ON THE VERBAL SYSTEM IN LANGI
A BANTU LANGUAGE OF TANZANIA (F.33)*

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ABSTRACT
This paper presents the Langi verbal system and the various ways in which tense, aspect and mood are encoded. Through the description of the structures and uses of the various forms, it attempts to demonstrate how the different conjugations fit together to form a coherent whole, morphologically and semantically, and how in some cases the system has been influenced by surrounding Cushitic languages.

RESUME
Cet article présente le système verbal du langi et les différents moyens mis en oeuvre pour encoder le temps, l’aspect et le mode. A travers la description des structures et emplois des diverses formes, il tente de démontrer comment les conjugaisons diverses forment un système cohérent, sur les plans morphologiques et sémantiques, et comment, dans certains cas, le système a été influencé par les langues couchitiques environnantes.

1 Introduction
Langi2 (Rangi in Swahili) is a Bantu language spoken by approximately 300,000 people in the Kondoa Region of Tanzania. It is of interest linguistically as its speakers have long been surrounded by non Bantu-speaking communities. In this presentation I will posit that this has not been without incidence on the language, as evidenced by certain areal features.

This paper presents the verbal system of Langi as it is spoken in the towns of Kondoa and Pahi. Through the description of the structures and uses of the

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* I thank the following for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper: Christiane Paulian, Zlatka Guentchêva, Denis Creissels, Dave Odden and an anonymous reviewer at SAL. I am also indebted to Derek Nurse and Maarten Mous for pointing out (as well as providing) various articles of interest for this study.

2 This language is relatively unknown to linguistics: when I began studying it in 1996, the only published work dated from 1916 (by Otto Dempwolff). The data presented here is all first hand, and was gathered during fieldwork I carried out in Tanzania during my doctoral studies, the funding for which was provided by the LACITO-CNRS. Oliver Stegen of SIL has started working on the language recently; so far he has presented a paper on the vowel system at CALL (Leiden) in 2000, and has published a paper on derivation (2002). A monograph on Langi is in press: Dunham (forthcoming).
various forms, I will attempt to demonstrate how the different conjugations fit together to form a coherent whole, morphologically and semantically. I will begin with a brief presentation of the three types of elements which enter into verbal constructions in Langi: verb forms, copulative verbs and infinitival forms. I will then proceed to present the conjugations attested in the language.

1.1. Verb forms. The verb form in Langi, and in Bantu languages in general, is composed of several elements. These elements are not all necessarily present in a given verb form, but always appear in a fixed order. In Langi, a verb form may contain up to seven elements, which can be represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>negative pre-pfx</td>
<td>subject pfx</td>
<td>TAM-TAM</td>
<td>object, reflexive</td>
<td>RAD extensions</td>
<td>TAM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimal forms contain only a radical and a suffix. This corresponds to the imperative (see section 2.18 below):

(1) **dōma**

> dōm -a
> go -IMP2SG

Maximal forms contain seven elements:

(2) **siviiyoversomera tukup**

> si-vaiy-som -er -a tukup
> P.PFX- SP2- PROG- OBJ2- read -APPL -PROG NEG

Position 1. The first element in the verb form is the negative pre-prefix *si*. Its presence negates the verb form. Negative forms are generally accompanied by the

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3 Abbreviations: ADV: advisory; APPL: applicative extension; ASS: associative extension; aux: auxiliary; CAUS: causative extension; CONN: connective; COP: copula; DEC: decisional; DEICT: deictic; DEM: demonstrative; DET: determinative; DP: dependant nominal prefix; HAB: habitual; IMP: imperative; INF: infinitive; INJ: injunctive; INV: inevitable; IP: independant nominal prefix; lit: literally; LOC: locative suffix; n/a: not applicable; NAR: narrative; NEG: negative; NEUT: neutral extension; OBJ: object marker; PASS: passive extension; pers.com.: personal communication; PFT: perfect; PFV: perfective; PERS: personal pronoun; PFX: prefix; PL: plural; POSS: possessive; P.PFX: negation pre-prefix; PRES: presentative; PROG: progressive; RAD: radical; REFL: reflexive; REL: relator; SFX: suffix; SG: singular; SP: subject prefix; STAT: stative extension; SUB: subjunctive; TAM: tense-aspect-mood marker; V: verb. Numbers in the glosses refer to the noun classes.

4 Tones will not be marked on the examples. Tonal distinctions in Langi, particularly at the grammatical level, are so restricted that not marking them in this study does not affect the analysis.
adverb *tuku* at the end of the sentence. This is the only negative marker in the 
verb form, the suffix, for example, is never modified. We will see in sections 2.20 
and 2.21 that imperatives and subjunctives are negated in a different manner.

**Position 2.** The second element in the verb form is the subject prefix. With the 
exception of imperatives, where the person is marked in the 7th position, a subject 
prefix in the second position is obligatory. The subject prefixes most frequently 
encountered in this paper will be the person prefixes. Below is a table showing 
the prefixes as they appear when followed by a consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ni-</td>
<td>tu-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>u-</td>
<td>mu-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>va-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When followed by a vowel, the forms vary somewhat, the prefix vowel 
either drops (as in example (2) above) or elides, depending on the articulatory 
nature of the two vowels in contact, and also on the nature of the following 
morpheme. In general, when the prefix vowel is altered, the following vowel is 
lengthened. The rules governing vowel contact may be found in Dunham 
(forthcoming).

The subject prefix for the 1st person singular has several distinct variants: it 
is *ni-* in verb forms, but when prefixed to the copula -rt, is *nde-* in the affirmative 
and *ndu-* in the negative:

(3)  

*niradzeŋga numb* “I built a house.”

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ni-</td>
<td>ka-</td>
<td>dzeŋ</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP1SG- NAR-</td>
<td>build</td>
<td>-NAR</td>
<td>IP9-</td>
<td>house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4)  

*ndere muhind3a, sinduri mutavana tuku* “I’m a girl, I’m not a boy.”

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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nde-</td>
<td>ri</td>
<td>mu-</td>
<td>hindʒa si-</td>
<td>ndu-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP1SG- COP</td>
<td>IP1-</td>
<td>girl</td>
<td>P.PFX-</td>
<td>SP1SG- COP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subject prefix for the 3rd person singular is *a* (Ø before a vowel) in all 
cases except preceding the habitual marker -σ where it is *y*:

(5)  

*akadzeŋga numb* “He built a house.”

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a-</td>
<td>ka-</td>
<td>dzeŋ</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP1-</td>
<td>NAR-</td>
<td>build</td>
<td>-NAR</td>
<td>IP9-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6)  

*yoodɔma ndʒirii* “He goes on the path.”

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| y- | ɔ- | dom- | -a | n- | dʒirai-
| SP3SG- HAB- | go | -HAB | IP9- | path | -LOC |
Position 3. The third position contains tense-aspect-mood markers. These will be largely discussed in the following sections. In brief, conjugations in the verb forms are determined by the elements present in the third and the seventh positions (in the case of the imperative and the subjunctive, by a null marker in the 3rd position). In example (3) above, one can see that I have given the same gloss (NAR) to the elements found in what corresponds to the 3rd and 7th positions of the verb form. In the representation of the verb form (at the beginning of this section), there are two sets of elements in the 3rd position as one TAM marker, ț, may combine with other TAM markers in this position. This phenomenon will be discussed below, in section 2.8.

Position 4. This position contains object and reflexive markers. Object marking is relatively limited in Langi, and is mostly, but not exclusively, reserved for beneficiaries. See for example (2), (36), (37), (81). The reflexive marker (-i-), roughly speaking, indicates that the situation applies to the subjects themselves, and is widely encountered in Langi. See for example (18), (19), (72), (102).

Position 5. This position contains the verb radical. The most common structure in Langi is -CVC-, many other structures are encountered however, such as -VC-, -VCVC-, etc.

Position 6. This position contains extensions, which modify the valency of the verb. The most common are the applicative (2), (18), the passive (100), (104) and the causative (43). Several extensions may be present in a given verb form (18), (104).

Position 7. This position also contains tense-aspect-mood markers, which, in combination with those in the third position, determine the conjugation of the verb form. These will be described in detail below.

1.2 Other predicative elements. The other elements which enter into Langi conjugations, alone or as part of verbal constructions, are the copulas -rɩ and -idʒa on one hand and infinitival forms on the other hand. In this section I will present them as they are used independently, in section 2 we will see how they enter into verbal constructions.

The copula -rɩ. The copula -rɩ always carries a subject prefix, and in certain cases is inflected for the perfect aspect. On its own, not in a verbal construction, it serves as predicative center with certain nominal determiners, certain types of
spatial localizations, etc. In this case it is negated in the same manner as verb forms, i.e. with the pre-prefix si-:

(7) ɳgɔ ᵐɔŋkɔɗɔ siι ri tuƙu “The dress is red, it isn’t grey.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ɳ-</td>
<td>dress</td>
<td>sp9- COP red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gɔ-</td>
<td>- P.PFX-</td>
<td>sp9- COP grey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ri</td>
<td>si-</td>
<td>ri- COP grey NEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the copula is followed by the connective na it denotes possession. In this case, when negated, the copula is replaced by the negative copula -si:

(8) twaarɔ na mpesa “We had money.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu-</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>ri na m- pesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sp1pl-</td>
<td>PFT- COP</td>
<td>Conn ip10- money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9) twaasi na mpesa tuƙu “We didn’t have any money.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu-</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>si na m- pesa tuƙu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sp1pl-</td>
<td>PFT- COP.NEG</td>
<td>Conn ip10- money NEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In verbal constructions, we shall see that -ri combines with infinitives and with inflected verbs.

The past copula -idʒa. idʒa is a past tense copula. It always bears a subject prefix. On its own, it denotes a durative (as opposed to a punctual) situation in the past:

(10) twiidʒa viimbi “We used to be singers.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu-</td>
<td>idʒa</td>
<td>va- imb -i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sp1pl-</td>
<td>COP  ip2-</td>
<td>sing -SFX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(11) kwiidʒa ktfaka aha ndʒi vi “There used to be woods just right here.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>idʒa</td>
<td>kr- tʃaka aha ndʒi vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sp17-</td>
<td>COP  ip7-</td>
<td>woods DEM16 DEICT only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(12) sikwiidʒa ktfaka tuƙu “There didn’t used to be woods.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Morphological Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>si-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>idʒa kr- tʃaka tuƙu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.PFX-</td>
<td>SP17- COP  ip7-</td>
<td>woods NEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In verbal compounds, -idʒa combines with inflected verbs. In some cases, it bears the pre-stem aspect marker -a- (see sections 2.16 and 2.18).

Infinitival forms. The infinitival forms found in verbal constructions show two structures, either RAD-a or kʊ-RAD-a, where kʊ- is the class 15 prefix which marks all verbo-nominal forms of verbs. The choice between the form with or without the class 15 prefix is based upon how closely bonded, semantically, the two verbal elements are. In Hadermann (1996: 159), the author mentions that in the languages under study the infinitive sometimes lacks a prefix. She puts this down to morphological factors (whether or no the radical is vowel initial), but
says the conditioning may also depend on the syntactic status of the verbo-
nominal form within the utterance.

In Langi the difference is independent of the radical initial, and is fully
distinctive. For example, there are two future tenses (which will be examined in
detail in section 2.19), distinguished by the presence/absence of the class 15
prefix:

(13) sakaata τuri “We are about to hunt.”
    sakaat -a τʊ- rɪ
    hunt -SFX SP1PL-COP

(14) kusakaata τuri “We will hunt.” (At some indeterminate time in the future.)
    ku- sakaat-a τʊ- rɪ
    IP15- hunt -SFX SP1PL-COP
    In (13) the form corresponds to an immediate future, something that is
    about to happen, in (14) to an indeterminate future.
    The same structural distinction is found for example when the infinitival
    form functions as direct object:

(15) voosaka vina “They always want to dance / they adore dancing.”
    va- ʊ- sak -a vin -a
    SP2PL- HAB- want -HAB dance -SFX

(16) voosaka kuvina “They want to dance.”
    va- ʊ- sak -a ku- vin -a
    SP2PL- HAB- want -HAB IP15- dance -SFX
    In example (15), wanting to dance is part of the subjects’ personality, it is a
    permanent feature, whereas in (16) it is a passing fancy. We will see more
    examples of this phenomenon in section 2.10.

    Now that we have had a look at the different elements involved, let us turn
to the conjugations in which they are used.

2 Conjugations

Below is a list of the conjugations I have attested in Langi. Where
applicable, negative forms are indicated by the pre-prefix in parentheses (si-) or,
where the pre-prefix does not apply, by the independent form following the
affirmative form(s) to which it applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(si-)SP-iyɔ-RAD-a</td>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>PROG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 In compound forms, each component has its specific abbreviation (such as cop for ‘copula’).
| (si-)SP-ɔ-RAD-a | Habitual | HAB |
| (si-)SP-a-RAD-a | Perfect | PFT |
| (si-)SP-a-RAD-ire | Perfective | PFV |
| (si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-a | Anterior perfect | PFT PFT |
| (si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-ire | Anterior perfective | PFV PFV |
| SP-END-ɔ-RAD-a | Inevitable | INV |
| SP-tɔ-RAD-a | Decisional | DEC |
| (si-)SP-ka-RAD-a⁶ | Narrative | NAR |
| SP-ri (ku-)RAD-a⁷ | Narrative present | n/a |
| ku-RAD-a SP-a-ri | Narrative past progressive | n/a |
| SP-a-ri SP-iyɔ-RAD-a | Dynamic past progressive | n/a |
| SP-a-ri SP-ɔ-RAD-a | Dynamic past habitual | n/a |
| (si-)SP-idʒa SP-ɔ-RAD-a | Stative past habitual | n/a |
| SP-idʒa SP-a-RAD-a | Stative past perfect | n/a |
| SP-idʒa SP-a-RAD-a | Stative far past perfect | n/a |
| SP-a-idʒa (si-)SP-a-RAD-ire | Stative past perfective | n/a |
| (si-)SP-a-idʒa SP-a-RAD-ire | Stative far past perfective | n/a |
| (ku)-RAD-a SP-ri | Future | n/a |
| si-SP-ri RAD-a | Negative future | n/a |
| RAD-a | Imperative 2sg | IMP2SG |
| RAD-ε | Imperative 1pl | IMP1PL |
| RAD-i | Imperative 2pl | IMP2PL |
| SP-RAD-ε | Subjunctive | SUB |
| SP-ka-RAD-a | Advisory | ADV |
| SP-ka-RAD-ε | Injunctive | INJ |
| apa ku-RAD-a / | Negative imperative | n/a |
| ku-RAD-a tuku |

It can be seen from this list that the Langi verbal system, like those of most Niger-Congo languages (Welmers 1973: 344), makes use of both ‘simple’ verb forms and verbal constructions. Several features however are atypical in comparison to Proto-Bantu or even to most East African Bantu languages. The most striking is the future formation *infinitive + auxiliary* which contradicts Greenberg’s (1966: 84) claim that verb-object (VO) languages show the order *auxiliary + infinitive*. However, Langi is not alone in presenting such atypical word order, it is also found in several other Bantu languages, such as Mbugwe.

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⁶ This form is identical to the Advisory. They are only distinguished by the context in which they are used (narratives vs. direct speech), and not for example by tone: the tones are identical.

⁷ On the presence vs. absence of kʊ-, see the discussion on examples (13) through (16) above.

It is highly probable that the counter-universal structures in Langi were calqued on surrounding Southern Cushitic languages, the most likely candidates being Burunge and Alagwa (Mous, pers. com.). Further indication of influence from these languages can be seen in the fact that there are no clear distinctions between degrees of past in Langi\(^8\). We will see in the following paragraphs that many conjugations can only incidentally be interpreted as past tenses, and that in most cases the past is indicated by a distinct copula, which precedes the verb form. This situation is contrary to what is found in most Bantu languages (although comparable to what is found in Standard Swahili, Nurse 2000a: 249), as well as in Proto-Bantu, but closely resembles Southern Cushitic where aspectual distinctions are much more central than temporal ones (Nurse 2000b: 524). Furthermore, the only clear temporal distinctions are expressed in verbal constructions, whereas most aspectual and modal distinctions are expressed directly in the verb form.

2.1 Progressive: \((si-)sp\text{-}iy\text{-}RAD\text{-}a\). The progressive indicates a process which is on-going at the time of speech. It is often used to signify that one is in the middle of doing something, and therefore unable to respond to a demand.

(17)  \(\text{niiyol\text{"u}}}\text{s\text{"i}ka}\) “I’m talking”
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{ni-} \quad \text{iy\text{"o}-} \quad \text{luus} \quad -rk \quad -a \\
\text{SP1SG-} \quad \text{PROG-} \quad \text{talk} \quad \text{NEUT-} \quad \text{PROG}
\end{array}
\]

(18)  \(\text{siiy\text{"o}seya k\text{"u}nu t\text{"u}ku, iiy\text{"o}kir\text{"i}rk\text{"a}na}\)
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{si-} \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{iy\text{"o}-} \quad \text{sey} \quad -a \quad \text{ki-} \quad \text{ntu} \quad \text{t\text{"u}ku} \\
\text{P.PFX-} \quad \text{SP1-} \quad \text{PROG-} \quad \text{say} \quad \text{-PROG Ip7-} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{NEG}
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{a-} \quad \text{iy\text{"o}-} \quad k^9 \quad i- \quad r \quad -ir \quad -rk \quad -an \quad -a \\
\text{SP1-} \quad \text{PROG-} \quad k \quad \text{REFL-} \quad \text{think} \quad \text{-APPL-} \quad \text{NEUT-} \quad \text{ASS-} \quad \text{PROG}
\end{array}
\]
“He isn’t saying anything, he’s thinking.”

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Or at least in the dialect spoken in the towns of Kondoa and Pahi. I have been told by Nurse that Stegen has found several distinct pasts, however, as Stegen’s aim is to establish a ‘pan-Langi’ orthography, he has not distinguished between the various dialects.

9 This consonant is inserted to avoid the merging of the two vowels. It is not part of the reflexive or the radical, the form in the infinitive is \(\text{kwir\text{"i}rk\text{"a}na}\) ‘to think’.
The progressive is never used with stative verbs. For a state current at the
time of speech, either the habitual, the perfect or the perfective is used. For
example the verb *kʊoфа* ‘to be afraid’ is usually conjugated in the habitual
(*nʊkʊoфа ndʒʊka ‘I am afraid of snakes / I fear snakes’), whereas the verb
*kʊvɪha* ‘to be bad’ is usually conjugated in the perfect (*naavɪha ‘I am bad’*).

2.2 Habitual: (si-)SP-ё-RAD-a. The habitual is mostly used to describe situations
that are characteristic of an extended period of time, to express recurrent events,
statements of general truth. It is used for example to describe what one does in
life, but, contrary to the progressive, does not stress that something is on-going at
the time of speech.

The habitual shares many features with the perfect (see below), the
difference being that the habitual does not refer to an earlier situation, and is
mostly used with dynamic verbs, whereas the perfect is commonly used with both
dynamic and stative verbs.

(20) **noorɪma** “I farm / I’m a farmer.”

*ni-*  ç-  rɪm -a
SP1SG- HAB- farm -HAB

(21) **ntʃʊŋɡula yɔɔrya ndʒʊʊ** “The hare eats beans.”

*n-*  tʃʊŋɡula ɪ-  ç-  ry -a  n- dʒʊʊ
IP9- hare SP9- HAB- eat -HAB IP10- beans

(22) **siŋʊtɛɛka tʊku** “I don’t cook / I’m not the one who cooks in our house.”

*si-*  *ni-*  ç-  tɛɛ -ɛk -a  tʊku
P.PFX- SP1SG- HAB- cook -NEUT -HAB NEG

(23) **siŋʊtɛmɑ ɫʊki tʊku** “They are not cutting wood.”

*si-*  va- ç-  tem -a  ɫʊ- kwi tʊku
P.PFX- SP2- HAB- cut -HAB IP11- wood NEG

In the following example, a stative verb usually inflected in the perfective
is inflected in the habitual, to show sarcasm:
(24) **tootaŋga** “We know / we are knowing (we’re not stupid).”

\[\begin{align*}
\text{tu-} & \quad \text{č-} \quad \text{taŋ} \quad -a \\
\text{SP1PL- HAB-} & \quad \text{know} \quad -\text{HAB}
\end{align*}\]

2.3 **Perfect: (si-)SP-a-RAD-a.** This form is certainly the reflex of the (tentative) Proto-Bantu ‘preterite ipf.’ (-á- -a) (Meeussen 1967: 109), however, as its values are closer to what Comrie calls the perfect (Comrie 1976: 52-65), I have chosen the label which will have meaning for the largest number of readers.

The interpretation of the perfect is linked to the type of verb: stative vs. dynamic. When used with stative verbs, the time reference is the present, as in:

(25) **vitʃŋɔ vyaabɔha** “The beads are beautiful.”

\[\begin{align*}
\text{vi-} & \quad \text{ʃ𝑖ŋɔ} \quad \text{vi-} \quad \text{bɔh} \quad -a \\
\text{IP8-} & \quad \text{bead} \quad \text{SP8-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{be.beautiful} \quad -\text{PFT}
\end{align*}\]

(26) **aya maɗʒi siyaahɔla tuko** “This water is not cold.”

\[\begin{align*}
\text{aya} \quad \text{ma-} \quad \text{ɗʒi} \quad \text{si-} \quad \text{ya-} \quad \text{hɔl} \quad -a \quad \text{tuko} \\
\text{DEM6} \quad \text{IP6-} \quad \text{water} \quad \text{P.PFX-} \quad \text{SP6-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{be.cold-PFT} \quad \text{NEG}
\end{align*}\]

When used with dynamic verbs, the perfect refers to a present situation which results from a preceding process, the latter having produced a state which is either still current or the effects of which are still felt:

(27) **mwaana aakula**

\[\begin{align*}
\text{mu-} & \quad \text{ana} \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{kʊl} \quad -a \\
\text{IP1-} & \quad \text{child} \quad \text{SP1-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{grow} \quad -\text{PFT}
\end{align*}\]

“The child has grown.” (One deduces that he used to be short.)

(28) **naaɗɔma kaayii yaavɔ**

\[\begin{align*}
\text{ni-} & \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{dɔm} \quad -a \quad \text{Ø-} \quad \text{kaaya-i} \quad \text{i-} \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{vɔ} \\
\text{SP1SG-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{go} \quad -\text{PFT} \quad \text{IP9-} \quad \text{house} \quad -\text{LOC} \quad \text{DP9-} \quad \text{DET-} \quad \text{POSS3PL}
\end{align*}\]

“I have been to their house (already, therefore I don’t want to go back).”

(29) **sinaaɗɔma kaayii yaavɔ tuko**

\[\begin{align*}
\text{si-} & \quad \text{ni-} \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{dɔm} \quad -a \quad \text{Ø-} \quad \text{kaaya-i} \quad \text{i-} \quad \text{a-} \quad \text{vɔ} \quad \text{tuko} \\
\text{P.PFX-} \quad \text{SP1SG-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{go} \quad -\text{PFT} \quad \text{IP9-} \quad \text{house} \quad -\text{LOC} \quad \text{DP9-} \quad \text{DET-} \quad \text{POSS3PL NEG}
\end{align*}\]

“I haven’t been to their house (but would like to go).”

2.4 **Perfective: (si-)SP-a-RAD-ire.** This conjugation can also be traced back to Proto-Bantu, however it is not clear whether it is the reflex of Meeussen’s ‘recent pf.’ (-a- -ɪɗɛ) or his ‘pret. pf.’ (-á- -ɪdɛ) (Meeussen 1967: 113), in neither case do the tones correspond (the pattern in Langi is usually -á- -ɪdɛ, but may vary according to context).

The perfective denotes a completed situation. Contrary to the perfect, it does not refer to a past situation:
(30) **mwaana aakurire** “The child grew.”
   mu- ana a- a- kul^10^-irε
   IP1- child SP1- PFV- grow -PFV

(31) **kuri sidzaalumire musungaati tuku** “The dogs didn’t bite the rich man.”
   Ø- kuri si- dʒi- a- lum -irε mu- suŋgaati tuku
   IP10- dog P.PFX- SP10- PFV- bite -PFV IP1- rich.man NEG

The perfective can be used with all types of past adverbs, ‘yesterday’ as well as ‘last year’:

(32) **idʒɔ, naadımire na ludʒii** “Yesterday I went to the watering hole.”
   idʒɔ ni- a- dɔm -irε na lu- dʒi -i
   yesterday SP1SG- PFV- go -PFV CONN IP11- watering.hole -LOC

(33) **mwaaka waalɔkiri, twaadımire na aruʃa**
   mu- aka u- a- bɔk -irε tu- a- dɔm -irε na aruʃa
   IP3- year SP3- PFV- pass -PFV SP1PL- PFV- go -PFV CONN Arusha
   “Last year, we went to Arusha”

One could be tempted to consider the perfective a ‘past tense’. In my opinion, however, the emphasis is on the completed aspect rather than on the fact that it is past. This is supported by the use of the perfective in conditional phrases such as:

(34) **kɔnɾ naadımire kaayii, rya ndɛɾi**
   kɔnɾ ni- a- dɔm -irε Ø- kaaya-i ry -a ndɛ- ri
   if SP1SG- PFV- go -PFV IP9- house -LOC eat -SFX SP1SG- COP
   “If I go home, I will eat.” (lit. “If I went home, I will eat”.)

2.5 Anterior perfect: (si-) SP-a SP-a-RAD-a. The anterior perfect has the same aspectual values as the perfect but refers to a situation which takes place prior to another situation, which is necessarily in the past. The structure of this form is unusual, as in Bantu verb forms a TAM marker must be prefixed to a radical, not to another TAM marker. According to my informants, the verb is simply ‘doubled’:

(35) **fatuma aa aatumama hantu ali uudʒire**
   Fatuma a- a a- a- tumam -a
   Fatuma SP3SG- PFT SP3SG- PFT- work -PFT
   ha- ntu Ally a- a- uudʒ -irε
   IP16- place Ally SP3SG- PFV- come -PFV
   “Fatuma was working when Ally came.”

^10 /l/ is pronounced [r] before /i/. 
“When they left, I hadn’t started the work you gave me.”

“Where were the children? I hadn’t seen them.”

A possible explanation is that these structures, as well as those presented in the following section, at one point contained an auxiliary which has since been deleted.

2.6 Anterior perfective: (si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-ire. The anterior perfective has the same aspectual values as the perfective but, as for the anterior perfect in the preceding section, refers to a situation which takes place prior to another, past situation.

“When we appeared, then Ally left (lit. passed).”

“When we appeared, then Ally left (lit. passed).”

This form is imbricated. Imbrication affects verbs inflected in the perfective, generally those bearing certain extensions, where, roughly speaking, the extension and the suffix merge. The outcome varies both according to the extension and to the radical final consonant. Other examples can be found in (41), (74), (94). For more information on imbrication, see Bastin (1983) and Dunham (forthcoming).
then SP1SG- NAR- start -NAR run -SFX CONN IP5- store -LOC
“We had met, then (after which) I started running off to the store.”

2.7 Inevitable: sp-endo-RAD-a. Verbs in this conjugation refer to a situation which the speaker considers will happen in the near future and which is inevitable. The marker endo is probably a grammaticalized form of the verb kwéenda ‘want, love’. This is quite frequent in Bantu languages, to the point that Bernd Heine includes it in his catalogue of probabilistic predictions that can be made about African languages:

(v) If a language develops a future tense marker then most likely it will use either of the motion verbs ‘go (to)’ or ‘come (to)’ or a verb of volition ‘want’. (1997: 2)

As will be seen from the following examples, Langi has retained the notion of volition, but in the sense where when something ‘wants’ to do something, it means that that something is bound to happen. This type of value is found for example in Moore (Raphael Kaboré, pers. com.), a Gur language spoken in Burkina Faso, where when one says ‘it wants to rain’, it means that the clouds are so full that it is bound to rain, or ‘the glass wants to fall’ meaning that if the glass is not moved it will fall from the table.

(40) mpaka mnénya tündopata habari

mpaka mnénya tu- endo- pat -a Ø- habari
until Mnénya SP1PL- INV- get -SFX IP10- news
“All the way to Mnénya we are bound to get the news.”

(41) ma ha mpitşı yeendo kwatwa

ma ha m- pitśli r- endo- kwat -w -a
then here IP9- hyena SP9- INV- touch -PASS -SFX
“Then, here, the hyena is going to get caught.”

(42) kintu mündaryu ni waari

ki- ntu mu- endo₁² ry -a ní u- arí
IP7- thing SP2PL- INV- eat -SFX PRES IP14- porridge
“What you are going to eat is porridge.” (Whether you like it or not.)

₁² Preceeded by the vowel /ʊ/, the marker’s initial /e/ drops.
2.8 Decisional: sp-to-RAD-a. It is highly probable that -tɔ- is a grammaticalized form of a full verb (Güldemann 2003: 185), as is the case for endɔ. Contrary to endɔ however, it is difficult to say which full verb it stems from. Language-internally, the only likely source is kutɔɔla “take”. I have been unable to find any examples of other Bantu languages where ‘take’ has been grammaticalized, however the phenomenon is widely attested in the languages of the world (Hagège: 1975, Sebba: 1987, Li and Thompson: 1974, Lord: 1993, Ozanne-Rivierre: 2004). Contrary to what is found in Langi, in most of the cases described, the verb ‘take’ is serialized and tends to undergo a gradual reanalysis as a preposition or a case marker. The one example I have found that is somewhat similar to Langi is in the Polynesian Outlier language, Pileni. According to Åshild Næss (2004: 242), two constructions use the verb toa ‘take’, with different semantic and syntactic properties: one where toa introduces an object argument, and another where it contributes a volitional or inceptive meaning to the clause, similar to the English ‘to take to V-ing’.

One other possibility is that the form derives from a verb ‘to leave’ or ‘to go’ (in Langi kʊ-tamanya and kʊ-dɔma respectively) followed by an infinitive. Botne (1999: 484) mentions two Bantu languages where a marker -to- is found, in the first case it is derived from ‘to leave, to go’:

Ntomba C.66 (Gilliard 1928): to-kos-e ‘va prendre’
in the second case it is derived from ‘come’ + ku-inf:

Lozi S.34 (Gorman 1950): mu-to-ng-a ‘come (Pl) and get (it)’.

Hadermann (1999: 454-455) mentions one case where a marker -too- is found, and also posits its origins in a verb ‘to go’: “En nkengo (C.61), une des formes du futur comporte la marque -too-, qui pourrait refléter une séquence ancienne -ta-ko- où -ta- remonterait à un verbe “aller”.”

In the examples I have found in Langi, the use of tɔ signifies that the speaker is about to/has decided to/intends to undertake an action voluntarily:
(44) **aakwiire, tutoseŋola mayiti yaatʃwe**

\[
\begin{align*}
&a- \quad a- \quad kώi \quad -irε \quad tu- \quad tő- \quad səŋɛl \quad \text{-a} \\
&\text{SP1-} \quad \text{PFV-} \quad \text{die} \quad \text{-PFV} \quad \text{SP1PL-} \quad \text{DEC-} \quad \text{remove} \quad \text{-SFX} \\
&Ø- \quad \text{mayiti} \quad ɪ- \quad a- \quad tʃwe \\
&\text{IP9-} \quad \text{corpse} \quad \text{DP9-} \quad \text{DET-} \quad \text{POSS3SG} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“He is dead, we are going to remove his corpse.”

(45) **ŋkukułume rtoveka vi, keyi kakatšola**

\[
\begin{align*}
&ŋ- \quad kuku- \quad lume \quad ɪ- \quad tő- \quad vek \quad \text{-a} \quad \text{vi} \\
&\text{IP9-} \quad \text{chicken-} \quad \text{male} \quad \text{SP9-} \quad \text{DEC-} \quad \text{crow} \quad \text{-SFX} \quad \text{just} \\
&keyi \quad ka- \quad ka- \quad tʃɔl \quad \text{-a} \\
&\text{then} \quad \text{SP12-} \quad \text{NAR-} \quad \text{take} \quad \text{-NAR} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“Just when the rooster was about to crow, he (small bird) took (clothes).”

A particularity of the decisional marker is that it can follow other TAM markers in the 3rd position of the verb form, for example:

**habitual + decisional**

When the decisional is combined with the habitual marker, the speaker indicates that a decision has been taken, and that it is in the process of being carried out:

(46) **noxtakɔwa luʤi**

\[
\begin{align*}
&ni- \quad ɔ- \quad tő- \quad k- \quad ɔw \quad \text{-a} \quad lu- \quad dʒi \quad \text{-i} \\
&\text{SP1SG-} \quad \text{HAB-} \quad \text{DEC-} \quad \text{k-} \quad \text{wash} \quad \text{-HAB} \quad \text{IP11-} \quad \text{watering.hole} \quad \text{-LOC} \\
\end{align*}
\]

“I’m going to wash in the watering hole.” (Despite contrary orders.)

**perfect + decisional**

Here the speaker indicates that a decision was taken, and has already been carried out:

(47) **naatɔkɔwa** “I still went and took a bath.”

\[
\begin{align*}
&ni- \quad a- \quad tő- \quad k- \quad ɔw \quad \text{-a} \\
&\text{SP1SG-} \quad \text{PFT-} \quad \text{DEC-} \quad \text{k-} \quad \text{wash} \quad \text{-PFT} \\
\end{align*}
\]

**progressive + decisional**

Here, too, the use of the marker ɪɔ seems to add a level of intention or decision to the basic verb, but, as the form is in the negative, to indicate that the decision is not in the process of being carried out:
(48) **mbula yɔɔvaa, ava vadala siviiyɔɔtɔrɔma tukɔ**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mbula</th>
<th>1-</th>
<th>va-</th>
<th>a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mP9-</td>
<td>bula</td>
<td>r-</td>
<td>va</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ip9-</td>
<td>rain</td>
<td>sp9-</td>
<td>hab-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ava</td>
<td>va-</td>
<td>dala</td>
<td>si-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIEM2 ip2- woman p.PFX- sp2- prog- dec- farm -prog neg

“It’s raining, the women are not going to farm.”

**inevitable + decisional**

When *endo* and *tɔ* are combined, the resulting values are inevitability and intention/decision:

(49) **nɔ uɔŋɔku yeɛndoɔtɔrɔya ndʒuŋu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nɔ</th>
<th>1-</th>
<th>uŋɔku</th>
<th>1-</th>
<th>ɛndo-</th>
<th>tɔ-</th>
<th>ry</th>
<th>-a</th>
<th>n-</th>
<th>dʒuŋu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rel</td>
<td>ip14-</td>
<td>night</td>
<td>sp9-</td>
<td>inv-</td>
<td>dec-</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>-sfx</td>
<td>ip10-</td>
<td>bean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“It’s at night (that) he goes and eats beans.” (Even though he knows he’s bound to be caught).

(50) **hapana kündɔtɔkɔwa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hapana</th>
<th>ku-</th>
<th>ɛndo-</th>
<th>tɔ-</th>
<th>k-</th>
<th>ow</th>
<th>-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neg</td>
<td>ip15-</td>
<td>inv-</td>
<td>dec-</td>
<td>k-</td>
<td>wash</td>
<td>-sfx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Do not go and wash anyway.” (Despite our orders).

From these examples it can be seen that the inevitable *endo* and the decisional *tɔ*, show rather atypical behavior. This leads me to hypothesize that they entered the Langi tense/aspect/mood system more recently than the other markers we have seen thus far, such as the anterior or the progressive, for example.

The first distinctive feature of *tɔ* and *endo* is that the corresponding full lexical verbs are still in common use (with reservation however concerning the origins of *-tɔ*, see above):

(51) **tɔoła idihwa** “Take some white sorghum.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tɔoł-</th>
<th>-a</th>
<th>i-</th>
<th>dihwa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>-imp2sg</td>
<td>ip5-</td>
<td>sorghum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(52) **simba kĩntu yɛenda ni mahɔŋge** “The lion, what he loves is steak.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Œ-</th>
<th>simba</th>
<th>kĩ-</th>
<th>ntu</th>
<th>1-</th>
<th>a-</th>
<th>ɛnd-</th>
<th>-a</th>
<th>ni</th>
<th>ma-</th>
<th>hɔŋge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ip9-</td>
<td>lion</td>
<td>ip7-</td>
<td>thing</td>
<td>sp9-</td>
<td>pft-</td>
<td>love</td>
<td>-pft</td>
<td>pres</td>
<td>ip6-</td>
<td>steak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I would further hypothesize that *tɔ* was grammaticalized before *endo* as the latter, in its full form, is still attested as the first verb in a verb combination. For example:
Furthermore, to can combine with other markers in the 3rd column.

In my opinion, the value common to these two verbs, kweenda “want, love” and kutrola “take” (?) which led to their grammaticalization, and which was lacking in the Langi verb system, is that of showing the speaker’s involvement, or attitude towards the state of affairs expressed in the clause. This type of “attitude” marker is described by Maarten Mous for Ma’a (2003: 116, 129, 131). A further similarity between the markers mentioned by Mous and the Langi to is their possibility of combining with other pre-radical TAM markers.

2.9 Narrative: (si-)sp-ka-RAD-a. This conjugation is identical in structure to what I have dubbed the ‘advisory’ (see below, section 2.22). A similar state of affairs was attested by Meeussen (1967), who mentions three distinct conjugations with ka (motional, inceptive and subsequent) and notes: “The relationship between -ká-, -ka- and an often attested near homophone formative with meaning “and (he did...)” (subsecutive) is not clear.” (p. 109)

In Langi, the narrative and the advisory are never used in the same speech context: the narrative, as its name indicates, is only used in narration, whereas the advisory, and the injunctive (with the suffix -e) is always addressed to someone, even if the advice concerns a third person.

The narrative is never used as the first verb form in a text, the time frame is always previously established, either by the traditional introduction aho kale “Once upon a time...” or by a preceding verb form. Once the time frame is established, the successive events are presented in the narrative, most often separated by ma “then”:

(54) ma akadoma na ludzii “Then she went to the watering hole.”

(55) ma tkawuluka na dzira nga “Then it flew away with those clothes.”

Verbs inflected in the narrative are usually translated by a preterit in English, in Langi however it cannot be considered a ‘past tense’ as in itself, it carries no reference to time, but is dependant on a separate form. In this respect,
the narrative is comparable to the ‘aorist’ described by Guentchéva (1990: 107) for Bulgarian, and Robert (1996: 377) for Wolof. Robert states: “L’Aoriste est une forme verbale qui n’indique pas de repérage temporel. (...) Les événements à l’Aoriste n’ont pas par eux-mêmes ni lieu ni temps ; ils s’inscrivent dans un cadre situationnel prédéfini à l’aide d’une autre conjugaison.”

2.10 Narrative present: $\text{SP-}\text{r}\text{ɪ} (\text{ku-})\text{RAD-a}$. In this construction, the verb radical following the copula may or may not carry the infinitive prefix $\text{ku-}$, depending on how closely, semantically, the subject is bound to the lexical verb. In example (56), the lion is coming of his own free will, he could choose not to, thus the verb carries the infinitive prefix. In example (57), the hare is struggling to get by and can do nothing about it, thus the prefix is absent. See also examples (13)-(16).

This conjugation is only attested in narratives. It is used when there is a break in the narration, either in time or in space:

(56) $\text{haha simba }\text{r}\text{ɪ} \text{kuudža }\text{no }\text{ʃiana }\text{mpîtʃi}$

$haha$ $\text{Ø-}$ $\text{simba}$ $\text{i-}$ $\text{rɪ}$ $\text{ku-}$ $\text{udʒ}$ $\text{-a}$
$\text{now}$ $\text{iP9-}$ $\text{lion}$ $\text{SP9-}$ $\text{COP}$ $\text{iP15-}$ $\text{come}$ $\text{-SFX}$
$\text{no}$ $\text{ʃian}$ $\text{-a}$ $\text{m-}$ $\text{pitʃi}$
$\text{REL}$ $\text{meet}$ $\text{-SFX}$ $\text{iP9-}$ $\text{hyena}$

“Now the lion is coming to meet the hyena.”

This example is taken from a story\textsuperscript{13}. The preceding sentences present the lion and the hyena, the narrative present is then used to signify that the speaker has finished the introduction and is entering the narrative present.

(57) $\text{ntʃùŋgula }\text{rɪ} \text{kwetá}$ “The hare is struggling (to get by).”

$n$ $\text{tʃùŋgula}$ $\text{i-}$ $\text{rɪ}$ $\text{kwet}$ $\text{-a}$
$\text{iP9-}$ $\text{hare}$ $\text{SP9-}$ $\text{COP}$ $\text{struggle}$ $\text{-SFX}$

Here too, the hare has been introduced as part of the story in the preceding sentences, example (57) serves to describe the state the hare is in in the narrative present.

2.11 Narrative past progressive: $\text{ku-}\text{RAD-a} \text{SP-a-rɪ}$. Unfortunately I have only one example of this construction in my data, and it is elicited\textsuperscript{14}, however it is also mentioned in Nurse (2003: 97). There is further mention of this same construction, in this order ($\text{infinitive + copula}$) as well as in the inverse order

\textsuperscript{13} This story and others may be read and listened to on the LACITO Archive Project website: http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/archivage/index.html.fr

\textsuperscript{14} It must be noted that this is a common problem when one works on a language that has not been previously described.
(copula + infinitive) in Mous (2000: 475, however his examples were given by Nurse\textsuperscript{15}). According to Mous, the change in word order is probably due to emphasis (pers. com).

(58)  \textit{kuseka twaarì ma ûhu maka akaanda rìra}

\texttt{kù- sek -a tu- a- rrì
ip15- laugh -SFX sp1pl- PFT- COP
ma ûhu Ø- maka a- ka- and -a rrì -a
then dem1 ip1a- guy sp1- nar- start -nar cry -SFX
“We were laughing then this guy started to cry!”}

Despite the scarcity of data, I have given this example as it shows counter-universal word order (infinitive + copula) (see the general introduction to section 2).

2.12 Dynamic past progressive: sp-a-rrì sp-iyo-RAD-a. This structure is also only attested in elicitation, in one example. However, it confirms that the copula -rrì is largely productive in verbal constructions, both with and without the perfect marker, and both preceding and following the lexical verb.

(59)  \textit{twaarì tōoseka “We were laughing.”}

\texttt{tu- a- rrì tu- ɔ- sek -a
sp1pl- PFT- COP sp1pl- hab- laugh -hab}


(60)  \textit{twaarì twiiyoseka “We were (in the process of) laughing.”}

\texttt{tu- a- rrì tu- iyɔ- sek -a
sp1pl- PFT- COP sp1pl- prog- laugh -prog}

From examples (58)-(60), it seems that the copula inflected in the perfect situates a process in the past. We will see in the following sections that when the lexical verb is stative, as opposed to dynamic, the copula -idʒa is used.

2.14 Stative past habitual: (si-)sp-idʒa sp-ɔ-RAD-a. This construction is made up of a verb inflected in the habitual preceded by the copula -idʒa, which serves to place the situation in the past. The aspectual values of the main verb are kept:

\textsuperscript{15} There seems to be some confusion in the translation in Mous (“We are buying”), it should read as it appears in Nurse (2003) “We were laughing”.

(61) **twiidza toɔkɪmba hantu tɔɔyɛnda, haha tɔɔtɔɾdza**

\[ tu- idʒa tu- ɔ- k- imb-a \]

SP1PL- COP SP1PL- HAB- k- sing -HAB

ha- ntu tu- ɔ- yɛnd-a haha tu- ɔ- tridʒ-a

IP16- place SP1PL- HAB- walk -HAB now SP1PL- HAB- run -HAB

“We used to sing while walking, now we run.”

(62) **twiidza toɔkikala Kondoa ma tɔɔkaama na London**

\[ tu- idʒa tu- ɔ- k- ikal-a Kondoa \]

SP1PL- COP SP1PL- HAB- k- reside -HAB Kondoa

ma tu- ka- saam-a na London

then SP1PL- NAR- migrate -NAR CONN London

“We used to live in Kondoa, then we migrated to London.”

(63) **hantu nɔɔkikaala americani**

\[ ha- ntu ni- ɔ- k- ikaal-a america -ni \]

IP16- place SP1SG- HAB- k- reside -HAB America -LOC

**siniidʒa nɔɔtumama benkii tukii**

\[ si- ni- idʒa ni- ɔ- tumam-a Œ- benki-i tukii \]

P.PFX- SP1SG- COP SP1SG- HAB- work -HAB IP9- bank -LOC NEG

“When I lived in America I didn’t use to work in a bank.”

2.15 **Stative past perfect:** **sp-idʒa sp-a-RAD-a.** In this construction the copula is combined with verbs inflected in the perfect aspect. The latter keeps its aspectual values, but is placed in the past:

(64) **niidʒa nɛɛndɛ tɔɾdʒa na tʃuuri** “I used to like to run in the morning.”

\[ ni- idʒa ni- a- ënd-a tridʒ-a na kr- uri \]

SP1SG- COP SP1SG- PFT- love -PFT run -SFX CONN IP7- morning

(65) **mwaasu wiidʒa waavaarika**

\[ mu- asu u- idʒa u- a- var -tk-a \]

IP3- sun SP3- COP SP3- PFT- shine -NEUT -PFT

“When the sun was shining.” (in response to: “When did you usually eat?”)

(66) **ira siku iidʒa yaabɔhla** “That day was beautiful.”

\[ ɪr- Ō- siku r- idʒa r- a- bɔh-a \]

DEM9 IP9- day SP9- COP SP9- PFT- be.beautiful -PFT

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16 This locative suffix is borrowed from Swahili.
2.16 Stative far past perfect: sp-a-idʒa sp-a-RAD-a. This is one of the rare cases where one finds distinctions between degrees of pasts in Langi. The only other case is shown below (section 2.17 vs. 2.18). I unfortunately have only one example of this conjugation, and no examples where this conjugation is in the negative.

(67) wɔɔkati naadʒa mʊdudi, naadʒa naadudya sana
u- ɔɔkati nɪ- a- idʒa mʊ- dudi
ip14- moment sp1sg- pft- cop dp1- small
nɪ- a- dʒa nɪ- a- dudi -a sana
sp1sg- pft- cop sp1sg- pft- be.small -pft very
“When I was small I was very small.”

2.17 Stative past perfective: sp-idʒa (si-)sp-a-RAD-ıʁ. As for the stative past perfect, verbs in the stative past perfective refer to situations which were current in the past:

(68) wiidʒa waateete\(^{17}\) waami “You used to have a corral.”
 u- idʒa u- a- tɛt -ıʁ u- ami
sp2sg- cop sp2sg- pfv- have -pfv ip14- corral

(69) niidʒa siniiıfyeęę na mama wiıt u tukư
nɪ- idʒa si- nɪ- a- i- fy -an -ıʁ
sp1sg- cop p.pfx- sp1sg- pfv- reﬂ- resemble -ass -pfv
na Ø- mama u- a- iţi u tuku
conn ip1a- mother dp1- det- poss1pl neg
“I used to not look like our\(^{18}\) mother.”

We shall see in example (72) below that in the stative far past perfective, it is the copular verb which carries the negative pre-prefix.

2.18 Stative far past perfective: (si-)sp-a-idʒa sp-a-RAD-ıʁ.

\(^{17}\) This verb is defective, it only appears in the perfective, where it shows an irregular form of imbrication. A comparable verb for ‘have’ is found in Chaga (M.-L. Montlahuc, pers. com.), where it is also defective (although to a lesser extent than in Langi).

\(^{18}\) Family members (and homes) are never possessed in the singular in Langi.
(70) vaadza vaateete udzusi wooruta\(^{19}\)

va- a- id3a va- a- tet -ire
sp2- pft- cop sp2- pfv- have -pfv
u- ɗ3usi u- o- rut -a
ip14- profession pp14- rel- pull -rel

“They used to be blacksmiths.” (lit. “They used to have the profession of pulling.”)

(71) uhu musiŋga hantu aadza mududi,

uhu mu- siŋga ha- ntü a- a- id3a mu- dudi,
dem1 ip1- child ip16- place sp1- pft- cop dp1- small
aadza iiyfyeene na iyo waavø
a- a- id3a a- a- i- fy -an -ire
sp1- pft- cop sp1- pfv- refl- resemble -ass -pfv
na Ø- iyo u- a- νo
conn ip1a- mother dp3- det- poss3pl

“When this child was small he looked like their mother.”

(72) ava vasiŋga hantu vaadza vadudi

ava va- siŋga ha- ntü va- a- id3a va- dudi
dem2 ip2- child ip16- place sp2- pft- cop dp2- small
sivaadza viiyeene na iyo waavø tuku
si- va- a- id3a va- a- i- fy -an -ire
p.pfx- sp1- pft- cop sp2- pfv- refl- resemble -ass -pfv
na Ø- iyo u- a- νo tuku
conn ip1a- mother dp1- det- poss3pl neg

“When these children were small they didn’t used to look like their mother.”

As can be seen from the examples in the preceding five sections, in accordance with its use independently, verb constructions with the past copula always refer to durative as opposed to punctual situations.

2.19 Future: (ku-)RAD-a sp-ri. This form denotes either an immediate or an indeterminate future, depending on the presence or absence of the class 15 prefix kʊ-. I have grouped the two forms together for practical reasons: in several cases,

\(^{19}\) Relative forms apparently share the same TAM markers as the habitual, only the prefix differs (the pronominal prefix is used as opposed to the subject prefix).
such as in the negative or the interrogative, only one form is possible, presenting the two forms together saves the need to go back and forth between sections. The prefixless form denotes an immediate future, something that is about to happen:

(73) ɲe ya arɪ “He is about to sleep.”
   ɲe y -a a run
   sleep -SFX SP1- COP

(74) mutɪ wiya urɪ “The tree is about to fall.”
   mu- tr wiy -a ur- rɪ
   IP3- tree fall -SFX SP3- COP

The prefixed form is used to denote an indeterminate future:

(75) mutɪ kuwiya urɪ “The tree will fall (some day).”
   mu- tr ku- wiy -a ur- rɪ
   IP3- tree IP15- fall -SFX SP3- COP

The prefixed form is also used whenever a time or place is mentioned:

(76) kʊkɛrá turɪ mutɪ lamʊtɔndɔ “We will cut the tree tomorrow.”
   kʊ- kɛr -a tu- rɪ mu- tr lamʊtɔndɔ
   IP15- cut -SFX SP1PL- COP IP3- tree tomorrow

(77) kʊdɔmə arɪ na dɔdɔmə “He will go to Dodoma.”
   kʊ- dɔm -a a rɪ na dɔdɔmə
   IP15- go -SFX SP1- COP CONN Dodoma

(78) mwaarɪmʊ kuʋasɔməra arɪ vasiŋɡa kitabu ʃulii
   mu- arɪmʊ ku- va- som -ɛr -a a rɪ va- siŋɡa
   IP1- teacher IP15- OBJ2- read -APPL -SFX SP1- COP IP2- child
   kr- tabu Ø- ʃulɛ -i
   IP7- book IP9- school -LOC
   “The teacher will read a book to the children at school.”

In conditional phrases, the prefixless form is used in the apodosis, probably to indicate that the action/event/state will immediately follow the fulfillment of the condition:
(79) kɔnĩ naaɗɔmɪrɛ kaayii, rya ndɛrɪ
kɔnĩ nɔ- a- dɔm -ɪrɛ ɪl- kaaya-i ry -a ndɛ- rɪ
if SP1SG- PFV- go -PFV IP9- house -LOC eat -SFX SP1SG- COP
“If I go home, I will eat.”

(80) kɔnĩ wɪmbɪrɛ, nɪ vɪnɪ ndɛrɪ
kɔnĩ u- a- ɪmɛ -ɪrɛ nɪ vɪn -a ndɛ- rɪ
if SP2SG- PFV- sing -PFV PERS1SG dance -SFX SP1SG- COP
“If you sing, me, I will dance.”

The prefixed form is used however when there is an object marker in the verb form, certainly in part because of possible confusion between the object prefix and the infinitive prefix (in the following example, both kʊ):

(81) kɔnĩ wɪmbɪrɛ kʊkuvɪnɪrɛ ndɛrɪ
kɔnĩ u- a- ɪmɛ -ɪrɛ kʊ- kʊ- vɪn -ɪr- a ndɛ- rɪ
if SP2SG- PFV- sing -PFV IP15- OBJ2SG-dance -APPL -SFX SP1SG- COP
“If you sing, I will dance for you.”

To the best of my knowledge, this constituent order (verb + copula) is limited to a very small number of Bantu languages. Among these languages, I believe a distinction must be made between those which accept SOV order and those with strict SVO order. In the first category are found languages from Guthrie’s zones B.40-50 and H.10-H.30. These have been studied by Hadermann (1996) who states:

“La deuxième construction que nous avons analysée est celle où l’infinitif est antéposé à un verbe auxiliant. Dans cette structure l’infinitif est généralement introduit par le préfixe locatif mu- et l’ensemble traduit l’aspect progressif du procès verbal en question. Donc, contrairement à ce qui se passe dans les constructions à verbe redoublé, le morphème locatif (ou sa trace) propre au temps du progressif (cf. la reconstruction *PV-di-mu-NV) n’apparaît pas dans la forme verbale conjuguée mais dans la forme nomino-verbale antéposée. Cette caractéristique est un signe du fait que la structure “infinitif + auxiliant” est issue de la séquence “auxiliant + infinitif” mais à un moment où celle-ci pouvait encore s’interpréter en “verbe + complément [nomino-verbale]”. Puis, il y a eu antéposition du complément, ceci probablement pour des raisons d’emphase. De nouveau, l’existence de l’ordre SOV dans les langues en question a sans doute facilité l’antéposition du locatif infinitival. Au moment où la structure emphatique “(S) Loc-Inf Aux” devient une structure non marquée, un processus de grammaticalisation peut se déclencher et le locatif infinitival sera réinterprété en noyau verbal, suivi d’un verbe-auxiliant “être” (p. 167).
The second category are languages with strict SVO order which nevertheless show constructions where the infinitival form precedes the auxiliary. In this category are found for example the closely related Gusii (E.42) and Kuria (E.43). In Gusii, the forms with an auxiliary (the copula -re) following a main verb correspond to what I call a narrative present (Whiteley 1960: 57) (tones not marked):

(82) nkogenda\textsuperscript{20} nde boono korigia embo ‘Now I’m going looking for the goat.’

When the auxiliary carries the verbal prefix -a-, the form corresponds to what I call a narrative past progressive:

(83) nkorema naare boono ngotimoka nde ‘I’ve been hoeing and now I’m resting’

In Kuria, the forms with an auxiliary following the main verb correspond to something between what I call present progressive and habitual (Whiteley 1955: 92):

(84) ngokora are emeremo kira urusiku ‘He’s working every day.’
(85) nkorema nde bono nkumunya nde ‘I’m hoeing and am resting.’

In Mbugwe (F.34) the situation is slightly different. All the tenses that make use of an auxiliary in combination with an infinitive show the order verb-auxiliary, in other words, the order never varies, contrary to what is found in Gusii, Kuria and Langi. In Mbugwe, three different auxiliaries may follow the main verb: the present progressive -kende, the future -je (which is the verb ja ‘come’ conjugated in the optative, marked by the suffix -e) and the habitual -anda (Mous 2000: 471):

(86) mbula o- tova e- kende na ngulu
   9:rain 15- rain 9- PRES.PROG with 9:force
   ‘The rain falls with force.’

(87) ora ko- je mohogo
   15:eat 1PL- come:SBJ 3:cassava
   ‘We will eat cassava.’

(88) ora w- anda nsiye?
   15:eat 2SG- HAB 9:fish
   ‘Do you eat fish?’

\textsuperscript{20} The class 15 prefix is ko-, these forms most certainly bear the cliticized focus marker n(i)- (Nurse and Muzale 1999).
One feature shared by Gusii, Kuria, Mbugwe and Langi is that they have long been surrounded by communities speaking non Bantu languages, where the object precedes the verb (Nurse 2000b: 525-6), which seems to indicate that this phenomenon is areal (Dahl: 2001). Furthermore, the adoption of these structures may well have been facilitated by internal factors. In Langi, the order infinitive + copula is only attested in main clause affirmatives, in all other cases the order copula + infinitive is found:

(89) nadi uti doma “When will you go?”
    nadi u- riri dom -a
    when SP2SG- COP go -SFX

(90) nombi siiri nwa madzi yosi tuku “The cow will not drink all the water.”
    Ø- nombi si- ri rr nwa ma- dži ya- sosi tuku
    IP9- cow P.PFX- SP9- COP drink -SFX IP6- water DP6- all NEG

(91) ni mwaarimu no arí soma kitabu
    ni mu- arimu no a- ri som -a ki- tabu
    PRES IP1- teacher REL SP1- COP read -SFX IP7- book
    “It is the teacher who will read a book.”

(92) kuudza arí kvari arí reeta tsäakurya
    ku- udž -a a- ri
    IP15- come -SFX SP1- COP
    kvari a- ri reet -a ki- a- ku- ry -a
    if SP1- COP bring -SFX IP7- DET- IP15- eat -SFX
    “He can come if he brings food.” (lit. “He will come if he is bringing food.”)

(93) hantu uti turira, kunzana uti naalokire
    ha- ntu u- ri tul -ir -a
    IP16- place SP2SG- COP appear -APPL -SFX
    ku- niri īn -a u- ri niri -a lok -ire
    IP15- OBJ1SG- find -SFX SP2SG- COP SP1SG- PFV- leave -PFV
    “When you appear, you will find me gone.” (lit. “When you will appear...”)

21 “Areal linguistics is traditionally concerned with similarities between geographically contiguous languages, in particular when they cannot be ascribed to a common proto-language.”
We also saw that constituent order in Langi can change in other circumstances, namely for reasons of emphasis, such as in example (58).

### 2.20 Imperatives: RAD-sfx.

Imperatives are characterized by the absence of both subject prefixes and pre-radical TAM markers. There are three affirmative imperative forms in Langi, distinguished by their suffixes:

(94) 2sg  **doma** “go!”
     dom  -a  
     go   -IMP2SG

(95) 1pl  **pale** “let’s count!”
     pal  -ε
     count -IMP1PL

(96) 2pl  **reki mburi** “leave the goat!”
     rek  -i  m-  bri
     leave -IMP2PL  IP9- goat

There are three negative imperative forms, apparently interchangeable: **apa** ku-RAD-a, **hapana** ku-RAD-a or ku-RAD-a *toku*. These forms are impersonal, equivalent to the English “no V-ing” or “do not V”. They are composed of a verb in the infinitive preceded by either **apa** or **hapana** (the latter form is borrowed from Swahili and appears to be replacing the former). The third possible negative form is composed of a verb in the infinitive accompanied by the adverb *toku* placed at the end of the sentence.

(97)  **apa kutirdza** “No running.”
     apa  ku-  trdə -a
     NEG  IP15-  run  -SFX

(98)  **hapana kuyenda ndzirii** “No walking on the path.”
     hapana  ku-  yend -a  n-  dzira -i
     NEG  IP15-  walk  -SFX  IP9- path  -LOC

(99)  **taata antehere kuri ma kidundii tu ku**
     Ø-  taata a-  a-  N-  teh -εr  -iɛ
     IP1a-  father  SP1-  PFV- OBJ1SG-  listen  -APPL  -PFV
     ku-  rrm  -a  kr-  dunda-ɪ  tuku
     IP15-  farm  -SFX  IP7-  hill  -LOC  NEG

“Papa told me: do not farm in the hills.”
2.21 Subjunctive: sp-RAD-e. The subjunctive mood is marked by a Ø TAM marker in the 3rd position, combined with the suffix -e. Contrary to the imperative, the verb bears a subject marker in the 2nd position. This mood is used to express wishes, orders, obligations, etc. Whereas the imperative is necessarily addressed to someone, this is not the case for the subjunctive.

(100) ułoolwe “that you marry/you should marry/I want you to get married…”

\[ u- \ łółl \ -w \ -e \]

SP2SG- marry -PASS -SUB

(101) adżeŋge numba “that he build a house”

\[ a- \ dżeŋ- \ -e \ n- \ umba \]

SP1- build -SUB IP9- house

(102) tiilàre kirume “that we show each other our magic”

\[ t\- \ i- \ la \ -ir \ -e \ kr- \ rume\]

SP1PL- REFL- show -APPL -SUB IP7- magic

(103) mumpeeëre madʒi “that you give me water”

\[ m\- \ N\- hęęr \ -e \ ma- \ dʒi \]

SP2PL- OBJ1SG- give -SUB IP6- water

The subjunctive mood does not have its own negative form, it shares that of the imperative. Furthermore, many negative subjunctive forms are rendered by verbs with negative meaning, such as kξdira ‘to not go’:

(104) adiriwe “that she be made to not go”

\[ a- \ dir \ -i \ -w \ -e \]

SP1- not.go -CAUS -PASS -SUBJ

2.22 Advisory: sp-ka-RAD-a. This form bears what is commonly called a distal marker, ka, in the 3rd position. This marker is thought to derive from a verb meaning ‘go’ (see Botne 1999 for a comprehensive study of the marker -ka-). In Langi, the distal imparts the notion of movement, even though the direction is not always itive. These forms are used to denote advice or weak orders:
(105) tukaręnta mpembe ma dʒikavikirwa ɪra myoɔda

\[tu-ka-reet-a-m-hembɛ\]

SP1PL-ADV- bring -ADV IP10- horn

\[ma \ dʒi-ka-vr-k-ir-w-a \ i-ra \ mi-ɔda\]

then SP10- ADV- put -APPL -PASS -ADV DP4- DEM IP4- potion

“We must bring horns, and the horns must be filled with potion.”

(106).ukatahrira mədʒi vi, ũkʊʊdzə nə kaayii

\[u-ka-tah-ir-a ma-dʒi vi\]

SP2SG-ADV- fetch -APPL -ADV IP6- water only

\[u-ka-udʒ-a na Ø-kaaya-i\]

SP2SG-ADV- come -ADV CONN IP9- house -LOC

“We must go and get water, and come back home.”

(107) vakasakwa vaɔsi “Elders must be found.”

\[va-ka-sak-w-a va-ɔsi\]

SP2-ADV- find -PASS -ADV IP2- elder

2.23 Injunctive: SP-ka-RAD-ɛ. Combining the distal marker with the suffix -ɛ, these forms denote forceful orders. -ka- is the only pre-radical TAM marker attested in combination with the subjunctive suffix -ɛ.

(108) uka ukakɔlwe ni mambɛya vaa waari

\[uk-a uk-a ka-loɔl-w-ɛ\]

come -IMP2SG come -IMP2SG SP2SG-INJ marry -PASS -INJ

\[ni mambɛya va-a u-arri\]

PRES Mambeya DP2- DET IP14- porridge

“Come, come, you must be married to Mambeya vaa Waari.”

(109) tutkaŋe ye “We must go sleep.”

\[tu-ka-ngey-ɛ\]

SP1PL-INJ sleep -INJ

3 Conclusion

The Langi verbal system is similar to most Bantu, and indeed Niger-Congo languages in that it makes use of both ‘simple’ verb forms and verbal constructions. However, it seems to have adopted certain areal features, which probably originated through contact with the neighboring Cushitic languages, Alagwa and Burunge. Langi also seems to have adopted a new system of
distinctions within the verbal paradigm, favoring aspectual oppositions over temporal ones, as evidenced by the fact that temporal distinctions are expressed through verbal constructions whereas aspectual and modal distinctions are expressed directly on the verb form. Langi thus contributes to the study of how language contact, or perhaps more importantly, language enclavement, can lead to the adoption of grammatical elements, and even to a change in word order.

REFERENCES


