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

Langi[2] (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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[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:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
negative pre-pfx[3]	subject pfx	TAM-TAM	object, reflexive	RAD	extensions	TAM

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

(1)   **dɔma**[4]   "go!"

    dɔm -a
    go   -IMP2SG

    Maximal forms contain seven elements:

(2)   **siviiyɔvasɔmɛra tʊkʊ**   "They are not reading to them."

    si-   va-   iyɔ-   va-   sɔm -ɛr -a   tʊkʊ
    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 *tʊkʊ* 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:

	Singular	Plural
1	nɪ-	tʊ-
2	ʊ-	mʊ-
3	a-	va-

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 *nɪ-* in verb forms, but when prefixed to the copula *-rɪ*, is *ndɛ-* in the affirmative and *ndu-* in the negative:

(3) **nɪkadʒɛŋga ɲʊmba** "I built a house."

nɪ-	ka-	dʒɛŋg	-a	ɲ-	ʊmba
SP1SG-	NAR-	build	-NAR	IP9-	house

(4) **ndɛrɪ mʊhindʒa, sindurɪ mʊtavana tʊkʊ** "I'm a girl, I'm not a boy."

ndɛ-	rɪ	mʊ-	hindʒa	si-	ndu-	rɪ	mʊ-	tavana	tʊkʊ
SP1SG-	COP	IP1-	girl	P.PFX-	SP1SG-	COP	IP1-	boy	NEG

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

(5) **akadʒɛŋga ɲʊmba** "He built a house."

a-	ka-	dʒɛŋg	-a	ɲ-	ʊmba
SP1-	NAR-	build	-NAR	IP9-	house

(6) **yɔɔdɔma ndʒɪrii** "He goes on the path."

y-	ɔ-	dɔm	-a	n-	dʒɪra-i
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, *tɔ*, 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 *-rɪ* 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 *-rɪ*. The copula *-rɪ* 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) **ŋgɔ ɪrɪ ŋkɔndɔ siirɪ bi tʊkʊ** "The dress is red, it isn't grey."

ŋ-	gɔ	ɪ-	rɪ	ŋkɔndɔ	si-	ɪ-	rɪ	bi	tʊkʊ
IP9-	dress	SP9-	COP	red	P.PFX-	SP9-	COP	grey	NEG

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) **twaarɪ na mpɛsa** "We had money."

tʊ-	a-	rɪ	na	m-	pɛsa
SP1PL-	PFT-	COP	CONN	IP10-	money

(9) **twaasi na mpɛsa tʊkʊ** "We didn't have any money."

tʊ-	a-	si	na	m-	pɛsa	tʊkʊ
SP1PL-	PFT-	COP.NEG	CONN	IP10-	money	NEG

In verbal constructions, we shall see that *-rɪ* 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 vɪɪmbi** "We used to be singers."

tʊ-	idʒa	va-	ɪmb	-i
SP1PL-	COP	IP2-	sing	-SFX

(11) **kwiidʒa kɪtʃaka aha ndʒi vi** "There used to be woods just right here."

kʊ-	idʒa	kɪ-	tʃaka	aha	ndʒi	vi
SP17-	COP	IP7-	woods	DEM16	DEICT	only

(12) **sikwiidʒa kɪtʃaka tʊkʊ** "There didn't used to be woods."

si-	kʊ-	idʒa	kɪ-	tʃaka	tʊkʊ
P.PFX-	SP17-	COP	IP7-	woods	NEG

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 tʊrɪ** "We are about to hunt."

sakaat	-a	tʊ-	rɪ
hunt	-SFX	SP1PL-	COP

(14) **kʊsakaata tʊrɪ** "We will hunt." (At some indeterminate time in the future.)

kʊ-	sakaat-a	tʊ-	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) **vɔɔsaka vina** "They always want to dance / they adore dancing."

va-	ɔ-	sak	-a	vin	-a
SP2PL-	HAB-	want	-HAB	dance	-SFX

(16) **vɔɔsaka kʊvina** "They want to dance."

va-	ɔ-	sak	-a	kʊ-	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.

Form	**Value**	**Abbreviation**[5]
(si-)SP-iyɔ-RAD-a	Progressive	PROG

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[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-irɛ	Perfective	PFV
(si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-a	Anterior perfect	PFT PFT
(si-)SP-a SP-a-RAD-irɛ	Anterior perfective	PFV PFV
SP-ɛndɔ-RAD-a	Inevitable	INV
SP-tɔ-RAD-a	Decisional	DEC
(si-)SP-ka-RAD-a[6]	Narrative	NAR
SP-rɪ (kʊ-)RAD-a[7]	Narrative present	n/a
kʊ-RAD-a SP-a-rɪ	Narrative past progressive	n/a
SP-a-rɪ SP-iyɔ-RAD-a	Dynamic past progressive	n/a
SP-a-rɪ 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-irɛ	Stative past perfective	n/a
(si-)SP-a-idʒa SP-a-RAD-irɛ	Stative far past perfective	n/a
(kʊ)-RAD-a SP-rɪ	Future	n/a
si-SP-rɪ RAD-a	Negative future	n/a
RAD-a	Imperative 2sg	IMP2SG
RAD-ɛ	Imperative 1pl	IMP1PL
RAD-i	Imperative 2pl	IMP2PL
SP-RAD-ɛ	Subjunctive	SUB
SP-ka-RAD-a	Advisory	ADV
SP-ka-RAD-ɛ	Injunctive	INJ
apa kʊ-RAD-a /	Negative imperative	n/a
kʊ-RAD-a tʊkʊ		

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.

(F.34, Mous 2000, 2004), Gusii (E.42, Whiteley 1960), Kuria (E.43, Whiteley, 1955), and a number of languages from the zones B.40-B.50 and H.10-H.30 (Hadermann, 1996).

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-iyɔ-RAD-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) **niiyɔlʋʋsɪka** "I'm talking"

nɪ-   iyɔ-   lʋʋs   -ɪk   -a
SP1SG- PROG- talk   -NEUT -PROG

(18) **siiyɔsɛya kɪntʋ tʋkʋ, iiyɔkirɪrɪkana**

si-   a-   iyɔ-   sɛy   -a   kɪ-   ntʋ   tʋkʋ
P.PFX- SP1-   PROG- say   -PROG IP7-   thing   NEG

a-   iyɔ-   k[9]-   i-   r   -ɪr   -ɪk   -an   -a
SP1-   PROG- k-   REFL- think -APPL -NEUT -ASS   -PROG

"He isn't saying anything, he's thinking."

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[8] 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 *kwiirɪrɪkana* 'to think'.

(19)   vasiŋga siviiyɔkivaa tʊkʊ, viiyɔbwɪɪta

va-	siŋga	si-	va-	iyɔ-	k-	i-	va	-a	tʊkʊ
IP2-	child	P.PFX-	SP2-	PROG-	k-	REFL-	hit	-PROG	NEG

va-	iyɔ-	bwɪɪt	-a
SP2-	PROG-	play	-PROG

"The children aren't fighting, they're playing."

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 *kɔɔfa* 'to be afraid' is usually conjugated in the habitual (*nɔɔkɔɔfa ndʒɔka* '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-ɔ-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)   nɔɔrɪma "I farm / I'm a farmer."

nɪ-	ɔ-	rɪm	-a
SP1SG-	HAB-	farm	-HAB

(21)   ntʃʊŋgʊla yɔɔrya ndʒʊʊ "The hare eats beans."

n-	tʃʊŋgʊla	ɪ-	ɔ-	ry	-a	n-	dʒʊʊ
IP9-	hare	SP9-	HAB-	eat	-HAB	IP10-	beans

(22)   sinɔɔtɛrɛka tʊkʊ "I don't cook / I'm not the one who cooks in our house."

si-	nɪ-	ɔ-	tɛr	-ɛk	-a	tʊkʊ
P.PFX-	SP1SG-	HAB-	cook	-NEUT	-HAB	NEG

(23)   sivɔɔtɛma lʊkwi tʊkʊ "They are not cutting wood."

si-	va-	ɔ-	tɛm	-a	lʊ-	kwi	tʊkʊ
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) **tɔɔtaŋga** "We know / we are knowing (we're not stupid)."

tʊ-	ɔ-	taŋg	-a
SP1PL-	HAB-	know	-HAB

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) **vitʃiŋgɔ vyaabɔha** "The beads are beautiful."

vi-	tʃiŋgɔ	vi-	a-	bɔh	-a
IP8-	bead	SP8-	PFT-	be.beautiful	-PFT

(26) **aya madʒi siyaahɔla tʊkʊ** "This water is not cold."

aya	ma-	dʒi	si-	ya-	a-	hɔl	-a	tʊkʊ
DEM6	IP6-	water	P.PFX-	SP6-	PFT-	be.cold	-PFT	NEG

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 aakʊla**

mʊ-	ana	a-	a-	kʊl	-a
IP1-	child	SP1-	PFT-	grow	-PFT

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

(28) **naadɔma kaayii yaavɔ**

nɪ-	a-	dɔm	-a	Ø-	kaaya	-i	ɪ-	a-	vɔ
SP1SG-	PFT-	go	-PFT	IP9-	house	-LOC	DP9-	DET-	POSS3PL

"I have been to their house (already, therefore I don't want to go back)."

(29) **sinaadɔma kaayii yaavɔ tʊkʊ**

si-	nɪ-	a-	dɔm	-a	Ø-	kaaya	-i	ɪ-	a-	vɔ	tʊkʊ
P.PFX-	SP1SG-	PFT-	go	-PFT	IP9-	house	-LOC	DP9-	DET-	POSS3PL	NEG

"I haven't been to their house (but would like to go)."

2.4 Perfective: (si-)SP-a-RAD-irɛ. 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- -ɪdé) or his 'pret. pf.' (-á- -ɪde) (Meeussen 1967: 113), in neither case do the tones correspond (the pattern in Langi is usually -à- -ɪdè, 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 aakʊrirɛ** "The child grew."

mʊ-	ana	a-	a-	kʊl[10]	-irɛ
IP1-	child	SP1-	PFV-	grow	-PFV

(31) **kuri sidʒaalʊmirɛ mʊsuŋgaati tʊkʊ** "The dogs didn't bite the rich man."

Ø-	kuri	si-	dʒi-	a-	lum	-irɛ	mʊ-	suŋgaati	tʊkʊ
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, naadɔmirɛ na lʊdʒii** "Yesterday I went to the watering hole."

idʒɔ	nɪ-	a-	dɔm	-irɛ	na	lʊ-	dʒi	-i
yesterday	SP1SG-	PFV-	go	-PFV	CONN	IP11-	watering.hole	-LOC

(33) **mwaaka waalɔkirɛ, twaadɔmirɛ na aruʃa**

mʊ-	aka	ʊ-	a-	lɔk	-irɛ	tʊ-	a-	dɔm	-irɛ	na	arusha
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) **kɔnɪ naadɔmirɛ kaayii, rya ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ	nɪ-	a-	dɔm	-irɛ	Ø-	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." (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 aatʊmama hantʊ ali ʊʊdʒirɛ**

Fatuma	a-	a	a-	a-	tʊmam	-a
Fatuma	SP3SG-	PFT	SP3SG-	PFT-	work	-PFT

ha-	ntʊ	Ally	a-	a-	ʊdʒ	-irɛ
IP16-	place	Ally	SP3SG-	PFV-	come	-PFV

"Fatuma was working when Ally came."

---

[10] /l/ is pronounced [r] before /i/.

(36) **hantʋ viinʋkirɛ,**

ha-	ntʋ	va-	a-	i-	nʋk	-irɛ
IP16-	place	SP2PL-	PFV-	REFL-	leave	-PFV

sinaa naanda ɪra kazi waampɛɛrɛ[11] tʋkʋ

si-	nɪ-	a	nɪ-	a-	and	-a
P.PFX-	SP1SG-	PFT	SP1SG-	PFT-	begin	-PFT

ɪ-	ra	Ø-	kazi	ʋ-	a-	N̶-	hɛɛr	-irɛ	tʋkʋ
DP9-	DEM	IP9-	work	SP2SG-	PFV-	OBJ1SG-	give	-PFV	NEG

"When they left, I hadn't started the work you gave me."

(37) **hayi vaarɪ ava vasiŋga? sinaa naavɔɔna tʋkʋ**

hayi	va-	a-	rɪ	ava	va-	siŋga
where	SP2-	PFT-	COP	DEM2	IP2-	child

si-	nɪ-	a	nɪ-	a-	va-	ɔn	-a	tʋkʋ
P.PFX-	SP1SG-	PFT	SP1SG-	PFT-	OBJ2-	see	-PFT	NEG

"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-irɛ. 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.

(38) **hantʋ twaa twaaturirɛ ma ali akalɔka**

ha-	ntʋ	tʋ-	a	tʋ-	a-	tul	-irɛ
IP16-	place	SP1PL-	PFV	SP1PL-	PFV-	appear	-PFV

ma	ali	a-	ka-	lɔk	-a
then	Ally	SP3SG-	NAR-	pass	-NAR

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

(39) **twaa twiiʃɛɛnɛ, ma nɪkaanda tɪɪdʒa na idukii**

tʋ-	a	tʋ-	a-	i-	ʃi	-an	-irɛ
SP1PL-	PFV	SP1PL-	PFV-	REFL-	meet	-REC	-PFV

ma	nɪ-	ka-	and	-a	tɪɪdʒ	-a	na	i-	duki	-i

---

[11] 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-ɛndɔ-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 *ɛndɔ* is probably a grammaticalized form of the verb *kwɛɛnda* '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 mnɛnya tʊndɔpata habari

mpaka	mnɛnya	tʊ-	ɛndɔ-	pat	-a	Ø-	habari
until	Mnenya	SP1PL-	INV-	get	-SFX	IP10-	news

"All the way to Mnenya we are bound to get the news."

(41) ma ha mpitʃi yɛɛndɔkwatwa

ma	ha	m-	pitʃi	ɪ-	ɛndɔ-	kwat	-w	-a
then	here	IP9-	hyena	SP9-	INV-	touch	-PASS	-SFX

"Then, here, the hyena is going to get caught."

(42) kɪntʊ mʊndɔrya nɪ waarɪ

kɪ-	ntʊ	mʊ-	ɛndɔ[12]-	ry	-a	nɪ	ʊ-	arɪ
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 /ɛ/ drops.

(43) akafumya ŋgɔ dʒaatʃwɛ na ɛndɔkɔɔwa

a-	ka-	fum	-y	-a	ŋ-	gɔ		dʒi-	a-	tʃwɛ
SP1-	NAR-	exit	-CAUS	-NAR	IP10-	clothes		DP10-	DET-	POSS3SG

na	a-	ɛndɔ-	k-	ɔw	-a
CONN	SP1-	INV-	k-	wash	-SFX

"She took off her clothes (in order) to wash."

2.8 Decisional: SP-tɔ-RAD-a.

It is highly probable that *-tɔ-* is a grammaticalized form of a full verb (Güldemann 2003: 185), as is the case for *ɛndɔ*. Contrary to *ɛndɔ* however, it is difficult to say which full verb it stems from. Language-internally, the only likely source is *kʊtɔɔla* "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) aakwiirɛ, tʊtɔsɔŋgɔla mayiti yaatʃwɛ

a-	a-	kwi	-irɛ	tʊ-	tɔ-	sɔŋgɔl	-a
SP1-	PFV-	die	-PFV	SP1PL-	DEC-	remove	-SFX

Ø-	mayiti	ɪ-	a-	tʃwɛ
IP9-	corpse	DP9-	DET-	POSS3SG

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

(45) ŋkʊkʊlʊmɛ ɪtɔvɛka vi, kɛyi kakatɔɔla

ŋ-	kʊkʊ-	lʊmɛ	ɪ-	tɔ-	vɛk	-a	vi
IP9-	chicken-	male	SP9-	DEC-	crow	-SFX	just

kɛyi	ka-	ka-	tɔɔl	-a
then	SP12-	NAR-	take	-NAR

"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) nɔɔtɔkɔɔwa lʊdʒii

nɪ-	ɔ-	tɔ-	k-	ɔw	-a	lʊ-	dʒi	-i
SP1SG-	HAB-	DEC-	k-	wash	-HAB	IP11-	watering.hole	-LOC

"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) naatɔkɔɔwa "I still went and took a bath."

nɪ-	a-	tɔ-	k-	ɔw	-a
SP1SG-	PFT-	DEC-	k-	wash	-PFT

progressive + decisional

Here, too, the use of the marker *tɔ* 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)   mbʊla yɔɔvaa, ava vadala siviiyɔtɔrɪma tʊkʊ

m-	bʊla	ɪ-	ɔ-	va	-a
IP9-	rain	SP9-	HAB-	beat	-HAB

ava	va-	dala	si-	va-	iyɔ-	tɔ-	rɪm	-a	tʊkʊ
DEM2	IP2-	woman	P.PFX-	SP2-	PROG-	DEC-	farm	-PROG	NEG

"It's raining, the women are not going to farm."

inevitable + decisional

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

(49)   nɔ ʊtʃiku yɛɛndɔtɔrya ndʒʊʊ

nɔ	ʊ-	tʃiku	ɪ-	ɛndɔ-	tɔ-	ry	-a	n-	dʒʊʊ
REL	IP14-	night	SP9-	INV-	DEC-	eat	-SFX	IP10-	bean

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

(50)   hapana kʊndɔtɔkɔwa

hapana	kʊ-	ɛndɔ-	tɔ-	k-	ɔw	-a
NEG	IP15-	INV-	DEC-	k-	wash	-SFX

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

From these examples it can be seen that the inevitable *ɛndɔ* 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 *ɛndɔ* is that the corresponding full lexical verbs are still in common use (with reservation however concerning the origins of -*tɔ*-, see above):

(51)   tɔɔla idihwa "Take some white sorghum."

tɔɔl	-a	i-	dihwa
take	-IMP2SG	IP5-	sorghum

(52)   simba kɪntʊ yɛɛnda nɪ mahɔŋgɛ "The lion, what he loves is steak."

Ø-	simba	kɪ-	ntʊ	ɪ-	a-	ɛnd	-a	nɪ	ma-	hɔŋgɛ
IP9-	lion	IP7-	thing	SP9-	PFT-	love	-PFT	PRES	IP6-	steak

I would further hypothesize that *tɔ* was grammaticalized before *ɛndɔ* as the latter, in its full form, is still attested as the first verb in a verb combination. For example:

(53) mpitʃi dʒɛɛnda kʊsakaata "Hyenas love to hunt."

m-	pitʃi	dʒi-	a-	ɛnd	-a	kʊ-	sakaat-a
IP10-	hyena	SP10-	PFT-	love	-PFT	IP15-	hunt -SFX

Furthermore, *tɔ* can combine with other markers in the 3rd column.

In my opinion, the value common to these two verbs, *kwɛɛnda* "want, love" and *kʊtɔɔla* "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 *tɔ* 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 subsecutive) 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 *-ɛ*) 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 *ahɔ kalɛ* "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 akadɔma na lʊdʒii "Then she went to the watering hole."

ma	a-	ka-	dɔm	-a	na	lʊ-	dʒi	-i
then	SP1-	NAR-	go	-NAR	CONN	IP11-	water	-LOC

(55) ma ɪkawʊlʊka na dʒira ŋgɔ "Then it flew away with those clothes."

ma	ɪ-	ka-	wʊl	-ʊk	-a	na	dʒi-	ra	ŋ-	gɔ
then	SP9-	NAR-	fly	-SEP	-NAR	CONN	DP10-	DEM	IP10-	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: SP-rɪ (kʊ-)RAD-a. In this construction, the verb radical following the copula may or may not carry the infinitive prefix *kʊ-*, 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) **haha simba ɪrɪ kʊʊdʒa nɔ ʃiana mpitʃi**

haha	Ø-	simba	ɪ-	rɪ	kʊ-	ʊdʒ	-a
now	IP9-	lion	SP9-	COP	IP15-	come	-SFX

nɔ	ʃian	-a	m-	pitʃi
REL	meet	-SFX	IP9-	hyena

"Now the lion is coming to meet the hyena."

This example is taken from a story[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) **ntʃʊŋgʊla ɪrɪ kwɛta** "The hare is struggling (to get by)."

n-	tʃʊŋgʊla	ɪ-	rɪ	kwɛt	-a
IP9-	hare	SP9-	COP	struggle	-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: kʊ-RAD-a SP-a-rɪ. Unfortunately I have only one example of this construction in my data, and it is elicited[14], however it is also mentioned in Nurse (2003: 97). There is further mention of this same construction, in this order (*infinitive + copula*) as well as in the inverse order

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[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

[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[15]). According to Mous, the change in word order is probably due to emphasis (pers. com).

(58) kʊsɛka twaarɪ ma ʊhʊ maka akaanda rɪra

kʊ-	sɛk	-a	tʊ-	a-	rɪ
IP15-	laugh	-SFX	SP1PL-	PFT-	COP

ma	ʊhʊ	Ø-	maka	a-	ka-	and	-a	rɪr	-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-rɪ SP-iyɔ-RAD-a. This structure is also only attested in elicitation, in one example. However, it confirms that the copula -*rɪ* is largely productive in verbal constructions, both with and without the perfect marker, and both preceding and following the lexical verb.

(59) twaarɪ tɔɔsɛka "We were laughing."

tʊ-	a-	rɪ	tʊ-	ɔ-	sɛk	-a
SP1PL-	PFT-	COP	SP1PL-	HAB-	laugh	-HAB

2.13 Dynamic past habitual: SP-a-rɪ SP-ɔ-RAD-a.

(60) twaarɪ twiiyɔsɛka "We were (in the process of) laughing."

tʊ-	a-	rɪ	tʊ-	iyɔ-	sɛk	-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:

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[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) **twiidʒa tɔɔkɪmba hantʋ tɔɔyɛnda, haha tɔɔtɪɪdʒa**

tʋ-	idʒa	tʋ-	ɔ-	k-	ɪmb	-a
SP1PL-	COP	SP1PL-	HAB-	k-	sing	-HAB

ha-	ntʋ	tʋ-	ɔ-	yɛnd	-a	haha	tʋ-	ɔ-	tɪɪdʒ	-a
IP16-	place	SP1PL-	HAB-	walk	-HAB	now	SP1PL-	HAB-	run	-HAB

"We used to sing while walking, now we run."

(62) **twiidʒa tɔɔkikala Kondoa ma tʋkasaama na London**

tʋ-	idʒa	tʋ-	ɔ-	k-	ikal	-a	Kondoa
SP1PL-	COP	SP1PL-	HAB-	k-	reside	-HAB	Kondoa

ma	tʋ-	ka-	saam	-a	na	London
then	SP1PL-	NAR-	migrate	-NAR	CONN	London

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

(63) **hantʋ nɔɔkikaala amɛricani**[16]

ha-	ntʋ	nɪ-	ɔ-	k-	ikaal	-a	amɛrica	-ni
IP16-	place	SP1SG-	HAB-	k-	reside	-HAB	America	-LOC

siniidʒa nɔɔtʋmama bɛnkii tʋkʋ

si-	nɪ-	idʒa	nɪ-	ɔ-	tʋmam	-a	Ø-	bɛnki	-i	tʋkʋ
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 nɛɛnda tɪɪdʒa na tʃuuri** "I used to like to run in the morning."

nɪ-	idʒa	nɪ-	a-	ɛnd	-a	tɪɪdʒ	-a	na	kɪ-	uri
SP1SG-	COP	SP1SG-	PFT-	love	-PFT	run	-SFX	CONN	IP7-	morning

(65) **mwaasʋ wiidʒa waavarɪka**

mʋ-	asʋ	ʋ-	idʒa	ʋ-	a-	var	-ɪk	-a
IP3-	sun	SP3-	COP	SP3-	PFT-	shine	-NEUT	-PFT

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

(66) **ɪra siku iidʒa yaabɔha** "That day was beautiful."

ɪra	Ø-	siku	ɪ-	idʒa	ɪ-	a-	bɔh	-a
DEM9	IP9-	day	SP9-	COP	SP9-	PFT-	be.beautiful	-PFT

---

[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**

ʊ-	ɔkati		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-irɛ. As for the stative past perfect, verbs in the stative past perfective refer to situations which were current in the past:

(68) **wiidʒa waatɛɛtɛ[17] waami** "You used to have a corral."

ʊ-	idʒa	ʊ-	a-	tɛt	-irɛ	ʊ-	ami
SP2SG-	COP	SP2SG-	PFV-	have	-PFV	IP14-	corral

(69) **niidʒa siniifyɛɛnɛ na mama wiitʊ tʊkʊ**

nɪ-	idʒa	si-	nɪ-	a-	i-	fy		-an	-irɛ
SP1SG-	COP	P.PFX-	SP1SG-	PFV-	REFL-	ressemble		-ASS	-PFV

na	Ø-	mama	ʊ-	a-	itʊ		tʊkʊ
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-irɛ.

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[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)   **vaadʒa vaatɛɛtɛ ʋdʒusi wɔɔruta[19]**

va-	a-	idʒa	va-	a-	tɛt	-irɛ
SP2-	PFT-	COP	SP2-	PFV-	have	-PFV

ʋ-	dʒusi		ʋ-	ɔ-	rut	-a
IP14-	profession		PP14-	REL-	pull	-REL

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

(71)   **ʋhʋ mʋsiŋga hantʋ aadʒa mʋdudi,**

ʋhʋ	mʋ-	siŋga	ha-	ntʋ	a-	a-	idʒa	mʋ-	dudi,
DEM1	IP1-	child	IP16-	place	SP1-	PFT-	COP	DP1-	small

aadʒa iifyɛɛnɛ na iyɔ waavɔ

a-	a-	idʒa	a-	a-	i-	fy		-an	-irɛ
SP1-	PFT-	COP	SP1-	PFV-	REFL-	ressemble		-ASS	-PFV

na	Ø-	iyɔ		ʋ-	a-	vɔ	
conn	IP1a-	mother		DP3-	DET-	POSS3PL	

"When this child was small he looked like their mother."

(72)   **ava vasiŋga hantʋ vaadʒa vadudi**

ava	va-	siŋga	ha-	ntʋ	va-	a-	idʒa	va-	dudi
DEM2	IP2-	child	IP16-	place	SP2-	PFT-	COP	DP2-	small

sivaadʒa viifyɛɛnɛ na iyɔ waavɔ tʋkʋ

si-	va-	a-	idʒa	va-	a-	i-	fy		-an	-irɛ
P.PFX-	SP1-	PFT-	COP	SP2-	PFV-	REFL-	ressemble		-ASS	-PFV

na	Ø-	iyɔ		ʋ-	a-	vɔ		tʋkʋ
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: (kʋ-)RAD-a SP-rɪ. This form denotes either an immediate or an indeterminate future, depending on the presence or absence of the class 15 prefix *kʋ-*. I have grouped the two forms together for practical reasons: in several cases,

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[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) ɲɛya arɪ "He is about to sleep."

ɲɛy	-a	a-	rɪ
sleep	-SFX	SP1-	COP

(74) mʊtɪ wiya ʊrɪ "The tree is about to fall."

mʊ-	tɪ	wiy	-a	ʊ-	rɪ
IP3-	tree	fall	-SFX	SP3-	COP

The prefixed form is used to denote an indeterminate future:

(75) mʊtɪ kʊwiya ʊrɪ "The tree will fall (some day)."

mʊ-	tɪ	kʊ-	wiy	-a	ʊ-	rɪ
IP3-	tree	IP15-	fall	-SFX	SP3-	COP

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

(76) kʊkɛra tʊrɪ mʊtɪ lamʊtɔndɔ "We will cut the tree tomorrow."

kʊ-	kɛr	-a	tʊ-	rɪ	mʊ-	tɪ	lamʊtɔndɔ
IP15-	cut	-SFX	SP1PL-	COP	IP3-	tree	tomorrow

(77) kʊdɔma arɪ na dɔdɔma "He will go to Dodoma."

kʊ-	dɔm	-a	a-	rɪ	na	dɔdɔma
IP15-	go	-SFX	SP1-	COP	CONN	Dodoma

(78) mwaarɪmʊ kʊvasɔmɛra arɪ vasiŋga kɪtabu ʃulii

mʊ-	arɪmʊ	kʊ-	va-	sɔm	-ɛr	-a	a-	rɪ	va-	siŋga
IP1-	teacher	IP15-	OBJ2-	read	-APPL	-SFX	SP1-	COP	IP2-	child

kɪ-	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) **kɔnɪ naadɔmirɛ kaayii, rya ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ	nɪ-	a-	dɔm	-irɛ	Ø-	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) **kɔnɪ wɪɪmbirɛ, nɪ vina ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ	ʊ-	a-	ɪmb	-irɛ	nɪ	vin	-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) **kɔnɪ wɪɪmbirɛ kʊkʊvinɪra ndɛrɪ**

kɔnɪ	ʊ-	a-	ɪmb	-irɛ	kʊ-	kʊ-	vin	-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-verbal]". 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) **nkɔgɛnda**[20] **nde** boono korigia embori '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) **ŋgokɔra are** emeremo kira urusiku 'He's working every day.'

(85) **ŋkorema nde** bono **ŋkumunya 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?'

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[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)[21]. 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 ʊrɪ dɔma "When will you go?"

nadi	ʊ-	rɪ	dɔm	-a
when	SP2SG-	COP	go	-SFX

(90) ŋɔmbɛ siirɪ ɲwa madʒi yɔɔsi tʊkʊ "The cow will not drink all the water."

Ø-	ŋɔmbɛ	si-	ɪ-	rɪ	ɲw	-a	ma-	dʒi	ya-	ɔsi	tʊkʊ
IP9-	cow	P.PFX-	SP9-	COP	drink	-SFX	IP6-	water	DP6-	all	NEG

(91) nɪ mwaarɪmʊ nɔ arɪ sɔma kɪtabu

nɪ	mʊ-	arɪmʊ	nɔ	a-	rɪ	sɔm	-a	kɪ-	tabu
PRES	IP1-	teacher	REL	SP1-	COP	read	-SFX	IP7-	book

"It is the teacher who will read a book."

(92) kʊʊdʒa arɪ kɔnɪ arɪ rɛɛta tʃaakʊrya

kʊ-	ʊdʒ	-a	a-	rɪ
IP15-	come	-SFX	SP1-	COP

kɔnɪ	a-	rɪ	rɛɛt	-a	kɪ-	a-	kʊ-	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) hantʊ ʊrɪ turɪra, kʊnɪʃana ʊrɪ naalɔkirɛ

ha-	ntʊ	ʊ-	rɪ	tul	-ɪr	-a
IP16-	place	SP2SG-	COP	appear	-APPL	-SFX

kʊ-	nɪ-	ʃan	-a	ʊ-	rɪ	nɪ-	a-	lɔk	-irɛ
IP15-	OBJ1SG-	find	-SFX	SP2SG-	COP	SP1SG-	PFV-	leave	-PFV

"When you appear, you will find me gone." (lit. "When you will appear...")

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[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   **dɔma** "go!"   **ɪmba** "sing!"

dɔm	-a		ɪmb	-a
go	-IMP2SG		sing	-IMP2SG

(95) 1pl   **palɛ** "let's count!"   **saɪrɛ** "let's taste!"

pal	-ɛ		sa	-ɪr	-ɛ
count	-IMP1PL		taste	-APPL	-IMP1PL

(96) 2pl   **rɛki mbʊri** "leave the goat!"   **iti** "pour!"

rɛk	-i		m-	bʊri	it	-i
leave	-IMP2PL		IP9-	goat	pour	-IMP2PL

There are three negative imperative forms, apparently interchangeable: *apa kʊ-RAD-a, hapana kʊ-RAD-a* or *kʊ-RAD-a tʊkʊ*. 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 *tʊkʊ* placed at the end of the sentence.

(97)   **apa kʊtɪɪdʒa** "No running."

apa	kʊ-	tɪɪdʒ	-a
NEG	IP15-	run	-SFX

(98)   **hapana kʊyɛnda ndʒɪrii** "No walking on the path."

hapana	kʊ-	yɛnd	-a	n-	dʒɪra	-i
NEG	IP15-	walk	-SFX	IP9-	path	-LOC

(99)   **taata antɛhɛɛrɛ kʊrɪma kɪdundii tʊkʊ**

Ø-	taata	a-	a-	~~N-~~	tɛh	-ɛr	-irɛ
IP1a-	father	SP1-	PFV-	OBJ1SG-	listen	-APPL	-PFV

kʊ-	rɪm	-a	kɪ-	dunda-i	tʊkʊ
IP15-	farm	-SFX	IP7-	hill	-LOC	NEG

"Papa told me: do not farm in the hills."

2.21 Subjunctive: SP-RAD-ɛ. The subjunctive mood is marked by a Ø TAM marker in the 3rd position, combined with the suffix -ɛ. 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) ʋlɔɔlwɛ "that you marry/you should marry/I want you to get married…"

ʋ-   lɔɔl   -w   -ɛ
SP2SG- marry -PASS -SUB

(101) adʒɛŋgɛ ɲʋmba "that he build a house"

a-   dʒɛŋg-ɛ   ɲ-   ʋmba
SP1-   build   -SUB   IP9-   house

(102) tiilaɪrɛ kɪrʋmɛ "that we show each other our magic"

tʋ-   i-   la   -ɪr   -ɛ   kɪ-   rʋmɛ
SP1PL- REFL- show -APPL -SUB   IP7-   magic

(103) mʋmpɛɛrɛ madʒi "that you give me water"

mʋ-   N̶-   hɛɛr -ɛ   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 *kʋdira* 'to not go':

(104) adiriwɛ "that she be made to not go"

a-   dir   -i   -w   -ɛ
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) tʊkarɛɛta mpɛmbɛ ma dʒɪkavɪkɪrwa ɪra myɔɔda

tʊ-	ka-	rɛɛt	-a	m-	hɛmbɛ
SP1PL-	ADV-	bring	-ADV	IP10-	horn

ma	dʒɪ-	ka-	vɪk	-ɪr	-w	-a	ɪ-	ra	mɪ-	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) ʊkatahɪra madʒi vi, ʊkʊʊdʒa na kaayii

ʊ-	ka-	tah	-ɪr	-a	ma-	dʒi	vi
SP2SG-	ADV-	fetch	-APPL	-ADV	IP6-	water	only

ʊ-	ka-	ʊdʒ	-a	na	Ø-	kaaya	-i
SP2SG-	ADV-	come	-ADV	CONN	IP9-	house	-LOC

"Just go and fetch 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) ʊka ʊka ʊkalɔɔlwɛ nɪ mambɛya vaa waarɪ

ʊk	-a		ʊk	-a		ʊ-	ka-	lɔɔl	-w	-ɛ
come	-IMP2SG		come	-IMP2SG		SP2SG-	INJ-	marry	-PASS	-INJ

nɪ	mambɛya	va-	a	ʊ-	arɪ
PRES	Mambeya	DP2-	DET	IP14-	porridge

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

(109) tʊkaɲɛyɛ "We must go sleep."

tʊ-	ka-	ɲɛy	-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.

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