

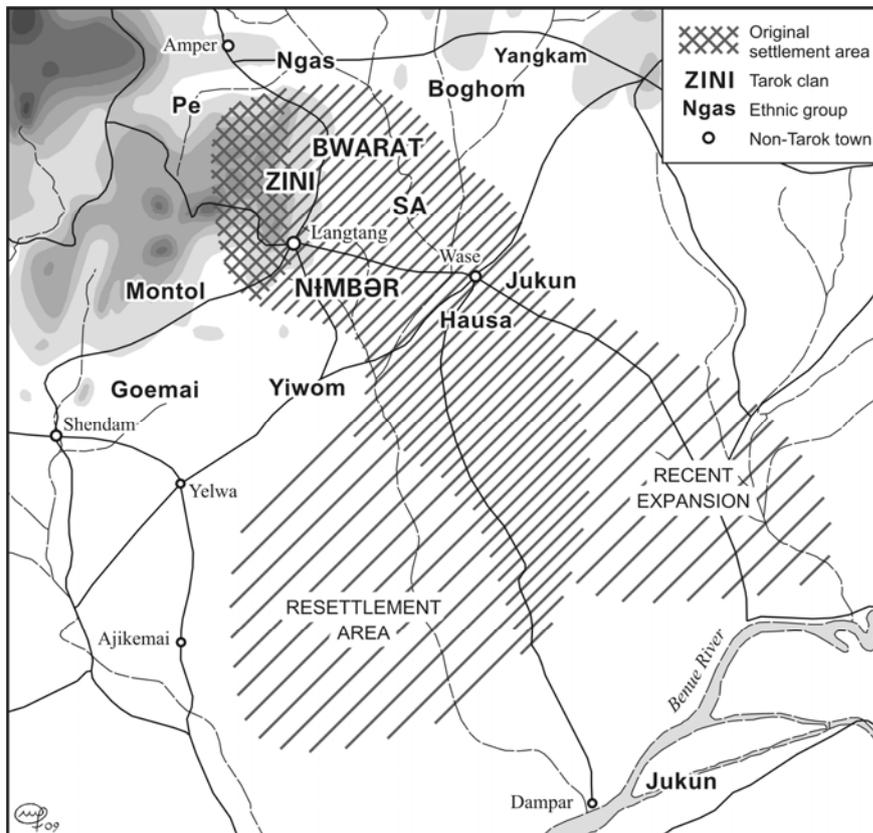
Tarok Pronouns

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1 Introduction

African pronominal systems are often poorly served by the tables that typically accompany sketch grammars. The pronominal systems of the Plateau languages of Central Nigeria are notable for two features, the use of the ‘intransitive copy pronoun’ (ICP) in many common constructions and the incorporation of Tense/Aspect markers (TAM) into the pronoun. The present paper describes Tarok, a language that gives its name to the Tarokoid group, which includes the little-known Pe, Sur, Yangkam and the Kwanka cluster. Tarok is an SOV language which retains a functioning system of nominal prefixes which can be related to broader Niger-Congo systems.

Map 1: *The Tarok area*



The Tarok people live primarily in the region around Langtang in south-east Plateau State, Nigeria. Tarok was first described by Fitzpatrick (1911) and subsequently Dangel (1929). There are scholarly publications on the Tarok language are by Sibomana (1980, 1981a,b) who provides a useful summary of the phonology, noun-classes and verbal system. Longtau (1993) has presented a formal phonology, an orthography (Longtau 2000) and a general account of the language (Longtau 2008) from which we draw some examples. There is a reference to an unpublished work on Tarok pronouns (Dassah 1988) but no copy is now accessible. Other student dissertations relevant the topic have been consulted (e.g. Siman 1997 on focus-marking and Zwalwap 1995 on determiners). The examples in this paper are drawn from a dictionary currently being published (Longtau & Blench in press).

This paper uses the phonological analysis proposed in Longtau (2008) but not the standard Tarok orthography, which has a rather misleading use of IPA symbols. The examples in this paper are written exchanging Tarok orthographic conventions for IPA symbols with their (1993) values. The changes are as follows;

Table 1: *Orthography*

IPA	Tarok orthography
ɨ	ə
ə	<u>a</u>
ŋ	ñ

Tarok orthography does not mark tone, but there are three level tones are noted with mid-tone unmarked. Tarok also has fairly rare rising and falling tones symbolised by /~/ and /^/. Tarok publications mark non-phonemic labialisation of initial consonants in front of high back vowels and palatalisation before high front vowels.

2 General

Tarok has highly ramified pronoun complex, with many different sets reflecting a variety of syntactic contexts. As with many Plateau languages, the unmarked pronoun set is marked for aspect. Incompletive pronouns use additional clitics to indicate tense, progressive or future. Pronouns can be bound or unbound; very often casual speech may

delete some of the bound elements, making this a distinction sometimes problematic to uphold.

Tarok also has an elaborate set of indefinites, some marking different degrees of determination, specificity or different degrees of uncertainty on the part of the speaker. Other aspects of pronominal expressions such as reciprocals, reflexives and evidentials are constructed using grammaticalised nouns, typically body parts. Concord plays an important role in Tarok pronominals, with many indefinites showing partial agreement with the noun they reference. Sometimes these also show tonal concord. However, concord is always defective and never reflects the complete system, by comparison with prefixed adjectives.

Tarok has elements of the ICP system found in other Plateau languages, but this seems to be strongly linked to the focus system rather than the negation context reported elsewhere. Similar constructions occur in neighbouring Chadic languages (Frajzyngier 1977) as well as in Plateau (Wolff & Gerhardt 1977). Comparable phenomena are also found in Jukunoid languages (e.g. Koops & Bendor-Samuel 1974: “recapitulating pronoun”, Storch 1999: “Persistivpronomina”) although these serial pronoun constructions are not identical.

3 Unmarked subject pronouns

3.1 Incompletive

The unmarked pronoun set in Tarok is the present/future subject pronoun. The paradigm for this set is shown in Table 2:

Table 2: *Tarok incompletive subject pronouns*

sg.	pl.		
‘I’	mà, mi	‘we’	í
‘you’	bú	‘you’	ó
‘he, she’	ùzí	‘they’	ozí
indefinite	m-	indefinite	m-

Third person pronouns use an additional *i* to mark future action;

- (1) ùzì i ga nda te, ùzì i ga ìnbét ònà tə
 he will leave today CM he will leave forever he CM
 ‘When he leaves today, he is leaving forever.’

The indefinite 3rd person pronoun with future aspect could be roughly translated ‘somebody will...’. However, natural English translation would usually result in a passive. The tone and vowel show concord with the following syllable.

- (2) mi i kùk akàsuwa ìpín
 someone will lock market tomorrow
 ‘The market will be locked up tomorrow.’

3.2 Completive

Tarok pronouns incorporating the completive aspect are shown in Table 3:

Table 3: *Completive subject pronouns*

sg.		pl.	
‘I’	n/m	‘we’	í
‘you’ (sg.)	u	‘you’ (pl.)	o
‘he, she’	ùzə	‘they’	ozə
indefinite	má	indefinite	má

First person singular pronouns consist of a single tone-bearing nasal which is homorganic with the following consonant (*m-* before bilabial consonants /*m, b, p*/ and *n-* before all others). The indefinite completive subject pronoun is invariant and does not show concord with following vowels, unlike the incomplete.

(3) kə yà pe m ɓiɓa kə ñlám te, ki í
 cond. past I coming at yesterday CM past we

gbəl ñnap-ñlà ata cíť
 finish matter that already

‘If I had come yesterday, we would have finished the matter already.’

The indefinite pronoun functions as a passive in most contexts:

(4) má ɓá kó ná cíť
 someone bring with him already

‘He has been brought.’

(5) má kú cíť kùr kə Jòť
 somebody die already finish at Jos

‘People have already died in Jos.’

4 Object and dative pronouns

Table 4 shows the paradigm for the object and dative pronouns:

Table 4: *Unmarked object and dative pronouns*

sg.		pl.	
‘I’	mi	‘we’	yí
‘you’ (sg.) obj.	ɓú	‘you’ (pl.) obj.	wó
‘you’ (sg.) dat.	ùpín	‘you’ (pl.) dat.	opín
‘he, she’	ná	‘they’	ozó

These should be compared with the subject set (Table 2). Several of the subject pronouns appear to be shortened forms of the object pronouns (*wó* as opposed to *ó*, *yi* as opposed to *i*).

The following example shows *ɓú* both as subject and object pronoun;

- (6) bú nìm dákdák kát té, mi nìm bú
you behave properly not CM I beat you
'If you do not behave properly, I will beat you.'

Datives are additionally marked in two ways:

- In sentences where a count noun precedes the pronoun, the nominal or pronominal prefix (if there is one) has a falling tone
- In sentences where the indirect object has no prefix, an additional particle *á* 'to, for' is inserted;

The following examples illustrate the use of a falling tone on the nominal prefix:

- (7) kpál aci ôzé
fetch eggs for-them
'Fetch eggs for them.'

- (8) ná ñkpákták yí
give DAT-all us
'Give (it) to all of us.'

- (9) ná ñshádǽŋ yí
give DAT-three us
'Give (it) to three of us.'

- (10) ná ûkàká
give DAT-grandma
'Give (it) to grandma.'

Where the indirect object has no prefix, *á* is inserted:

(11) ná aci á ná
 give eggs to him
 ‘Give him eggs.’

(12) má nak aci á mi
 they keep eggs for me
 ‘Eggs were kept for me.’

5 Focus/emphatic constructions

Tarok has a number of strategies for focusing the subject. A set of pronouns fronted by a bound *m̀m̀à-* resembles the object pronouns (Table 4), without entirely reproducing it. In intransitive constructions, the *m̀m̀à-* pronouns set is obligatorily followed by a resumptive pronoun (RP) after a copula. Since most subject pronouns occur in tense-marked clauses, the use of this set is comparatively rare and is used for emphasis, ‘I myself’ etc. The copy pronouns resemble the completive subject pronouns for first and second person, but diverge for third person (Table 3). Table 5 shows the paradigm of this set.

Table 5: *Tarok focus pronoun paradigm*

sg.		RP	pl.		RP
‘I’	m̀m̀ami	n	‘we’	m̀m̀ayi	i
‘you’ (sg.)	m̀m̀abú	u	‘you’ (pl.)	m̀m̀awó	ó
‘he, she’	m̀m̀awò	ǒ	‘they’	?	

In simple intransitive sentences the resumptive pronoun is obligatory:

(13) m̀m̀ami ná n gà
 I-myself COP I go
 ‘I was the one who went.’

- (14) òmàwó nà ó gà
 you-are COP you go
 ‘You were the ones who went.’

The use of this pronoun clearly resembles the ICPs reported elsewhere from Plateau (Wolff & Gerhardt 1977: 1525). With a transitive verb or a verbal noun, the copy pronoun is no longer required. The three examples show sentences illustrating this pattern, and also the use of these pronouns in any TAM context.

- (15) UJulcit a ba te, òmàmi kə nwor na
 Julcit when come CM I-EMPH PROG call her
 ‘When Julcit comes, tell her I am calling her.’

- (16) òmàmi kə ŋga nzhi ipin
 I- PROG going home tomorrow
 EMPH
 ‘I will go home tomorrow.’

- (17) UZum myat zongzot təpə òmàwò kə ncir
 Hare jump id. that he PROG running
 ‘Hare was showing off while running and so he jumped *zongzot*!’

Third person pronouns, personal names and nouns can also focus the subject pronoun in intransitive clauses through the use the TA-marked pronouns with optional prefixed copy-pronouns (Siman 1997: 12). Thus:

PRON + TAM optional resumptive set 1 focus-marked copula optional resumptive à verb

The singular pronouns in optional resumptive set 1 agree with the prefix of the noun or pronoun they reference.

- (ì)yà non-human singular nouns with ì- prefixes
- (ù)wà third person singular (used with pronouns and personal names)
- (̀)̀nà all other non-human singular nouns (à- and ñ- classes and all plural prefixes)
- (ò)mà all plural nouns

Table 6 summarises the paradigm for this set:

Table 6: *Emphatic pronouns*

	sg.	pl.
i-	ìyà	òmà
u-	ùwà	òmà
a-	̀nà	òmà
n/m-	̀nà	òmà

The examples show the use of the TA-marked subject pronoun for both completive and incompletive aspects:

- (18) ùzà (ù) wà (à) gà
 he-is (it) is (he) go
 ‘He is the one who is going.’

- (19) ùpán (ù) wà (à) gà
 he-was it is he go
 ‘He was the one who went.’

and similarly for the plural:

- (20) ozà (ò) mà (à) gà
 they-are they is they go
 ‘They were the ones who went.’

An exactly similar construction is used with personal names:

- (21) ùTáí (ù) wà (à) gà
Tali he FOC he go
'Tali was the one who went.'

However, (i)yà is used for non-human nouns:

- (22) ivá (i) yà (à) gà
dog it FOC it go
'It was the dog that went.'

These focus markers are also present in replies to questions. Thus:

- (23) ùda watar yà? ùTáí ù wà à watar
who pass by INT Tali he FOC he pass by
'Who passed by?' 'It was Tali who passed.'

- (24) izè watar yà? ivá (i) yà à watar
what pass by INT dog it FOC it pass by
'What passed by?' 'It was a dog that passed by.'

6 Vocatives

The standard strategy in Tarok for converting personal names into vocatives is to prefix them with a high tone á-. Thus:

- (25) ùPai áPai 'Oh Pai!'

The 2nd person pronouns can be converted to vocatives by changing the prefix:

- (26) òmàbù ámàbù
òmàwó òmàwó

This type of vocative can either precede the clause or be clause-final in types of hortative sentence. Either:

- (27) ámàbù, lé á mi kó có
you! move from me at far
'You, go far away from me!'

or:

- (28) lé á mi kó có, ámàbù
move from me at yonder you!
'Go away from me far, you!'

Vocatives can be related to some types of evidentiality marking (§12). When the speaker wants to mark frustration and uncertainty, the structure is similar to the indefinite pronoun *ámó*. Thus:

- (29) gá, ámábu
go, you
'Go away!'

or:

- (30) gá, ámó
go, you
'Go away!'

7 Reflexive pronouns

Tarok expresses reflexivity with the possessive pronoun preceded by *ishí* ‘head’, but here meaning ‘self’. The pronoun set used for possession is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: *Possessive pronouns used in reflexive constructions*

sg.		pl.	
‘my’	mí	‘our’	yí
‘your’ (sg.)	ǒú	‘your’ (pl.)	wó
‘his, hers, its’	wò	‘their’	ozé

For example:

- (31) n tatici ishí mi
 I-past hit self my
 ‘I hit myself.’

The particle *ká* can be used with *ishí* to expression the meaning ‘by myself’:

- (32) n gà ká ishí mi
 I-past go with head mine
 ‘I went on my own.’

There are two possible syntactic variants of the reflexive construction:

- (33) ùTá lí ùwà ká ishí wò (à) ǒá
 Tali he by head his (he) come
 ‘It was Tali himself who came.’

The following is also heard, but is not regarded as good Tarok and may be a direct Hausa calque.

- (34) ùTáí kǎ ishí wò ùwà (à) bá
 Tali by head his he-it-is (he) come
 ‘It was Tali himself who came.’

Through the reduplication rule in third person possessives, *ishíshí* can be used as an alternative to *ishí wò*.

Where the subject of the sentence is a noun or proper name, the same basic construction is used but the subject pronoun required to focus the sentence is drawn from a different set. Thus:

- (35) ùTáí ùwà gá kǎ ishí wò
 Tali it-is-he go by head his
 ‘It is Tali himself who went.’

- (36) m̀bàn nnà tat ìpèṅ wò kǎ ishí wò
 grasshopper it-is kick throat its by head its
 ‘It is the grasshopper which crushed its own throat.’

In the 3rd person, an alternative noun *izár* ‘body’ can be used with the pronouns *wò* and *ozá* to mean ‘himself’ and ‘themselves’ respectively.

8 Expressing reciprocal relationships

Reciprocal pronouns mark a mutual relationship, expressed in Tarok by grammaticalised nouns. The pronouns used are the same set as the unbound subject pronouns (Table 8 below). Mutuality is expressed by the nouns *izár* ‘body’ and *uwán/owán* ‘kind, sort’ plus a possessive pronoun. Intriguingly, the subject pronoun must be precisely copied before the verbs, in what would otherwise be a serial verb construction. Example:

- (37) í tàm í fèl izór yí
 we stay we stare body our
 ‘We were staring at each other.’

This example has the same meaning as the above, but uses the grammaticalised *owán*:

- (38) í tàm í fèl owán yí kó iwú
 we stay we stare kind our with eye
 ‘We were staring at each other.’

Where a verbal noun is the subject of the second verb, the copy pronoun can be deleted. Tarok has an unusual pattern of syllable reduplication to mark third-person possession (Robinson 1976) as in this example.

- (39) ó tàm ñtàm òmmən kó izózór
 you stay staying love with each-body
 ‘You should live in love with one another.’

9 Relative pronouns

The relative pronoun in Tarok is *vá*. It has a secondary form, *vâ*, which acts like a determiner and marks prominence or definiteness.

- (40) òmmàn vá sórák cít
 salt that dissolve already
 ‘The salt has dissolved.’

- (41) òmmàn vâ sórák cít
 salt that dissolve already
 ‘It is the salt that has dissolved.’

Where there is a main clause and a dependent clause, the second clause requires the subject of the main verb to be copied as a pronoun, either the invariant optional resumptive *à*, or the emphatic set (Table 6). The following examples illustrate these two uses:

(42) ùcár vó mar kó òlám té, à kú cít
 woman who gave birth of yesterday CM, she die already
 ‘A woman who gave birth yesterday has died.’

(43) ùcár vó mar kó òlám té, ùwà kú
 woman who born of yesterday CM, she-is die
 ‘The woman who gave birth yesterday is the one who has died.’

(44) ùcár vâ cír té, à lé cít bá
 woman the one run then she return already come
 ‘The woman who ran away has come back.’

Where the main clause is transitive, the relative pronoun must be repeated after the object, bracketing the verb phrase.

(45) ìvâ vó wá acì vó té, à lé cít bá
 dog which drink egg which CM it return already come
 ‘The dog which emptied the eggshell has come back again.’

Where the subject is definite and the object indefinite, *vâ* can be followed by *vó*;

(46) ìpéri vâ rí òcír vó té, iyà rú
 horse which eat running which CM is-one fell
 ‘The horse that won the race is the one that fell down.’

The relative pronoun can be preceded by a specifier marker *-víŋ*, roughly ‘the one who’ and often translated in Nigerian English as ‘the very’. The prefix of *-víŋ* shows concord with the noun it qualifies.

(47) ùcár ùvínj vó cír té, á lé cít bá
 woman the very who run then, she return already come
 ‘The very woman who ran away has come back.’

(48) onim ovínj vâ cínj té, òmà lé cít bá
 people who that run then, some people return already come
 ‘The people who fled are the (same) ones who have returned.’

Note the use of the resumptive indefinite pronoun *òmà* (Table 6 above) to head the dependent clause.

Apart from qualifying a head-noun, *-víŋ* can also act as the head of a dependent clause:

(49) ùnàm vó kú té, ùvínj vâ gà akàsuwa kó ñlám á
 man who died then, one who go market yesterday as-it-were
 ‘It is the man who went to the market yesterday who has died.’

10 Reported speech

Subject pronouns in reported speech are identical to the completive subject pronoun set (Table 8):

Table 8: *Subject pronouns in reported speech*

sg.		pl.	
‘I’	n/m	‘we’	í
‘you’ (sg.)	u	‘you’ (pl.)	o
‘he, she’	ùzə	‘they’	ozə

The object and dative pronouns in reported speech are the same as in declarative sentences except for the second person singular and plural (table 9).

Table 9: *Second person pronouns in reported speech*

sg.		pl.	
'you'	ùpín	'you'	opín

Tarok appears to distinguish two types of reported speech, where the utterance is directly reproduced (although with appropriate changes to the pronominals) and one in which the sense is 'should', as in a hortative or command. In direct reports, the secondary verb is not required and the pronoun becomes the subject of the quoted utterance. For example:

- (50) ozə là pə ùpín wa bá
they said that you the one who came
'They said 'you were the one who came'.'

Where there is a hortative sense, using verbs such as 'say' or 'ask', the pronoun takes the falling tone of the dative on the prefix:

- (51) ma là á mi pə n la ùpín
they said to me that I say DAT you

pə ùpín a bá
that you will come
'They told me I should tell you to come.'

- (52) ma là pə n bíp ùpín pə ùpín la saŋ, â
they said that I should-ask you that you said what not so?
'They told me to ask you what you said, is it not so?'

11 Possessives

The independent possessive pronoun is *-j-*, preceded by a concord element agreeing with the noun to which it refers and followed by a vowel which generally agrees with

the vowel of the following pronominal element. The paradigm for these pronouns is given in Table 10:

Table 10: *Possessive adjectives*

Tarok	gloss
-jem, -jimí	‘mine’ (short form of <i>-ji mi</i>)
-jibu	‘your’ (sg.)
-jiwò	‘his, hers’
-jiyí	‘ours’
-jiwó	‘yours’ pl.
-jo ozə	‘theirs’ pl.

(53) akwàp mi arizaŋ aja apin azizə ya?
 shoes my red yours colour what
 ‘My shoes are red, what colour are yours?’

(54) uzə la pə ìtòk ijiwò a kám kət
 he said that chair his it be strong not
 ‘He said his own chair is not strong.’

Table 11 shows the independent possessive pronouns which can stand alone in a sentence with an implied copula.

Table 11: *Independent possessive pronouns*

Tarok	gloss
-jimí	‘mine’ (short form of <i>-ji mi</i>)
-ja apin	‘yours’ (sg.)
-jiní, -jiná	‘his, hers, its’
-jiyí	‘ours’
-jó opin	‘yours’ pl.
-jo ozə	‘theirs’ pl.

Example:

- (55) atàk nra apùpòn a shin dō? ò'ò, njíní
 house sleeping father's it demolish QM No, his
 'Is it his father's bedroom that was demolished? No, it is his.'

12 Evidentiality

Evidentiality is the grammatical means by which information source is marked (Aikhenvald 2004). For example, speakers may wish to mark the reliability of information or imply this by directing the listener to its source. English tags such as 'I heard that', or 'in my opinion' typically express different levels of information reliability. Tarok has two strategies for marking evidentiality shown in Table 12:

Table 12: *Tarok evidentiality markers*

pronoun	gloss
<i>-nəmo</i> with a concordial prefix	'a certain' implying an erroneous assumption on the part of the speaker
pronoun <i>-yan</i> with a concordial prefix	'some' implying the speaker is doubtful about the amount

The concordial pronoun *-nimó* shows both tone and prefix concord with the head noun, similar to the possessive adjectives. The implication is always that the speaker is in error through lack of prior knowledge. These examples show the use of *-nimó*:

- (56) iyám inimó iyiryír
 thing certain sacred
 'The thing is sacred (but I did not know).'

- (57) ùnim (ù)nimó ùgínàŋ bú vâ kát
 man a certain brother your which not
 'The man is not your brother (I made an error).'

Where the speaker wishes to imply that something is not known because he/she has forgotten it, the concordial pronoun *-yan* is used.

(58) kè n là pò mí mwà ná ñ-yan
 PROG I say that I-will pay him something
 ‘I said I will pay him an amount (I have forgotten).’

(59) adín acícar pò ùyan
 name his-wife that somebody
 ‘His wife's name is something (I have forgotten).’

Uncertainty with some element of frustration can also be expressed by the indefinite pronoun *ámó*, which also has some characteristics of an interjection. It is used in constructions similar to the vocative (§ 6) both fronted and sentence finally:

(60) gá, ámó
 go, you
 ‘Go away!’

or:

(61) ámó ó là á mí
 Somebody! he tell to me
 ‘Someone please tell me (what is happening)!’

Doubt can also be expressed by the pronoun *átòh* which implies doubt about the precise recipient of a query or exhortation, and implies a request for confirmation. It can perhaps be seen as corresponding to the English ‘whoever?’.

(62) gà átòŋ
 go whoever
 ‘Someone should go (please confirm that they will).’

(63) m cír átòŋ
 i
 I run whoever
 ‘Should I run away?’

(64) í gà dō átòŋ?
 we go INT. whoever
 ‘Should we go? (Can someone confirm?)’

13 Interrogatives

Interrogative pronouns are used to ask questions seeking information, such as who, which and what. The Tarok formula is [QM + main verb + yà]. The three interrogatives are shown in table (13):

Table 13: *Tarok interrogatives*

gloss	sg.	pl.
‘who?’	ùdà...yà?	odà...yà?
‘what?’	izá...yà?	—
‘which?’	ñzà...yà?	—

Only the interrogative for persons marks a number distinction. Examples of their use are:

(65) ùdà kú yà?
 who die INT
 ‘Who died?’

(66) odà kú yà?
who die INT
'Who died?'

(67) izó kú yà?
what die INT
'What died?'

(68) ñzọ ñkpàng kùr yà?
which porridge finish INT
'Which porridge has finished?'

(69) ñzọ ován kú yà?
which children die INT
'Which children have died?'

The interrogative pronominal adjective showing possession for all classes and irrespective of number is *àdè...yà?*

(70) ñkpàṅ àdè kùr yà?
porridge whose finish INT
'Whose porridge has finished?'

(71) ován adè kú yà?
children whose die INT
'Whose children have died?'

The specifier particle *-jì* can be used in the above constructions. The particle shows concord with the noun as in the following examples:

(72) ñkpàng ñjì àdè kùr yà?
 porridge one whose finish INT
 ‘Exactly whose porridge has finished?’

(73) ován oji adè kú yà?
 children one whose die INT
 ‘Whose children have died?’

The vowel of the open syllable *-ji* can assimilate to the possessive particle as *-jà*. The interrogative pronouns *ùdà/odà*, *izè* and *ñzè* can be treated as an indirect object and used as a fixed pronoun, no longer bracketing a main verb. In this case, the first vowel takes the falling tone typical of datives (§ 4). The following examples show how this works:

(74) u ná ñkpàŋ ùdà yà?
 you give porridge to-who INT
 ‘Who did you give porridge to?’

(75) u kàp m̀bwài ôdà yà?
 you share money to-who INT
 ‘Which people did you give money to?’

(76) u ðikcì ashár îzè yà?
 you break leg of-what INT
 ‘What leg did you break?’

(77) u túŋ alúr ñzè ìnà yà?
 you pierce nose for-which cow INT
 ‘Which cow’s nose did you pierce?’

The interrogative pronouns *ùdà/odà* and *izè* can be reduplicated for emphasis;

(78) ùzə̀ ùd̀̀da kó ashé̀ ònap tá yà?
 he *who* in inside matter this INT
 ‘What exactly is *his* role in this business?’

(79) ìzə̀zə̀ yár ná kó ashé̀ ònap vó tá yà?
whatever carry him in inside matter that this INT
 ‘What is his concern in this matter?’

14 Distributive pronouns

Distributive pronouns are used to refer to members of a group separately, rather than collectively. They correspond to English ‘each’, ‘every’, etc. In Tarok this is expressed with the invariant *kó òzə̀ ... ògò* which brackets the noun.

(80) kó òzə̀ iyóm ògò
 each what thing it
 ‘everything’

(81) kó òzə̀ ùnə̀ ògò
 m
 each what man it
 ‘every person/everybody/everyone’

(82) kó òzə̀ ilum ògò
 each what sun it
 ‘anytime, everyday’

(83) kó òzə̀ itòk ògò
 each what chair it
 ‘each chair’

15 Partitive pronouns

Partitive pronouns are defined as “non-assertive” in other words they do not specify who has done something. In English these are ‘certain’, ‘some’, ‘nobody’, ‘nothing’, etc. The affirmative partitive pronoun in Tarok is *-ró* with a prefixed concord marker:

(84) iyám iró
thing certain
‘something’

(85) ipí(n) iró
morning certain
‘one day’

(86) aci aró
eggs certain
‘some eggs’

In casual speech, the prefixed concord marker is often deleted. The morpheme *-ro* can also be treated as a pronoun where the noun is not specified. Where it is the direct object, it must be bracketed by a repeated main verb:

(87) n nyí oró nyí kè ashé wó
I know certain thing know in inside you
‘I know some among you.’

However, it is most often employed in two-part formulaic sentences, of the type ‘on the one hand’, ‘on the other’ etc.

(88) oró gà cít, oró omá gà cít kát
certain go already, certain they go already not gone
‘Some people have gone, others haven’t.’

- (89) iró lilar, iró kukú
 certain live, certain die
 ‘Some lived, others died.’

The negative partitive pronoun is the same particle without prefix concord and is followed by the negative particle *kát*:

- (90) iyám ró kát
 thing certain not
 ‘nothing’

- (91) ùnàm ró kát
 perso certain not
 n
 ‘someone/somebody’

16 Conclusion

Tarok has an extremely rich pronominal system with many features that resemble both other Plateau languages and also some neighbouring Chadic languages, as far as can be judged. Unfortunately, the Chadic languages which have most directly influenced Tarok, Ngas and Yiwom, remain barely described in terms of their grammar and syntax, so it is currently not easy to determine the origin of some of the constructions described here. This paper does not describe all the complexities of Tarok pronominal systems, in particular some of the tone perturbations that occur in main verbs. These will still require more systematic elicitation and analysis.

Abbreviations

CM	class marker
pl.	plural
sg.	singular
cond.past	conditional past
obj.	object

dat., DAT	dative
RP	resumptive pronoun
COP	copula
EMPH	emphatic
PROG	progressive
id.	Ideophone
FOC	focus
INT	interrogative
QM	question marker

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