

Basic morphosyntax of verbal and non-verbal clauses in San-Maka

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This article presents an overview of the main verbal constructions of San-Maka, a Mande language of Burkina Faso. The article is structured as follows: the introduction provides general facts on San-Maka, its position in the San / Sane language cluster, and basic information on its phonetics and noun morphology. This is followed by a description of San verbal morphology and predicative constructions. In the final section, an overview of San-Maka non-verbal predications is given.

This article is based on language data gathered by the author during two field work sessions in Burkina Faso (2016, 2017), data from a published San-French dictionary (*Boo nen séwε*) and Primer (*Ka daa wɔ*); as well as on works on San-Maka by Suzy Platiel (1974) and Moïse Paré (1998, 1999).

1. The San cluster

Southern San (San-Maka) is a language of the Eastern group of the Mande language family. It belongs to a dialect / language cluster known as *San* or *Samo*. Sometimes the term *Sanan* is used which represents a plural form of *San*. According to the *Ethnologue*, there were 233 000 San speakers in 2009. This language is spoken almost exclusively in the provinces of Sourou (with the center in Tougan) and Nayala (with the center in Toma) in Burkina Faso.

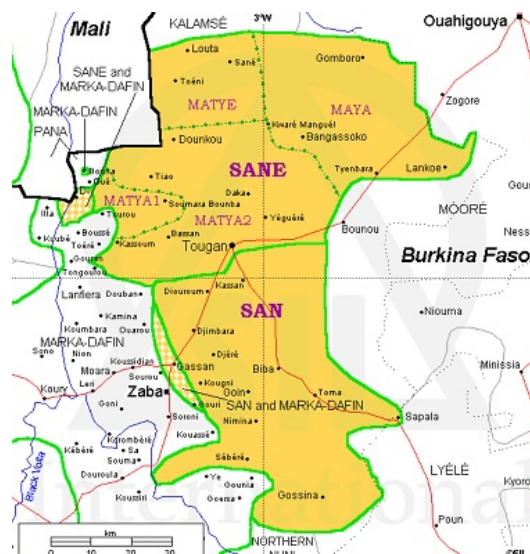
The divisions within the cluster are subject to debate. The most popular proposal is a subdivision into three varieties: *Maka* in the South, *Makya* and *Maya* in the North. The northern region is smaller as well as much less homogenous from a linguistic point of view (Berthelette 2001: 5-7).

The names of the three varieties are based on the expression 'I say' in the respective varieties (Platiel 1974: 25). Traditionally in linguistic literature the northern varieties are referred to as *Sane*, with the term *San* designating the Southern dialect (see for example (Vydrine, Bergman, Benjamin 2001)), these labels were first proposed by André Prost (1981: 18). William Welmers (1958) expressed the idea that

Northern and Southern San varieties are in fact different languages, as they are completely unintelligible, while Joseph Greenberg (1963: 8) apparently regarded all varieties of San as one language. The main difference of opinion on the subdivision of San concerns the opposition between southern and northern varieties, i.e. “the languages of Toma and Tougan”; they can be considered as one language (Greenberg), two dialects (Prost 1981) or three (Platiel 1974) of the same language, or as two different languages (Welmers 1958). Though Platiel refers to three dialects (Maka, Makya and Maya), she notes a clear cultural division, since «chacune de ces deux populations considère l'autre comme étrangère» (Platiel 1974: 25).

There is also debate concerning the names of these speech varieties. The San-French dictionary (*Boo nen séwe* s.d., 4) mentions three dialects of San: *Mà kaa* (Maka), *Mà tiaa* (Makya) and *Mà yaa* (Maya). Southern San, which includes the variant of Toma, is defined there as *Mà kaa*. The two new unpublished dictionaries by SIL¹ are titled: *Guide d'orthographe san macaa* and *Guide d'orthographe san mayaa*, where the *Maca* dialect corresponds to the *Mà tiaa* dialect mentioned in the San-French dictionary².

Fig. 1. San varieties (Vydrine, Bergman, Benjamin 2001)



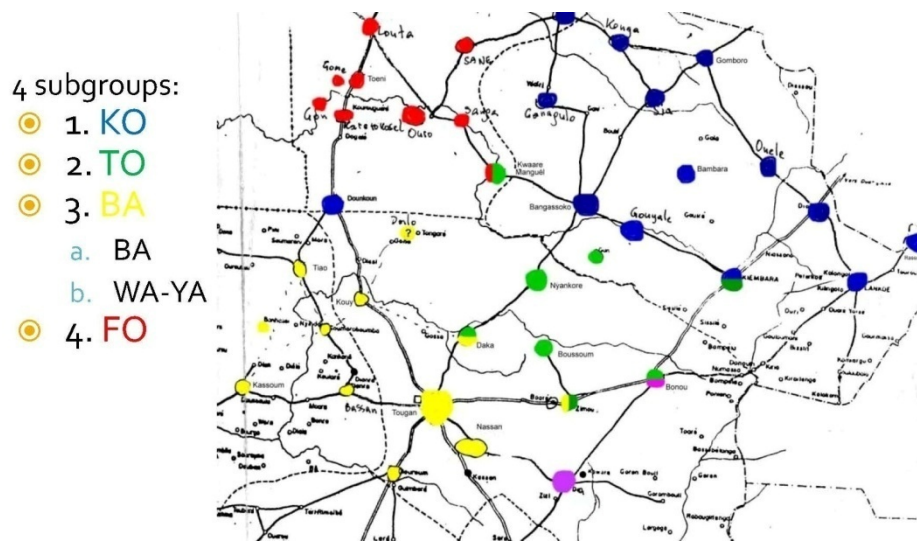
Linguists working on the San language cluster agree that compared to the northern speech varieties, the Southern part is most homogenous. In the area of San-Maka (or *San* as opposed to *Sane*) there are only minor differences among varieties. The description of nominal and verbal morphology by Moïse Paré (1998, 1999) was based on the Yaba variant of San-Maka, noting certain differences between Yaba and Toma varieties. Some of these differences are dealt with in this article.

¹ Each dictionary contains an orthographic guide and a text sample.

² *Maca* reflects the pronunciation [matfaa].

The situation in the Northern area is more complicated. According to Erwin Ebermann, within Northern San four different “lects” can be distinguished. In addition to *Maya* (*Ko* on Ebermann’s map) and *Makya* (*Ba* on the map), Ebermann notes a transitional variety: *To* which is situated between the Makya and Maya zones as well as the *Fo* variety localized in the North-West Sourou province near the border with Mali (Ebermann n.d.). San literacy workers consulted on this subject are rather skeptical on the relevance of this subdivision and insist on the existence of only three “official” San varieties, although they do mention significant cultural distinctions in the area where Ebermann’s *Fo* variety is spoken.

Fig. 2 Northern San varieties according to Erwin Ebermann³



Suzy Platiel (1974: 24) mentions four varieties (“parlers”) in the Makya zone: Daalo, Daale, Toa and Dya-kaso. Platiel and Ebermann agree that the Maya dialect on the North-East is quite homogenous. As for the Makya zone, it seems to be linguistically rather diverse including three or four different dialects.

Writing systems have been elaborated for three varieties: Maka, Maya and Makya. The written form of San-Maka is based on the variety spoken in Toma, the administrative centre of the Nayala province. In this paper, this will be the variety under study.

Table 1. Vowels

	Front	Middle	Back
Closed		η	
High	$i \quad \underline{i}$		$u \quad \underline{u}$
Mid-high	$e \quad \underline{e}$	∂	o
Mid-low	$\varepsilon \quad \underline{\varepsilon}$		$\text{ɔ} \quad \underline{\text{ɔ}}$
Low		$a \quad \underline{a}$	

³ The purple points on the Ebermann’s map are Fula-speaking villages of the so called *rimaibé*, ethnic San-Maya who have switched to Fula.

2. General information on the language

2.1.1. Phonetics

The system of vowels in San-Maka is represented at the Table 1.

Comments:

1) Nasalization is a distinctive feature, oral phonemes /o/ and /ə/ have no nasal counterparts.⁴

2) I regard “long vowels” as combinations of two identical vowels: *pí* ‘fonio’ ~ *píí* ‘market’; *zú* ‘reject’ ~ *zúú* ‘husband’.

3) The phoneme /ŋ/ is classified as a vowel. Like other vowels, it is a tone-bearing unit.

Table 2. Consonants

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Uvular
Unvoiced stops (plosives)	p	t	k'	k	
Voiced stops	b	d	g'	g	
Unvoiced fricatives	f	s			h
Voiced fricatives		z			
Sonorants	Approximants	w	l	y	
	Vibrant		r		
	Nazals	m	n	ɲ	

Comments:

1) The palatal consonants /k'/ and /g'/ may be pronounced as affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ] or as palatals [k'] and [g'] respectively. Following San orthography, in this paper these sounds are spelled as *ki* and *gi*, therefore, *kio(ŋ)*⁵ ‘house’ may be pronounced as [k'o] or [tʃo].

2) The floating nasal element *ŋ*: some words in San Maka have a stem final nasal element which is normally not pronounced. These are mainly nouns,⁶ and also several adjectives and adverbs; it is not characteristic for verbs.

3) Vowel harmony affects vowel height: within one phonetic word, vowels can be either all mid-open (ɔ, ε) or mid-closed (o, e).

An important phonetic feature in Maka that is unique among Mande languages is the existence of harmonic variants for two clitics and one bound morpheme. These are a copula of identification *nē / nē / nī*, a postposition *né' / né / ní* ‘in, at’, and the allomorphs of the plural marker appearing after the (-ŋ) stems *-ní / -nə / -né / -nó / -ná*. The distribution of the variants is shown in Table 3.

⁴ In this article, vocalic nasalization is marked with tilde below the letter.

⁵ The final *ŋ* designates the floating nasal element (see below).

⁶ In order to distinguish the floating nasal element from the final nasal vowel -ŋ, it is designated (ŋ) (in brackets) in this article.

Table 3. Distribution of synharmonic variants

		Copula of identification	Postposition ‘in’	Plural marker
Left context				
High	<i>i, u</i>	<i>nī</i>	<i>ní</i>	<i>ní</i>
Mid-high	<i>e</i>	<i>nē</i>	<i>né</i>	<i>ná</i>
	<i>ə</i>			
	<i>o</i>			
Mid-low	<i>ɛ, ɔ</i>	<i>nē</i>	<i>né</i>	<i>né</i>
	<i>ɔ</i>			<i>nó</i>
Low	<i>a</i>			<i>ná</i>

Examples. The copula of existence: *Māā tásá nē*. ‘It is my bowl’. *Māā kiō(η) nē*. ‘It is my house’. *Māā būūkūrù nī*. ‘It is my machete’.

The postposition ‘in, at’: *làṅdā né* ‘in tradition’, *nò né* ‘in the stomach’, *kiwí gólé né* ‘in the city (lit.: in big village)’, *wù bósò né* ‘in the preparation of tô’; *píí ní* ‘in the market’, *wù ní* ‘in tô’.

Plural marker: *sāḥ-ná* ‘the San people’, *dṣṣ(η)-nó* ‘relatives’, *mè(η)-né* ‘certain (PL)’, *kōō(η)-ná* ‘chickens’, *ká(η)-ná* ‘calaos’, *bāsṣkókó(η)-ná* ‘morenga fruits’, *mī(η)-ní* ‘people’.

2.1.2. **Tonal system.** San-Maka is a tonal language with three level tones, designated, according to IPA, by acute, macron and gravis diacritics. Tones in San-Maka play a role in both the lexicon and grammar. There are minimal pairs confirming the lexical function of tones (*bálá* ‘individual field’ ~ *bàlà* ‘stick’; *pàḡ* ‘cheek ~ *pàá* ‘force’) as well as their grammatical functions (e.g. in the verbal paradigm: ‘to come’ *dāā*, neutral form vs. *dāà*, perfective). In compound nouns the tone of the second element is replaced by a higher one: *nē* ‘child’, *lō* ‘woman’ → *nē ló* ‘daughter’. Tonal distinctions also mark other grammatical functions.

2.2. Noun

Nouns in San Maka may be divided into two classes: 1) those whose stems end with the floating nasal element *η*; 2) all other words. There are minimal and quasi minimal pairs: *dā* ‘fetish’ ~ *dā(η)* ‘limit’; *dó* ‘which also’ ~ *dó(η)* ‘pot’; *bàá(η)* ‘bird’ ~ *bāā* ‘run’ ~ *bàá* ‘place’ etc. The floating nasal element of an NP affects the form of certain grammatical elements which follow it, such as the plural marker and certain predicative markers.

Depending on the structure of the possessive nominal constructions, nouns are divided into two classes: free (alienable) and relational (inalienable). In a possessive group, free nouns require a possessive marker (possessive postposition) *ā*: *Kōōdé ā kiō(η)* ‘Kodé’s house’. Relational nouns (terms for body parts, certain kinship terms) are used without this marker: *Kōōdé gólóḡí* ‘Kodé’s elder brother’.

Plurality is consistently marked on NPs. The form of the plural marker depends on the type of the noun or adjective stem. Words with *-ŋ* stems form the plural with a high-tone suffix *-ná/ -nǎ/ -nó/ -ní*. The vowel is chosen according to the final vowel of the noun stem (see table 3). Other words form plurals by adding the suffix *-ŋ* which carries a high tone if the stem has the structure CV; otherwise it acquires the tone of the previous syllable, cf. Table 4.

Table 4. The formation of noun plural in San-Maka:

Singular	Translation	Plural
<i>só</i>	'tooth'	<i>sóŋ</i>
<i>tù</i>	'well' (for water)	<i>tùŋ</i>
<i>sèré</i>	'ram'	<i>sèréŋ</i>
<i>dòm̄</i>	'griot'	<i>dòm̄ŋ</i>
<i>tóó</i>	'ear'	<i>tóóŋ</i>
<i>gòò</i>	'liver'	<i>gòòŋ</i>
<i>wòtòró</i>	'cart'	<i>wòtòróŋ</i>
<i>kiō(ŋ)</i>	'house'	<i>kiōŋná</i>
<i>gó(ŋ)</i>	'forest'	<i>góŋnó</i>
<i>màŋ</i>	'thing'	<i>màŋná</i>
<i>kè</i>	'this'	<i>kèŋ</i>
<i>dó</i>	'which also'	<i>dóŋ</i>

2.3. Personal pronouns

Table 5. Personal pronouns and forms fused with predicative markers

		Affixed element	1 Sg	2 Sg	3 Sg	1 Pl	2 Pl	3 Pl
1	Basic	-	<i>mā</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>à</i>	<i>wō</i>	<i>kā</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
2	Imperative			<i>ŋ</i>			<i>Kà</i>	
3	Emphatic	<i>sé</i>	<i>māsé</i>	<i>ŋsé</i>	<i>àsé</i>	<i>wōséŋ</i>	<i>kāséŋ</i>	<i>ŋséŋ</i>
4	Possessive	<i>ā</i>	<i>māā</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>à</i>	<i>wōā (wā)</i>	<i>kāā</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
5	Imperfective	<i>nā / ŋ</i>	<i>māŋ</i>	<i>ŋ nā</i>	<i>àŋ</i>	<i>wōŋ</i>	<i>kāŋ</i>	<i>màŋ ŋ nā</i>
6	Imperfective new information	<i>tá / á</i>	<i>máá</i>	<i>ŋ tá</i>	<i>áá</i>	<i>wóá</i>	<i>káá</i>	<i>ŋ tá</i>
7	Imperfective Negative	<i>bā / ā</i>	<i>māā</i>	<i>ŋ bā</i>	<i>àà</i>	<i>wō</i>	<i>kāā</i>	<i>ŋ bā</i>
8	Perfective	<i>nó / high tone</i>	<i>má</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>á</i>	<i>wó</i>	<i>ká</i>	<i>ŋ nó</i>

There are six personal pronouns. Personal pronouns fuse with certain predicative markers and also with the possessive marker *ā*. Most of these forms can be easily

decomposed: this is true for Emphatic, Imperfective habitual (with the exception of the 3 Pl form) and Imperfective negative forms.

Comments to the Table 5:

1) The forms are written in one or two words according to the orthographic tradition. Emphatic pronouns which are predictable could be written in two words if one postulates the existence of a determinant *sé* (which has a regular plural form *séŋ*).

2) Series 5-8 result from fusion of basic pronouns with predicative markers; together with corresponding verbal forms they constitute predicative constructions in the absence of a full-fledged subject.

3) The 3 Pl pronoun optionally forms a compound *màŋ* with the Imperfective habitual PM *nā / ŋ̄*. However, a non-fused variant *ŋ̄ nā* is also attested in my data and also in written texts (Syllabaire 2003). The element *mà* is a competing 3 Pl form which appears also with the copula of identification (3 Pl form *mànē*) and with postpositions (e.g. *ká màné* ‘with them’, where *ká* is a comitative preposition).

4) The Imperative is characterized by a special 2 Pl form with a low tone (*kà*) which is not used in prohibitive constructions where the mid-tone subject 2 Pl form is used (*kā*).

5) Possessive pronouns which are used with free nouns have special forms only for 1 Sg, 1 Pl and 2 Pl.

2.4. Word order

San Maka has a strict word order. Like other Mande languages, it has the following linear sequence of elements:

S PM (Aux) DO V IO

Order of elements in the genitive and possessive constructions is as follows:

Noun Modifier (Possessor) – modified (Possessee)

The order of the elements in an NP is:

Noun – Adj – Dem – Art – Num.

2.5. Adpositions

San-Maka uses postpositions, there is also one preposition: a comitative connector *ká* ‘with’ (used in combination with the postposition *ne / ne / ni*).

3. Verbs

The verb in San-Maka is defined as an open class of words which alone can be the head of a clause and which form, alone or together with a predicative marker, constructions expressing aspect, tense, modality and polarity.

The verb is inflected for aspect and mood.

3.1. Verbal morphology. The morphological paradigm of a verb in San-Maka consists of three aspectual forms: neutral, perfective and imperfective. In non-indicative forms, aspectual meanings are not expressed, and the verb is represented by a neutral form. This form also appears in the negative perfective construction. The neutral form is used as the basic form in dictionaries and linguistic works.⁷

Table 6. Sample verbal forms

	Neutral form	Perfective	Imperfective
‘to eat’	<i>bī</i>	<i>bī̀</i>	<i>bī̄</i>
‘to come’	<i>dāā</i>	<i>dā̀à</i>	<i>dīē</i>
‘to strike, to kill’	<i>dē</i>	<i>dḕ</i>	<i>dī́</i>
‘to send’	<i>dīā</i>	<i>dī̀à</i>	<i>dīé</i>
‘to teach’	<i>dórōō</i>	<i>dṑròò</i>	<i>dōréè</i>
‘to hide’	<i>dūrū</i>	<i>dūr̀ù</i>	<i>dūrī</i>
‘to stay’	<i>gōā</i>	<i>gṑà</i>	<i>gōē</i>

Both perfective and imperfective forms seem to be derived from the non-finite verb forms (nominalizations or gerunds). Perfective forms historically seem to be formed with the help of a low tone suffix (or postposition); imperfective forms are formed through the addition of a suffix *-e/-ε*. The neutral form seems to be etymologically simple.

Perfective and imperfective forms have similar tonal behavior, while neutral forms raise the tone of the first syllable in the presence of a direct non-pronominal object. See the neutral form used in Imperative (1) and in Conjunctive (2) constructions.

- (1) *Kà wù bī́.*
 2PL.IMP *tô*⁸ eat/H
 ‘(You, pl.) eat *tô*’.
- (2) *Í pè mà Kōōdé wù bī́.*
 2SG.PFV say.PFV that Koodé *tô* eat/H
 ‘You (sg.) ordered that Koodé would eat *tô*’.

The neutral form of the verb *bī* ‘to eat’ carries a mid tone, but with an overtly expressed direct object the tone of the verb becomes high. This tone modification does not occur with the imperfective form of the same verb which keeps its mid tone (3).

⁷ The citation form of the verb is the Imperative which obscures the initial tone of transitive verbs, as in the presence of a non-pronominal direct object verbs raise their tones.

⁸ *Tô* is a very common dish in Burkina Faso, consisting of cooked millet or sorghum flour. It is served as a paste and is eaten with a sauce.

- (3) *Mā ḡ wù bī̄.*
 SG IPFV tô eat.IPFV
 ‘I eat tô’.

3.2. Predicative markers

Perfective and imperfective verb forms combine with predicative markers, some of which seem derived from corresponding copulas (see 5.2.).

Predicative markers form a separate word class in San-Maka. They occupy the position after the Subject NP.

Table 7. Predicative markers

Perfective affirmative	<i>ná</i> / high tone on the final vowel of the Subject NP
Perfective negative	<i>nā</i> / \emptyset
Perfective experiential	<i>bīḡ</i>
Imperfective affirmative	<i>nā</i> / <i>ḡ</i>
Imperfective affirmative “new information”	<i>tá</i> / <i>á</i>
Imperfective negative	<i>bā</i> / <i>ā</i>
Imperfective negative in dependent clauses, prohibitive	<i>bāràḡ</i>

Comments:

1) Most of predicative markers in Maka are represented by two variants. The choice of the variant depends on the left phonological context. The full variant appears after *-ḡ* stems or after NPs in plural; the shorter variant is used in other cases.

2) Negative constructions are frames: they contain a negative particle *wā*⁹ which occupies the position at the end of the clause.

3.2.1. Perfective PMs

3.2.1.1. THE PERFECTIVE PM *ná* (affirmative polarity) can be realized as a tone raise on the final syllable of the Subject NP (see table 7). Cf. the NP *bòé lè* ‘this goat’ in the object (4) and in the subject (5) positions.

- (4) *Lḡ lé bòé lè sḡ.*
 woman ART\PFV goat ART sell.PFV

‘The woman sold the goat’.

- (5) *Bòé lé dāà.*
 goat ART\PFV come.PFV

‘The goat came’.

3.2.1.2. THE EXPERIENTIVE PERFECTIVE PM *bīḡ* may be used in affirmative, interrogative and negative contexts. Affirmative and interrogative sentences require the perfective verb form (6-8); in negative contexts the neutral verb form is used (9).

⁹ A variant *mā* is used in some varieties.

- (6) *L̄* *l̄* *bī̄* *bòé* *s̄ā*.
 woman ART PFV.EXP goat sell.PFV
 ‘The woman has already sold the goat (has the experience)’ (Paré 1998: 33).
- (7) *L̄* *l̄* *bī̄* *dāā* *kānā*.
 woman ART PFV.EXP come.PFV here
 ‘The woman has already come here’ (Paré 1998: 33).
- (8) *Ī* *bī̄* *nà̄nsáárá* *yē?*
 2SG PFV.EXP European see.PFV
 ‘Have you ever seen a white person?’
- (9) *Mā* *bī̄* *ȳ* *mí* *wā*.
 1SG PFV.EXP beer drink.NTR/H NEG
 ‘I have never drunk beer’.

M. Paré (1998: 36) singles out two different PMs, *b̄* and *bī̄*: *bī̄* in affirmative sentences, and *b̄*...*wā* in negative sentences. My informants do not distinguish between these forms; probably this fact reflects the difference between Yaba and Toma variants.

In my data a variant *bī̄nì* of this PM has been attested:

- (10) *Mā* *bī̄nì* *zī* *t̄* *wó* *wōō* *bàá* *kó̄* *nē* *wà*.
 1SG PFV.EXP road walk do go place any in NEG
 ‘I have never gone anywhere’.

3.2.1.3. Perfective negative PM *n̄*/*o* is represented by a null (11) unless it appears after a plural NP or one ending with-*η* (12):

- (11) *L̄* *gōā* *pí-n* *wā*.
 woman remain market-in NEG
 ‘A woman did not stay in the market’.
- (12) *Mī(η)* *n̄* *dāā* *wā*.
 person PRF.NEG come NEG
 ‘Nobody has come’.

3.2.2. **Imperfective PMs.** There are two predicative markers of the affirmative polarity which require the imperfective form of verb: *tá / á* and *n̄ / ŋ̄*.

The interpretation of verbal structures with these PM has been a matter of discussion. Translations of individual sentences are often misleading as they allow different interpretations. Isolated phrases (e.g. proverbs) do not clear up the situation. Researchers of the San-Maka language, Suzy Platiel (1974) and Moise Paré (1998), expressed different opinions about the meaning of these forms.

Platiel noted a similarity between San *tá / á* and *n̄ / ŋ̄* and Spanish copular verbs *ser* and *estar*. As a result, she attributed the same meanings to the San copulas:

“.../tá/ se traduit par « ser ». Cette forme sera donc utilisée, de préférence à l’autre, toutes les fois que l’on souhaitera asserter une qualité, un état, un événement, ou une situation dont le caractère est considéré comme irrévocable, ou plus simplement, quand on ne souhaite pas mettre l’accent sur son aspect provisoire... Le prédicat de forme complète /nē/ ... par opposition au précédent correspondrait à « estar »; il situe l’événement en introduisant une notion de relativité à la fois temporelle et spatial” (Platiel 1974: 570). Thus, according to Platiel, the imperfective constructions of San-Maka are contrasted by the permanent or temporary characteristics of properties, qualities and situations. Unfortunately, Platiel does not provide convincing examples to prove her hypothesis. She wrote: “Dans tous les exemples cités ci-dessus, /á/ pourrait être remplacé par /~¹⁰; la traduction française ne pouvant pas rendre compte de la différence” (Platiel 1974: 570-571).

M. Paré proposed an aspectual interpretation for the opposition between the two quasi-synonymous constructions. He attributes the habitual meaning to the constructions with the PM *tá/á*, and the progressive meaning to the constructions with the PM *nē/ñ* (Paré 1998: 37, 47). However, further on (p. 61) he writes: “La valeur secondaire du prédicatif *tá* ... est celle du progressif. Ici le procès en cours de réalisation au moment de l’énonciation... ». At the same time, it is stated for the PM *ñ* that « En plus de sa valeur progressive, *ñ* est aussi le prédicatif qui est utilisé pour relater une vérité ou une opinion » (Paré 1998: 63). Thus, there is an uncertainty in his distribution of aspectual meanings between both constructions: the progressive meaning is ascribed to constructions with both PMs; and both constructions express meanings which belong to the habitual domain («une vérité ou une opinion»).

Cf. examples with different PMs expressing the progressive aspectual meaning:

- (13) *L̄ñ-ñ l̄-ñ tá b̄é s̄ñ̄.*
 woman-PL ART.PL IPFV.NEW goat sell.IPFV

‘Women are selling a goat (right now)’.

- (14) *Mā ñ wù b̄ s̄s̄ià.*
 1SG IPFV tô eat-IPFV now

‘I am eating tô’.

In the following examples habitual actions (15-16) or “eternal truths” (17-18) are expressed by both constructions.

- (15) *L̄ñ l̄ ñ b̄é-ñ s̄ñ̄.*
 woman ART IPFV goat-PL sell.PFV

‘The woman sells goats’.

¹⁰ In Platiel’s work, /~/ is the sign designating the nasal vowel *ñ*.

- (16) *Ī tá mú bĕē dōĕ.*
 2SG IPFV.NEW water run.PFV know-IPFV

‘You can swim’.

- (17) *L̄ sōŋbōrē ĩ sūmū kōē.*
 woman good IPFV yard put.IPFV

‘A good woman takes care of her yard’ (Syllabaire 1: 16).

- (18) *Lē á gònó(ŋ) zìzìĕ.*
 mouth IPFV.NEW body spoil.IPFV

‘The mouth spoils the body’ (proverb “words may harm”).

My data show that these quasi-synonymous constructions encode different pragmatic intentions of the speaker. Constructions with *nā / ĩ* point out at a “general state of affairs”; constructions with *tá / á* encode information that is supposed to be new to the listener.¹¹

See the following examples:

- (19) *Bòé ĩ būū sĕĕ.*
 sheep IPVF grass eat.IPFV

‘A sheep eats grass’ (general information of the usual behavior of sheep).

- (20) *Bòé tá būū sĕĕ.*
 sheep IPVF.NEW grass eat.IPFV

‘A sheep eats grass’ (it is supposed that the listener is unaware of this fact).

(19) is the expression of a common fact, while (20) may be an answer to a question, for example, whether sheep eat grass.

Thus, the usage of *nā/ĩ/màŋ* or *tá/á* shows the informational intention of the speaker: in (21) the information is an observation of a fact; in (22) it is supposed to be new to the listener.

- (21) *Ī nā tǎǎ-ŋ kúú bē ĩ nā ĩ sĕ.*
 3PL IPFV animal-PL catch.IPFV when 3PL IPFV 3PL chew.NTR

‘They attack the domestic animals and eat them’ (Syllabaire 2: 19).

- (22) *Ī tá à gí kōē nē nāāŋ-nā lā.*
 3PL IPFV.NEW 3SG egg give.IPFV child child-PL on

‘They give its (hornbill’s) eggs to children’ (Syllabaire 2: 13).

In (22) the phrase “anticipates” the question “And what do they do with the hornbill’s eggs?”

3.2.2.1. IMPERFECTIVE PM *nā / ĩ* (3 Pl *màŋ*). The variant *ĩ* acquires a low tone (*ĭ*) after a pronominal subject:

¹¹ This fact was mentioned by Paré (1998: 61), but he did not consider it the main distinctive feature.

- (23) *Mā ñ gíélì màá Kōōdē wù bíí.*
 1SG IPFV look.for.IPFV that Koodé tô eat/H
 ‘I want Kodé to eat tô’.

This predicative marker of 3 PL is *màñ*:

- (24) *Bàáñ-ná màñ sòé.*
 bird-PL 3PL.IPFV go.out.IPFV
 ‘The birds come out’.

This form may substitute the pronominal subject of 3 Pers. Pl. pronoun:

- (25) *Màñ wù bósè lōñ?*
 3PL.IPFV tô cook.IPFV how
 ‘How do they prepare tô?’

As *nā/ñ* expresses an already known information, it often encodes «eternal truths», habitual or iterative actions:

- (26) *Mī(ñ)-ní màñ kón díí píí ní.*
 person-PL IPFV.PL RECP kill.IPFV market in
 ‘People fight in the market’ (and it is an ordinary thing).

The constructions with *nā / ñ* may also point out the fact that information is known to the speaker from his personal experience:

- (27) *Témāā míí ñ búú díè.*
 smoke drink.NMLZ IPFV illness put.IPFV
 ‘Breathing smoke provokes illness’.

Compare with the construction using *tá / á*, where the information is viewed as new:

- (28) *Témāā míí á búú díè.*
 smoke drink.NMLZ IPFV.NEW illness put.IPFV
 ‘Breathing smoke provokes illness’ (do you know that?).

3.2.2.2. IMPERFECTIVE PM *tá / á* points to information that is new to the listener. In some instances, the difference in grammatical meanings of both constructions may be close to the sphere of evidentiality, cf.:

- (29a) *Mā ta dōé mà ñ wóó píí ní.*
 1SG IPFV.NEW know.IPFV that 2SG go market in
 ‘I know that you go to the market’.

- (29b) *Mā nā dōé mà ñ wóó píí ní.*
 1SG IPFV know.IPFV that 2SG go market in
 ‘I know that you go to the market’ (in spite of the fact that you did not tell me).

3.2.2.3. IMPERFECTIVE NEGATIVE PM *bā/ā*. In the imperfective negative, the distinction between both affirmative imperfective constructions is neutralized; the only negative PM is *bā/ā*:

- (30) *L̄ l̄ bā b̄òé l̄ s̄īē wā.*
 woman ART IPFV.NEG goat ART sell.IPFV NEG
 ‘The woman is not selling the goat’.

It is also used in proverbs (31) and for negating habitual (32) actions.

- (31) *Ḡōη ḡóōη bā w̄ùsú ḡòè wā.*
 hand one IPFV.NEG flour gather.IPFV NEG
 ‘One hand does not gather the flour’ (a proverb) (Syllabaire 1: 34).
- (32) *Mā ā d̄žē wā.*
 1SG IPFV.NEG know.IPFV NEG
 ‘I don't know’.

Negative constructions with *bā/ā* can negate prospective situations:

- (33) *D̄ié n̄ē? Mā ā p̄ī n̄i wā.*
 who ICOP 1SG IPFV.NEG say.IPFV in/L NEG
 ‘Who is this? I won't tell to anybody’.

3.2.2.4. The IMPERFECTIVE NEGATIVE CONTRASTIVE ELEMENT *bīē*, according to Paré (1998), has the experiential meaning “I have never”; in my data it appears only in the sentences of identification¹² (see 5.2.2).

3.2.3. Prohibitive PMs

Moïse Paré (1998: 53-54) mentions two prohibitive PMs: *ηā ... wā* and *bārā ... wā*. According to his description, *ηā ... wā* is used more often than *bārā ... wā*; at the same time, these PMs express different meanings: *ηā ... wā* is the “negation of the imperative”, and *bārā ... wā* is the negation of “énoncés injonctifs”. In my materials (Toma variant) the PM *bārā ... wā* is the only construction available, both in prohibitive sentences (34-35) and with the negated dependent predication (36).

- (34) *Ī bārāη w̄ wā.*
 2SG PROH enter NEG
 ‘Do not enter!’ (prohibition).
- (35) *Kā bārāη p̄èē m̄ú mí wā.*
 2PL PROH lake water drink/H NEG
 ‘Do not drink the water from a pond! (advice addressed to more than one person)’ (Syllabaire 2: 15).

¹² According to M. Paré (1998: 63), constructions with the PM *bīē* encode “progressif négatif” and “indique que le process n’est pas en cours de réalisation”.

- (36) *Ī dōāmáá nē ĩ̄ bāràŋ sīgārētì mī wā.*
 2SG necessity ICOP 2SG NEG cigarette drink NEG
 ‘You should not smoke (lit. It is necessary that you would not smoke)’.

3.3. Auxiliaries

In San-Maka there is a closed class of words which occupy the third position in the clause, after the predicative marker and before the direct object in transitive clauses or before the verb in intransitive ones. These words will be referred to as “auxiliaries”. These are:

- tóŋ* – Continuative marker (affirmative context)
tòŋ – Continuative marker (negative context)
rē – Future marker

3.3.1. **Continuative markers.** M. Paré (1998: 44-45) distinguishes between three markers *t̄* (*t̄nà*), *t̄* and *t̄ŋ*, which are used in different contexts: *t̄* (*t̄nà*) « indique l’aspect continuatif du procès exprimé et est traduisable en français par “toujours”, “encore” ou l’anglais “still” ». *T̄* is used in negative clauses « pour signifier que le procès n’est pas encore effectif au moment de l’énonciation ». The auxiliary *t̄ŋ* « est utilisé pour marquer qu’un procès est postérieur à un autre procès ».

In my data, the distinction between these forms is only tonal. In affirmative clauses the auxiliary *t̄ŋ* (mid tone) is used in combination with the imperfective PMs *nā / ĩ̄* and *tá / á* (37). The high-toned *tóŋ* is used as a discursive marker ‘then’ (38). The low-toned auxiliary *tòŋ* appears in negative clauses (39).

- (37) *Mā díé-gū ĩ̄ (á) t̄ŋ dí jé.*
 1SG younger-brother IPFV (IPFV.NEW) AUX work do.IPFV
 (He has to stop working at a fixed time but) ‘My younger brother is still working’.

- (38) *Á kò là, á tóŋ pè nè.¹³*
 3SG.PRF give.PRF/L on/L 3SG.PRF AUX say.PRF in/L
 ‘He gave it to him and said to him’.

- (39) *Mā tòŋ wóró yé wā.*
 1SG not.yet money see/H NEG
 ‘I haven’t obtained any money yet’.

M. Paré gives an example of the complex PM+AUX (*b̄ + t̄*) which expresses the experiential meaning:

- (40) *Mā b̄ t̄ wò Bígā wā.*
 1SG PFV.EXP not.yet go Abidjan NEG

¹³ A pronominal object (indirect or direct inanimate) of the 3Sg is usually omitted; in this case the subsequent postposition or verb acquire a low tone.

‘I have never been to Abidjan’.

3.3.2. The FUTURE AUXILIARY *rē* co-occurs with the Imperfective PMs *tá / á* (affirmative) or *bā / ā* (negative):

(41) *L̄* *lè* *á* *rē* *wé* *Làwà* *ā* *kiō(η)*.
 woman ART IPFV.NEW FUT enter.IPFV God POSS house
 ‘This woman will enter the church’.

(42) *Bòyó(η)* *bā* *rē* *dīè* *wā*.
 Boyo IPFV.NEG FUT come.IPFV NEG
 ‘Boyo will not come’.

3.4. Auxiliary verbs. There are auxiliary verbs which, from the syntactic point of view, behave as the verbal parts of the predicative constructions being heads of a verb chain. These are *gōā* (*gōà*, *gōē*) ‘to stay’, *dāā* (*dāà*, *dīē*) ‘to come’ and *bāā* (*bāà*, *bīē*) ‘to become’. They can also be used as ordinary verbs with their primary lexical meaning.

3.4.1. *gōā* (*gōà*, *gōē*) ‘to stay’ is used in order to shift the situation of a non-verbal sentence to past or future, thus the non-verbal sentence becomes a verbal one.

In verbal sentences *gōā* is a marker of retrospective shift (which indicates that the action has lost its relevance):

(43) *Lélé* *má* *gōà* *bōé* *séwò* *kíē* *lā*.
 before 1SG.PFV stay.PFV can.IPFV paper write on
 ‘Formerly I could write (and now I cannot any more)’.¹⁴

3.4.2. **The imperfective form of the verb *dāā*** ‘to come’ > *dīē* is used to mark the immediate future; it co-occurs with the PM *nā / ŋ*:

(44) *Mā* *ḡ* *dīē* *sī* *kúkúrì*.
 1SG IPFV FUT.PROX meat slice.IPFV
 ‘I am going to cut meat’.

3.4.3. **The perfective form of the verb *bāā*** ‘to become’ > *bāà* together with the future marker *rē* expresses the avertive meaning (the action that “almost happened” or “nearly happened”).¹⁵

(45) *Á* *bāà* *rē* *gíé*.
 3SG.PRF become.PRF FUT die-IPFV
 ‘He nearly died’.

¹⁴ Comment of an activist of the San literacy company: “It often happens”.

¹⁵ M. Paré (1998: 41) considers the sequence *bāà rē* to be an auxiliary but notes that the element *rē* is optional. In my data, only the variant with *rē* (*bāà rē*) is attested.

- (46) *Tōētóá bāà rē mēnēē gúnúnj zī ká*
 Toetoa.PRF become.PRF FUT fall.IPFV yesterday road COMMIT
mótó né.
 motorcycle in

‘Toetoa nearly fell down on the road with his motorcycle yesterday’.

4. The basic verbal constructions. Indicative.

4.1. **Affirmative Perfective:** PM *ná* / high tone on the Subject NP + perfective form of the verb:

S *ná* / -H (DO) V.PFV

- (47) *Ló-ŋ ná wōò kòè góè dōŋ.*
 woman-PL PFV go.PFV shea.nut gather.IPFV bush
 ‘Women have gone to gather shea nuts in the bush’.
- (48) *Né ànānáà nà.*
 child\PFV pineapple cut.PFV

‘The child has cut a pineapple’.

4.2. **Negative Perfective:** PM *nā* / 0 + neutral form of the verb and the negative particle *wā* at the end of the sentence:

S *nā* / Ø (DO) V.NTR ... *wā*

- (49) *Mī(ŋ) nā dāā wā.*
 person AC.NEG come.NTR NEG
 ‘Nobody has come’.
- (50) *Á Ø séwò dḡ wā.*
 3SG PFV.NEG paper know.NTR NEG

‘He has not learned to read and write’ (lit.: he has not learned the paper).

4.3. **Perfective experiential affirmative:** *bīḡ* (*bīni*) + Perfective form of the verb, see examples (7-9):

S *bīḡ* (DO) V.PFV

4.4. **Perfective experientive negative:** *bīḡ* (*bīni*) + neutral form of the verb and the negative particle *wā* at the end of the sentence; see examples (10-11):

S *bīḡ* (DO) V.NTR ... *wā*

4.5. **Imperfective Affirmative:** PM *nā* / *ḡ* + imperfective form of the verb:

S *nā* / *ḡ* / *màḡ* (DO) V.IPFV

These constructions are often used in proverbs and in the expressions of “eternal truth”:

- (51) *Lē-dēnāā ā sùí ŋ bāā síí.*
 mouth-owner POSS horse IPFV run take.IPFV
 ‘The horse of a phrasemonger runs fast’ (Syllabaire 2: 9).

4.6. **Imperfective Affirmative (New Information):** PM *tá / á* + imperfective form of the verb:

S *tá / á* (DO) V.IPFV

- (52) *Lḡ-ḡ tá kòŋ mìí tḡḡ.*
 woman-PL IPFV.NEW RECP head weave.IPFV
 ‘Women are doing each other’s hair’.
- (53) *Lḡ-ḡ lè-ḡ tá dḡè.*
 woman-PL ART-PL IPFV.NEW come.IPFV
 ‘Women are coming’.

4.7. **Imperfective negative:** PM *bā / ā* + imperfective form of the verb + particle *wā*:

S *bā / ā* (DO) V.IPFV ... *wā*

- (54) *Mā ā màḡ kóŋ dḡḡ wā.*
 1SG IPFV.NEG thing any know.IPFV NEG
 ‘I know nothing’.

4.8. **Future:** Future marker *rē (rè)* with the imperfective New Information construction,¹⁶ see examples (41-42):

Affirmative:

S *tá / á rē* (DO) V.IPFV

Negative:

S *bā / ā rē* (DO) V.IPFV ... *wā*

5. Non-verbal sentences in San.

Non-verbal sentences in San Maka are those which do not contain a verbal lexeme in the Neutral form or in the forms of Perfective or Imperfective. The bearers of predication are the copulas. The following elements are used as copulas:

- 1) copulas which are used as predicative markers (both polarities);
- 2) postpositional copulas: the copulas of existence and the copula of identification.

5.1. Copulas

Copulas etymologically seem to be the source for the imperfective predicative markers of both polarities; they coincide with the latter both in form and meaning.

¹⁶ On the contrary, the periphrastic construction of the Immediate Future uses the PP *ḡ / nā* with the imperfective form of the verb *dāā* ‘to come’, see ex. (44).

The copula *nē / ñ* encodes the general state of affairs, and *tá / á* point out at the new information:

- (55) *Í tá píí ní.*
3PL COP.NEW¹⁷ market in

‘They are now in the market (the answer to the question “Where are they?”)’.

- (56) *Màñ píí ní.*
3PL.COP market in.

‘They are in the market (state of affairs)’.

- (57) *Kiéñlé kè á kóó sísià.*
door this COP.NEW open now

‘(Look), this door is now open’.

- (58) *Kiéñlé màñ kóó dúdúú.*
door 3PL.COP open always

‘Doors are always open’.

In negative constructions *bā / ā* is used:

- (59a) *L̄ lè ā píí ní sísià wā.*
woman ART COP.NEG market in today NEG

‘The woman is not in the market’.

- (59b) *L̄ lè ā píí ní dúdúú wā.*
woman ART COP.NEG market in always NEG

‘The woman is never in the market’.

5.2. Postpositional copulas

5.2.1. **The copula of identification** (positive polarity) *nē / nē / nī / mànè* occupies the final position in the clause; only the negation particle *wā* can be placed after it.

- (60) *Kiō(η) nē.*
house ICOP

‘This is a house’.

In Southern San, the copula of identification appears in three synharmonic variants depending on the quality of the preceding vowel (about the vowel harmony, see 2.1). The form of the 3 PL is *mànè*.

5.2.2. **Negative contrastive copula of identification *bīē (wā)*** denotes a negated participant when there is a choice between two possibilities:

- (61) *Kōō bīē wā, gā nē.*
hen ICOP.NEG NEG guinea.fowl ICOP

‘It is not a hen, it is a guinea fowl’.

¹⁷ When used as copulas they are glossed as COP.

Like copula of identification $n\bar{e} / n\bar{e} / n\bar{i}$, it is used in cleft sentences:

- (62) *Koodé bīē á yō mí wā.*
 Kodé ICOP.NEG 3SG.PRF beer drink NEG

‘Kodé, he did not drink beer (contrary to what was expected)’.

5.2.4. **Copulas of existence** $tá\bar{\eta}$ (affirmative) and $bā\eta bā\eta$ (negative) usually also occupy the final position in the clause (see (71) for an exception).

- (63) *Lāwà tá\bar{\eta}.*
 God COP

‘God exists’.

- (64) *Bòyó(η) ā wùrù bā\eta bā\eta.*
 Boyo POSS field COP.NEG

‘Boyo has no field (Boyo’s field does not exist)’.

5.2.3. Auxiliary verb $g\bar{o}\bar{q}$ in the copular function.

The auxiliary verb $g\bar{o}\bar{q}$ (see 3.4.1.) is used to shift a situation to the past or future:

- (65) *Bòyó(η) g\bar{o}\bar{q} wùrù-dēnāā lēā.*
 Boyo/PFV stay.PFV field-owner EQUAT

‘Bojo was (once) a field owner’.

- (66) *Kiō\bar{\eta} gólé kè gònó\eta nā á g\bar{o}\bar{q} fú.*
 house big this body ICOP 3SG.PFV stay.PFV white

‘This large house was white’.

- (67) *Lā g\bar{o}\bar{q} píi-n wā.*
 woman stay.NTR market-in NEG

‘The woman was not in the market’.

When the situation refers to the future, the imperfective form is used with the PM $tá / á$ and the future marker $r\bar{e}$ (68) or $n\bar{a} / \bar{\eta}$:

- (68) *Kiō\bar{\eta} kè gònó\eta tá rē g\bar{o}\bar{q} fú.*
 house this body IPFV.NEW FUT stay.IPFV white

‘This house will be white’.

- (69) *Zón kè \bar{\eta} g\bar{o}\bar{q} bīē.*
 holiday this COP.IPFV stay.IPFV tomorrow

‘The holiday will be tomorrow’.

5.3. Types of non-verbal sentences

5.3.1. Constructions with one argument

5.3.1.1. EXISTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION are formed with the copulas $tá\bar{\eta}$ (affirmative) and $bā\eta bā\eta$ (negative).

(+) NP $tá\bar{\eta}$

(-) NP *bāḥbāḥ* ... (*wā*)

(70) *Dōḥ māj bābārāā gígíá táḥ.*
savannah thing dangerous much COP

‘There are many dangerous wild animals’.

(71) *Píí bāḥbāḥ kīwí kè-n wā.*
market COP.NEG village this-in NEG

‘There is no market in this village’.

5.3.1.2. *Constructions of identification* indicate an NP or names it. Affirmative and negative copulas of identification are used:

(+) NP *nē / nē / nī / mǎnè*

(-) NP *bīē wā*

(72) *Māsé ā nēḥāāḥ-nā mǎnè.*
1SG.EMPH POSS child-PL ICOP.3PL

‘These are my children’.

5.3.2. Constructions with two arguments

5.3.2.1. *Qualitative constructions* attribute a quality to the NP.

(+) NP *tá / nē¹⁸* Adj

(-) NP *bā* Adj *wā*

(73) *Dìì kélè lá á kākā.*
climb mountain on COP.NEW hard

‘Climbing the mountain is hard’.

(74) *Kiōḥ kè gòḥnóḥ bā fú wà.*
house this body COP.NEG white NEG

‘This house is not white’.

5.3.2.2. QUANTIFICATIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS are similar to the qualitative ones.

(+) NP *nē* Num

(-) NP *bā* Num *wā*

(75) *Māā gíḥ nē māj sī.*
1SG-POSS dog COP thing four

‘My dogs are four’ (where *māj* is a classifier).

5.3.2.3. EQUATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS state the identity of two NP. These constructions use the comitative group *ká ... nē / nē / nī*:

a) Complete equative constructions state the identity of the two NPs.

¹⁸ Constructions with different copulas (*nē* or *tá*) have different informational structure, see 3.2.2.

(+) NP1 *nā* *ká* NP2 *nε*

(-) NP *bā* NP2 *wā*

- (76) *Būrkiná Fàsò ā kīwī gōlé ĩj ká Wòdóó né.*
 Burkina Faso POSS village large COP COMMIT Ouaga in
 ‘The capital of Burkina Faso is Ouagadougou’.

b) Situational equativity. These constructions are similar in form and meaning to ascriptive ones. Copulas coincide with imperfective markers (both polarities). NP2 is followed by the postposition *lēā* ‘like, alike’.¹⁹

(+) NP1 *tá*, (*nā*) NP2 *lēā*

(-) NP1 *bā* NP2 *lēā wā*

- (77) *Bálá lè á là lēā.*
 field ART COP.NEW profit EQUAT
 ‘Individual field is a profit’.

- (78) *Bē tūmàà ĩj dí lēā.*
 this all COP work EQUAT
 ‘All this is work’.

5.3.2.4. ASCRIPTIVE CONSTRUCTIONS express the inclusion of the referent of a NP into a particular class. They use the copula *nā* and a postpositional group with *lēā*.

(+) NP1 *nā* NP2 *lēā*

(-) NP1 *bā* NP2 *lēā wā*

- (79) *Mártī ĩj mā-ā nēló lēā.*
 Martha COP 1SG-POSS daughter EQUAT
 ‘Martha is my daughter’.

- (80) *Sálífù ĩj làṅdā-dēnāā lēā.*
 Salif COP tradition-owner EQUAT
 ‘Salif is a connoisseur of traditions’.

- (81) *Bòyó(η) bā fùyù lēā wà.*
 Boyo COP.NEG blacksmith EQUAT NEG
 ‘Boyo is not a blacksmith’.

5.3.2.5. CONSTRUCTION OF SPECIFICATION:

(+) NP1 *nā* *ká* NP2 *nε*

(-) NP1 *bā* *ká* NP2 *nε wā*

¹⁹ Usages of the postposition *lēā* in other functions are rare, e.g.: *dàgōā sì-lí dàgōā lè zènāā kōō gù lēā* ‘The fetish-maker made a fetish like an egg’.

- (82) *Fùù ñ ká Bòyó(η) né.*
 smith COP COMIT Boyo in
 ‘The smith is Boyo’.
- (83) *Mā-ā nēló ñ ká Mārtì ní.*
 1SG-POSS daughter COP COMIT Martha in
 ‘My daughter is Martha’.

5.3.2.6. LOCATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS code the location of the referent designated by the subject NP.

(+) NP1 *tá, nē* Loc

(-) NP1 *bā* Loc *wā*

- (84) *Lō tá píí ní.*
 woman COP.NEW market in
 ‘The woman is in the market’.
- (85) *Lō bā píí ní wā.*
 woman COP.NEG market in NEG
 ‘The woman is not in the market’.
- (86) *Māā nēló-η tá kùη māné māā kiōñ.*
 1SG.POSS daughter-PL COP.NEW together 1SG.in 1SG.POSS house
 ‘My daughters are with me in my house’.

5.3.2.7. TEMPORAL CONSTRUCTIONS are variants of the locative type:

- (87) *Zóñ kè bā lè bóé wā.*
 holiday this COP.NEG year return.NMLZ NEG
 ‘The festival will not take place next year’.

5.3.2.8. POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS. San Maka has two possessive constructions: a construction with the copula of existence (the type «Boyo’s father exists») and postpositional constructions (“locative” type). In this respect San Maka is closer to the languages of the Southern Mande group (Fedotov, 2016). According to the classification of Leon Stassen (2009), these are “adnominal possessive constructions”, which he classified as an «additional type», in other words, as a typologically rather rare type of possessive constructions.

A) Adnominal possessive constructions in San-Maka are similar to existential structures (with the copulas of existence *táñ*⁻(+) and *bāñbāñ* (-)):

(+) NP1 NP2 *táñ*⁻

(-) NP1 NP2 *bāñbāñ* (*wā*)

- (88) *Bòyó(η) ā kiō(η) bāñbāñ.*
 Boyo POSS house COP.NEG

‘Boyo has no house (lit. Boyo’s house does not exist)’.

- (89) *Bòyó(η) ā nēlós páá táñ.*
 Boyo POSS daughter two COP

‘Boyo has two daughters’.

B) Pospositional constructions. According to Stassen’s classification, such structures are viewed as «locative» (locational). In San-Maka these constructions use:

- 1) the postposition *lòñ* which is not etymologized on the synchronic level;
- 2) the postposition *gñ* which is derived from a noun meaning ‘hand’.

Constructions with the postposition *lòñ*:

(+) NP1 *nā, tá* NP2 *lòñ*

(-) NP1 *bā* NP2 *lòñ wā*

- (90) *Wùrù tá Bòyó(η) lòñ.*
 field COP.NEW Boyo in.possession

‘Boyo has a field’.

- (91) *Wóró bā mā lòñ wā.*
 money COP.NEG 1SG in.possession NEG

‘I have no money (on me)’.

Constructions with the postposition *gñ*:

(+) NP1 *nā, tá* NP2 *gñ*

(-) NP1 *bā* NP2 *gñ wā*

The adnominal possessive constructions express permanent possession and are used more often with the kinship terms or other objects of permanent possession (the possessor is a «legal» owner). Pospositional constructions with *lòñ* are used more often to indicate abstract possession; *gñ* co-occurs with more concrete items or designates a situational possession:

- (92) *Wóró tá mā lòñ pñ, sēnē wóró bā mā*
 money COP 1SG in.possession at.home but money COP.NEG 1SG
gñ kánáá wā.
 hand here NEG

‘I have money at home but I have no money on me here’.

The loss of the lexical meaning in the postposition *lòñ* in San Maka has led to the emergence of a new construction built according to the same model.

Constructions used in non-verbal sentences of Southern San are represented in Table 8.

Table 8. Constructions of non-verbal sentences of San-Maka

Form	Predicative element	Meaning
<i>tá</i> (+), <i>bāṅbāṅ</i> (-)	copulas of existence	existential, adnominal possessive constructions
<i>nē</i> (<i>nē, nī, mànè</i>) (+) <i>bīē</i> (-)	copula of identification	construction of identification
<i>tá</i> (+) <i>nā</i> (+) Adj (Num) <i>bā wā</i> (-)	imperfective PM in copular function	qualitative, quantitative constructions
<i>tá</i> (+) <i>nā</i> (+) NP + postp <i>bā wā</i> (-)	imperfective PM in copular function with postpositional group	locative, temporal, possessive constructions
<i>nā</i> + <i>ká</i> NP <i>né</i>	imperfective PM in copular function with the comitative frame construction <i>ká ... né</i>	(complete) equative and specificative constructions
<i>nā</i> + NP <i>lēā</i>	imperfective PM <i>nā</i> in copular function with postpositional group (postposition <i>lēā</i>)	(situational) equative, ascriptive constructions

As shown in the Table 8, the most widely used constructions are structures with postpositions, which are, in fact, constructed by analogy with the locative construction.

6. Conclusion

The overview of verbal and non-verbal sentences in San-Maka shows that there is a parallelism between constructions of the imperfective zone: the imperfective predicative markers of both polarities are linked to the corresponding copulas; they coincide in form and express similar meanings.

Copulas which coincide with predicative markers:

- imperfective affirmative *nā* / *ṅ* / *māṅ*;
- imperfective affirmative (new information) *tá* / *á*;
- imperfective negative *bā* / *ā* (*wā*).

There are also specific predicative markers which are not directly connected to any copula. These are:

- perfective affirmative *ná* / high tone on the final vowel of the Subject NP;
- perfective experientive *bīṅ* (*wā*);
- imperfective negative in dependant clauses, prohibitive *bāràṅ* (*wā*).

There are also specific copulas:

Copulas of identification: affirmative *nē* / *nē* / *nī* / *mānē*;

- negative *bīē* (*wā*);
- copulas of existence: affirmative *tāj̄*;
- negative *bāṅbāṅ*.

There is certain parallelism in form and meaning between negative copulas and negative predicative markers (*bā*, *bāràṅ*, *bāṅbāṅ*). The affirmative copula of identification *nē/nē/nī/mānē* seem to be etymologically connected to the imperfective copula *nā/ṅ/māṅ*. It is worth mentioning that a focus marker *-ṅ*²⁰/*māṅ* (3PL) seem to be related to the copula of identification.

For further research on the origin of these word classes of San-Maka, a comparison with data of other languages of the San cluster is necessary.

Abbreviations

1 – 1st person	N – noun
2 – 2 nd person	NEG – negation
3 – 3rd person	NEW – new information
Adj – adjective	NMLZ – nominalized form
Art – article	NTR – neutral form
Aux – auxiliar	Num – numeral
COMIT – comitative	DO – direct object
COP – copula	IO – indirect object
Dem – demonstrative	Pl – plural
EMPH – emphatic pronoun	PM – predicative marker
EQUAT – equative postposition	POSS – possessive preposition
EXP – experientive	PRF – perfective
FUT – future	PROH – prohibitive
H – high tone	PROX – proximate
ICOP – copula of identification	RECP – reciprocal
IMP – imperative	S – subject
IPFV – imperfective	Sg – singular
L – low tone	V – verb.

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²⁰ The focus marker *-ṅ* is a clitic.

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Elena Perekhvalskaya

Basic morphosyntax of verbal and non-verbal clauses in San-Maka

This article presents an overview of the basic verbal constructions of San-Maka, an East Mande language of Burkina Faso. The introduction provides general facts on San-Maka: its position in the San / Sane language cluster, basic information on its phonological (segmental and tonal) system. Information on noun and pronoun morphology is also given. The main part of the article deals with predicative constructions of San-Maka. The morphological paradigm of a verb in San-Maka consists of three aspectual forms: neutral, perfective and imperfective. Perfective and imperfective verb forms combine with predicative markers, some of which seem derived from copulas. The grammatical meaning of the existing predicative constructions is analyzed. It is shown that two imperfective constructions differ by their information structure and reflect different pragmatic intentions of the speaker. The final section represents an overview of San-Maka non-verbal predications. The Conclusion shows some similarities between grammatical words in San-Maka: certain copulas, predicative markers and the focus marker.

Key words: Mande cluster, San, San-Maka, verb, aspect, predicative constructions, non-verbal predication, informational structure

Le morphosyntaxe de base des phrases verbales et non-verbales en san-maka

L'article présente un aperçu des constructions verbales de base en san-maka, une langue Mandé du Burkina Faso. L'introduction fournit des faits généraux sur le san-maka : sa position dans le groupe San-Sane, le système phonologique segmental et tonal, la morphologie des noms et des pronoms. La partie principale de l'article traite des constructions prédicatives de san-maka. Le paradigme morphologique du verbe se compose de trois formes aspectuelles : neutre, perfective (accomplie) et imperfective (inaccomplie). Les formes accomplie et inaccomplie se combinent avec des marqueurs prédicatifs, dont certains semblent être dérivés des copules. Les valeurs grammaticales des constructions prédicatives sont analysées. Il est montré que les deux constructions imperfectives disponibles en san-maka diffèrent par leurs structures d'information et par les intentions pragmatiques du locuteur. La section finale traite des prédications non-verbales. Dans la conclusion, des similitudes entre certains mots grammaticaux (copules, marqueurs prédicatifs, la marque de focalisation) sont discutées.

Mots clés: mandé, san, san-maka, aspect, verbe, constructions prédicatives, prédication non-verbale, structure d'information

Елена Всеволодовна Перехвальская

Базовый морфосинтаксис глагольных и неглагольных предложений в сан-мака

В статье представлен обзор основных предикативных конструкций в сан-мака, языке восточной группы семьи манде, распространенном в Буркине-Фасо. Введение содержит общие сведения о языке: его положение в языковом кластере сан—сани, информация о фонологической и тональной системах данного языка. Далее приводятся базовые данные о морфологии существительного и местоимения. Основная часть статьи посвящена анализу предикативных конструкций языка сан-мака. Морфологическая парадигма глагола в этом языке состоит из трех аспектуальных форм: нейтральной, перфективной и имперфективной. Перфективные и имперфективные формы сочетаются с предикативными показателями, некоторые из которых, по-видимому, восходят к соответствующим связкам. Дается анализ грамматической семантики имеющихся предикативных конструкций. Показано, что две синонимичные имперфективные конструкции различаются по информационной структуре и отражают прагматические намерения говорящего. Последний раздел посвящен обзору невербальных предикаций сан-мака. В Заключении показано материальное сходство между некоторыми служебными словами: некоторыми связками, предикативными показателями и маркером фокуса.

Ключевые слова: языки манде, кластер сан, сан-мака, глагол, аспект, предикативные конструкции, неглагольная предикация, информационная структура