive studies of numerous other scholars. The names of these scholars will be found in the bibliography, with the understanding that their citation there is accompanied by my sincere appreciation and thanks. Since this work has taken so many years to reach fruition, it is impossible to acknowledge individually all of the people who in some manner or other contributed to the development of my general ideas about Chadic linguistics and thus contributed in a real sense to the making of this book. I would, however, like to single out Ekkehard Wolff, who has been an unusually loyal and stimulating colleague in the Chadic field, Zygmunt Frajzyngier, who has generously shared materials and ideas with me, and Joseph Greenberg, who has been, and who remains, my inspiration in historical and comparative linguistics. Most of all, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Russell Schuh, with whom I have been closely associated over the past twenty years and whose first-rate linguistic scholarship has established him among the world's leading Chadicists.

Paul Newman
Stanford, California
July, 1989

Abbreviations, symbols, and key to transcription

ch, j = alveo-palatal affricates   (č, ǰ)
sh, zh =   palatal fricatives (š, ž)
x, gh = velar fricatives (x, γ)
hl, ɦl =   lateral fricatives ("hlaterals") (ɬ, ɮ)
ř, ɽ = rolled rhotic (in languages where it contrasts with another /r/)
ə = schwa (any mid to high central vowel)
aa (any vowel) = long vowel
à(a) (any vowel) =   low tone
â(a) (any vowel) =   falling tone
ǎ(a) (any vowel) =   rising tone
á(a) (any vowel) = high tone, in 3-tone languages only. In 2-tone
                         languages, high tone is unmarked; in 3-tone
                         languages, mid tone is unmarked.

Introduction

This book is a study of derivational and inflectional formations embodying plurality in the Chadic language family. The presentation is essentially descriptive/comparative, that is, I have attempted to document fully the nature and extent of particular constructions in present-day Chadic languages. My ultimate objectives, however, are historical, namely to come to a better understanding of what various morphological constructions must have been like in Proto-Chadic. It should be emphasized that this study is focused on matters internal to Chadic, although there are occasions when I haven't been able to resist drawing comparisons with similar structures in other Afroasiatic languages.

The term "plurality" encompasses various notions of pluralness or multiplicity including distributiveness and repetitiveness. It is treated in this work in four major areas: noun (and adjectival) plurals, plural action (= "pluractional") verbs, plural verb stems required by concord rules, and plural imperatives used when a command is directed at more than one addressee. Plurality in Chadic is also an important feature of pronouns, demonstratives, genitive markers, and such. These categories are not described in detail, but they are illustrated as part of a discussion of gender/number patterns (see § 1.2).

1.1. Chadic classification

The Chadic family, which is a constituent member of the Afroasiatic phylum, contains some 140 or so languages. A full list together with alternative nomenclature is given in the Appendix. According to the most generally accepted classification (Newman 1977a), which is presented here with a few modifications, the family consists of four coordinate branches:
I. West, II. Biu-Mandara (= Central), III. East, and IV. Masa (= Southern). These branches divide into subbranches (A,B,C), which in turn divide into discrete groups (1, 2, 3, etc.) containing from one to more than a dozen languages. In the text, the individual languages are identified with reference to these levels by a three-term notation system; for instance, Hausa is (I.A.1) and Lamang is (II.A.4). Intermediate groupings between the level of the group and the subbranch are not coded in the referential system, but they are indicated in the family tree

Figure 1: Chadic Family Tree

BRANCH	SUBBRANCH	GROUP
		1. Hausa
		2. Bole
	A	3. Angas
		4. Ron
I. West		
		1. Bade
	B	2. Warji
		3. Saya
		1. Tera
		2. Bura
		3. Higi
		4. Mandara
	A	5. Matakam
		6. Sukur
		7. Daba
		8. Bata
CHADIC FAMILY — II. Biu-Mandara		
	B	1. Kotoko
		2. Musgu
	C	1. Gidar
		1. Somrai
	A	2. Lele
		3. Kera
III. East		
		1. Dangla
	B	2. Mukulu
		3. Sokoro
IV. Masa	A	1. Masa
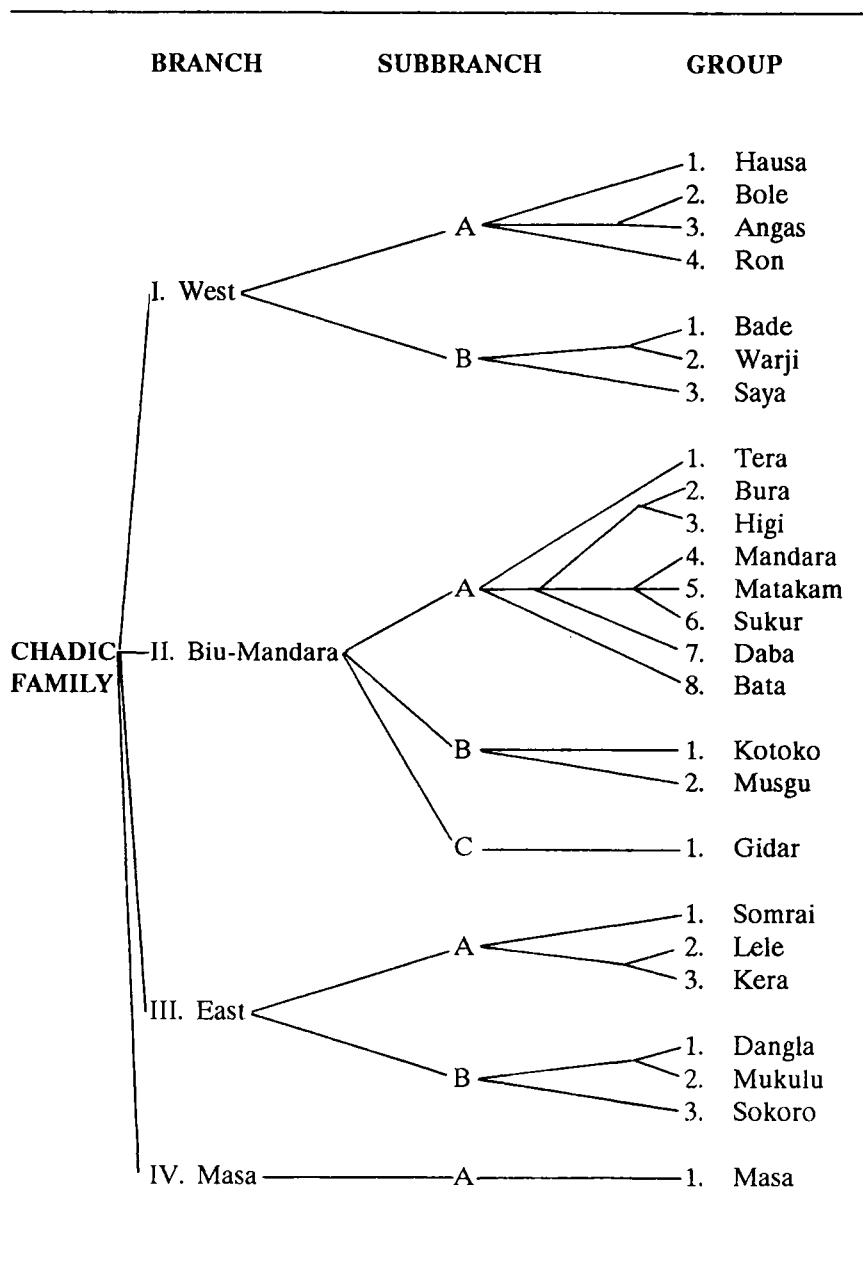
diagram (figure 1). Subclassification below the level of the group is also not coded, but it is shown in the classificatory listing (table 1) by the use of lower case letters (a, b, etc.) and differential punctuation (mainly semicolon as opposed to comma). Within the individual groups or subgroups, the language after which the group is named is listed first followed by other languages in alphabetical order.

Table 1: Chadic Language Classification

I. West Branch
  A. Subbranch West-A
    1. Hausa group: Hausa, Gwandara
    2. Bole group
      a. Bole, Bele, Kirfi, Deno, Galambu, Gera, Geruma, Kwami, Maha, Ngamo; Karekare
      b. Kanakuru; Kupto, Pero, Tangale
    3. Angas group
      a. Angas, Chip, Kofyar, Mapun, Sura; Goemai, Koenoem, Montol, Tal
      b. Gerka
    4. Ron group
      a. Ron, Karfa, Kulere, Sha, Shagawu
      b. Fyer
  B. Subbranch West-B
    1. Bade group: Bade, Duwai, Ngizim
    2. Warji group
      a. Warji, Diri, Jimbin, Kariya, Mburku, Miya, Siri, Tsagu
      b. Pa'a
    3. Saya group
      a. Saya, Dass, Geji, Polchi, Zeem
      b. Guruntum, Ju
      c. Boghom, Laar, Mangas
II. Biu-Mandara Branch
  A. Subbranch BM-A
    1. Tera group
      a. Tera, Jara
      b. Ga'anda, Hona
    2. Bura group
      a. Bura/Pabir, Chibak, Putai
      b. Kilba, Margi
    3. Higi group: Higi/Kapsiki, Bana, Hya
    4. Mandara group
      a. Mandara; Dghwede, Glavda, Guduf, Gvoko; Podoko
      b. Lamang, Mabas

5. Matakam group
   a. Matakam, Chuvok, Mefele; Balda, Gisiga, Gisiga-South, Mofu-Gudur, Mofu-North; Dugwor, Merey, Zulgo; Mada, Moloko, Muyang, Ouldeme
   b. Muktile
   c. Mboku, Ndreme
6. Sukur group: Sukur
7. Daba group: Daba, Buwal, Gawar, Hina
8. Bata group
   a. Bata/Bachama; Gude, Holma, Nzangi
   b. Gudu, Ngwaba
  B. Subbranch BM-B
    1. Kotoko group: Kotoko, Logone, Midah; Buduma
    2. Musgu group: Musgu, Mbara
  C. Subbranch BM-C
    1. Gidar group: Gidar
III. East Branch
  A. Subbranch East-A
    1. Somrai group: Somrai, Ndam, Tumak; Gadang, Miltu, Mod, Sarwa
    2. Lele group: Lele, Nancere; Gabri, Kabalai, Tobanga
    3. Kera group: Kera, Kwang
  B. Subbranch East-B
    1. Dangla group
      a. Dangaleat, Bidiya, Jegu, Migama, Mogum
      b. Birgit, Kujarke, Mahwa, Mubi, Toram
    2. Mukulu group: Mukulu
    3. Sokoro group: Sokoro, Barain, Saba
IV. Masa branch
    1. Masa group: Masa, Marba, Musey; Mesme, Peve, Zime

The classification presented here is probably reasonably accurate in most instances, but it is far from definitive. Although the purpose of this study is not to provide a detailed discussion or justification of the classification, a few comments would seem to be in order.

The West branch (I) easily forms a unity within the family. It has two distinct subbranches (A and B). The only point of uncertainly in West branch subclassification concerns the position of the Saya group (I.B.3), sometimes referred to as the "South Bauchi" group. It was originally placed in West-B primarily because of its traditional association with the languages of the Warji group (I.B.2), the former "North Bauchi" group. (This is an instructive example of nomenclature affecting, rather than reflecting substantive classification. The use of the common term "Bauchi" for the two groups naturally predisposes linguists to treat them

as having an especially close relationship.) In a number of respects, however, Saya group languages have properties that are more typical of languages in the West-A Angas group (I.A.3) than of West-B languages such as Warji or Bade. Most likely, the assignment of Saya to West-B is in fact correct and the similarities with Angas are due to contact or the spread of areal features, but the matter needs to be investigated.

Within Biu-Mandara (II), the difference between the A and B sub-branches seems much greater than that between West-A and West-B, so much so that the unity of Biu-Mandara as now defined is not above challenge. My feeling is that Biu-Mandara is valid as a distinct branch, that is, that any two languages in B-M are more closely related to one another than they are to any language in any other branch – but this needs to be verified. Within Biu-Mandara, the unity of BM-A seems evident, notwithstanding the large number of languages involved and the linguistic diversity exhibited. As far as BM-B is concerned, Kotoko and Musgu would seem to go together with no difficulty. The position of Gidar, on the other hand, is problematic. Although one can easily classify it as Biu-Mandara rather than West Chadic, it doesn't look like a typical BM-A language; nor is there anything linguistically striking about it that justifies putting it together with the other BM-B groups. I have, therefore, taken it out of BM-B, where it was previously clas-sified, and provisionally set it up as a distinct isolate (II.C.1) within Biu-Mandara.

Like the West, the East branch (III) also stands as a readily identifi-able unit with two clearly distinct subbranches. The classificatory pro-blems all appear to be lower-level matters of detail.

The branch whose correct classification still presents the most serious problem is the Masa branch (IV). Masa, which consists of a single closely related group of languages, was traditionally thought to be a member of the same group as Musgu (II.B.2). This was the position taken by Westermann and Bryan (1952:166ff) and still adhered to by a number of linguists (e.g. Jungraithmayr 1981). My own feeling, however, is that the observed similaries between Masa and Musgu are due to cultural and geographical contact rather than phylogenetic closeness and that Masa belongs neither in the same group as Musgu nor even in the same branch.[1] I have therefore extracted Masa from Biu-Mandara and provisionally set it up as a fourth independent branch.

1.1.1. Sources and Citations

In a comparative study of this sort, one necessarily draws on primary descriptions provided by other scholars. If one tried to give the source for each example cited from every language, the result would be so cumbersome that the entire academic enterprise would bog down. I have therefore adopted the following (I hope satisfactory) practice. Unless

indicated otherwise, it is to be understood that my source for examples cited is the standard reference work on that language. Thus Margi data are assumed to be taken from Hoffmann (1963), Ron data from Jungraithmayr (1970), Ga'anda data from R. Newman (1971), and so forth. The bibliography provides an extensive listing of all works on Chadic consulted in this study, whether actually cited or not. Whenever there is particular reason to identify a source explicitly, e.g. where there is a question of interpretation or a direct quotation is used, I have always done so.

In the numbered examples, the language cited is always identified by an abbreviation in square brackets, e.g. [H] indicates Hausa and [Ko] indicates Kotoko. Sometimes the identification may seem redundant, since the language to be exemplified has just been mentioned by name in the text, but with so many languages involved, extra care and explicitness at the point of the examples themselves seem fully justified in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding. The key to the abbreviations is included in the language inventory provided in the Appendix. Possibly redundant, but also important, identification is also provided by the referential classification scheme. When a language is introduced in the text, it is always accompanied by its classificatory number, for instance Ngizim (I.B.1) or Kera (III.A.3). This allows the reader to see immediately whether the languages being discussed (whose names may not be familiar) are closely related or belong to distant branches of the family.

1.2. Number and gender

One can assert with confidence that Proto-Chadic had grammatical gender, this being part of its Afroasiatic inheritance. Approximately half of present-day Chadic languages have gender, the loss elsewhere having occurred independently a number of times in different groups at different times. Gender in Chadic is (and always was) a two-term opposition: masculine vs. feminine. There are no Chadic languages with a neuter as opposed to m/f, nor are there any Chadic languages that have a Bantu-type system of multiple classes. Gender is never distinguished in the plural, thus there are a maximum of three grammatical categories: m = masculine singular, f = feminine singular, and p = common plural.[2] From the point of view of morphophonological or morphosyntactic organization, the languages that have gender exhibit a variety of gender/number patterns.

1.2.1. A/B/A pattern

In describing Hausa (I.A.1) linguists have often said that plurals are all masculine regardless of the gender of the corresponding singulars. This