

DOI: 10.2478/v10122-012-0001-5

## ARTICLES

**THE MEANING OF THE NAATA + INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTION  
IN BASSE MANDINKA**

ALEXANDER ANDRASON

ABSTRACT: Alexander Andrason. *The Meaning of the NAATA + Infinitive Construction in Basse Mandinka*. *Lingua Posnaniensis*, vol. LIV (1)/2012. The Poznań Society for the Advancement of the Arts and Sciences. PL ISSN 0079-4740, ISBN 978-83-7654-103-7, pp. 7–19.

Purpose: The present paper aims at providing a detailed description of values and uses offered by the *NAATA* form – an analytic Mandinka construction formed by means of the auxiliary *naa* ‘come’, employed itself in the so-called ‘*TA* tense’, and the infinitive of the main “meaning” verb. In that manner, we intend to rectify an important lacuna in grammatical studies of the Mandinka language which have almost entirely ignored the issue of the *NAATA* locution.

Method: A detailed map of the semantic content of the *NAATA* form will be designed, specifying its temporal, taxis, aspectual and modal implications, as well as certain textual properties. All the values will be illustrated by instructive examples provided by ten native Mandinka speakers (i.e. residents of Basse and neighboring villages: Manne Kunda, Bassending, Mansajang and Kaba Kama) and collected by the author in 2010 and 2011.

Results: The evidence shows that the meaning of the *NAATA* construction corresponds to a present perfect (resultative, iterative, inclusive, experiential and indefinite), to a past tense (immediate, recent, general and remote) and to a perfective aspect (punctual, terminative and ingressive; less commonly the locution approximates a simple past). Additionally, the formation expresses certain modal concepts, such as non-intentionality, accidentality or spontaneity of a corresponding perfect or past event. As far as textual properties are concerned, the *NAATA* form is found both in discourse and narration, being able in the latter case to introduce events of the narrative foreground.

Conclusion: The author demonstrates that the values displayed by the construction (with an exception of the modal senses) can be connected and a definition, which exceeds a simple inventory of uses, may be provided if one views the locution from a dynamic evolutionary perspective, i.e. as a manifestation of one of the developmental scenarios governing the grammatical evolution of original resultative constructions, namely as a realization of the anterior path. Furthermore, the modal senses of the *NAATA* form may be related to the anterior trajectory (and to its meanings-stages) if we make use of the evidential path, an evolutionary possibility which links the grammatical life of resultatives with determined modal domains. This latter proposition, however, needs a more profound analysis and will constitute one of the research activities, conducted by the author in the future.

Alexander Andrason, University of Stellenbosch, Private Bag X1, 7602 Matieland, South Africa; University of Iceland, v/ Suðurgötu, 101 Reykjavík, Iceland, [aleksand@hi.is](mailto:aleksand@hi.is)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The present paper aims at providing a detailed description of values and uses offered by an analytic Mandinka<sup>1</sup> construction formed by means of the auxiliary *naa* ‘come’ – employed itself in the so-called ‘*TA* tense’ (sometimes referred to as a completive-perfective aspect or past tense; see MACBRAIR 1842: 16; ROWLANDS 1959; GAMBLE 1987: 17; COLLEY 1995: 15; CREISSELS 2008: 77; 2010a: 3; 2010b: 3 and 2007 and ANDRASON 2011c)<sup>2</sup> – and the infinitive of the main “meaning” verb (cf. example 1 below; henceforth the expression will be labeled ‘*NAATA* gram’).<sup>3</sup>

- (1)           A   **naata**       **taa**<sup>4</sup>  
               he   come-TA<sup>5</sup>   go  
               He went

Despite the fact that the formation is commonly used both in colloquial-discursive situations and in narrative (written or recited) texts, most scholars paid no attention to it in their studies of the Mandinka verbal system. *De facto*, the locution has almost entirely been overlooked or marginalized in – yet highly valuable – grammars, teaching manuals and scientific articles available thus far (e.g., MACBRAIR 1842; ROWLANDS 1959; CREISSELS 1983; GAMBLE 1987; COLLEY 1995; *Mandinka Learning Manual* 2002; DRAMÉ 2003 etc.). This article rectifies this deficiency in the grammatical description of the Mandinka language and offers a comprehensive analysis of the semantics of the *NAATA* gram.

One shall acknowledge that our evidence – and hence conclusion reached in the last part of the article – makes reference to a Mandinka variety spoken in the eastern part of Gambia,

<sup>1</sup> Mandinka – an idiom widely spoken in Gambia, Senegal and Guinea Bissau – is usually classified as the westernmost variant of the Manding cluster (WILSON 2000: 109) which, in turn, forms a part of the Western branch of the Mande family (KASTENHOLZ 1996: 281; VYDRINE et al. 2000; WILLIAMSON & BLENCH 2000). Manding, itself, consists of several regional varieties such as, aside from Mandinka, Bambara, Malinké or Jaahanka. The total number of speakers of Mandinka amounts to 1,346,000 of whom 510,000 reside in Gambia (the presented numbers are based on data gathered in 2006; cf. LEWIS 2009).

<sup>2</sup> The *TA* gram is formed by adding the suffix *-ta* to the verb, as in our case: *naa* ‘to come’ > *naata* ‘has (have) come/come’. The *TA* formation displays a broad range of uses. It approximates the categories of present perfect, past (perfective, simple and durative), pluperfect, future perfect (exclusively in certain subordinated clauses), stative and present (for a complete review of meanings conveyed by the *TA* expression see ANDRASON 2011c).

<sup>3</sup> The *NAATA* construction should be clearly distinguished from a literal periphrasis composed by the verb *naa* ‘come’ in the *TA* form (i.e. *naata*) and an infinitive with a postposition *la*, alternatively analyzed as an infinitive marker:

- (A)           a.   N       **naata**               bukoo   safee   la  
               I       come-TA           book   write   to  
               I came to write the book  
               b.   Fo     i       **naata**               le       ka    ñ     kasaara   baŋ?  
               whether you come-TA           EMPH to   us   destroy QUES  
               Did you come in order to destroy us?

It should be noted that in the above example, the word *baŋ* stands for a question particle and is glossed QUES.

<sup>4</sup> The relevant *NAATA* forms (i.e. the auxiliary *naa* + a meaning verb) will be given in bold type.

<sup>5</sup> The auxiliary *naa* in the *NAATA* formation will be glossed respecting its origin, i.e. ‘come-TA’, i.e. the verb *naa* ‘come’ in the *TA* tense.

namely in the capital of the Upper River Region, Basse, and in neighboring villages (Manne Kunda, Bassending, Mansajang and Kaba Kama). This variation will henceforth be labeled as Basse Mandinka in order to differentiate it from ‘Standard Mandinka’ – a uniform normalized version of Mandinka employed in Gambia in dictionaries,<sup>6</sup> grammar manuals,<sup>7</sup> religious Christian and Islamic literature<sup>8</sup> as well as in television or the Internet. The vernacular used in Basse – even though highly similar to that literary “norm” – shows certain discrepancies. For instance, the voiced velar stop [g] – missing in the standardized language – functions as a genuine phoneme in Basse Mandinka (e.g. *gaadiinoo* or *Gambiya* instead of the standard forms *kaadiinoo* ‘garden’ and *Kambiya* ‘Gambia’). Likewise, in Basse Mandinka possessive or pronominal constructions may be derived not only by means of the postposition *la* (a typical technique in the normalized language: *Laamini la bukoo* ‘Lamin’s book’) but also by employing the morpheme *ye* (*Laamini ye bukoo* ‘Lamin’s book’; for a complete analysis of differences between Basse Mandinka and Standard Mandinka, see ANDRASON 2012b: 9–10).<sup>9</sup>

All the examples offered in the present article were collected in the Basse district in 2010 and 2011 during an extensive research project dedicated to work on the grammar of Basse Mandinka (cf. ANDRASON 2012b). These linguistic illustrations have been provided by the following ten native Mandinka speakers, residents of Basse or the four – previously mentioned – neighboring villages:<sup>10</sup> Keba Suso (13 years old, primary school student, Bassending), Malick Suso (18, high school student, Bassending), Musa Yaffuneh (24, watchman, Basse), Lamin Manneh (25, university student, Manneh Kunda), Mamanding Sanjang (27, nurse assistant, Basse), Musa Sanneh (29, driver, Kaba Kama), Baba Kamara (30, teacher, Mansajang), Saikou Drammeh (44, nurse, Basse – originally from Serekunda but living in Basse for ten years), Kumba Jallow (56, cook, Mansajang) and Mariama Mendi (32, nurse, Mansajang – originally from Fulla Bantang).<sup>11</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that our examples are threefold: some were spontaneously formulated by speakers; others were pronounced under the request of the author (the informant was asked to translate a certain proposition or to express determined meaning); finally, a number of examples was motivated by written Christian and Muslim texts (the person was asked to pronounce a given sentence and, if needed, reformulate and comment on it).

<sup>6</sup> For instance, *Mandinka English Dictionary* (1988) and (1995).

<sup>7</sup> See *A Practical Orthography of Gambian Mandinka* (1988), LÜCK & HENDERSON (1993) or *Mandinka Learning Manual* (2002).

<sup>8</sup> For example, *Kambej Kutoo* ‘New Testament’ (1988), *Kambej Kotoo* ‘Old Testament’ (1998) or *Selections from the Writings of the Promised Messiah* (1988).

<sup>9</sup> Despite a number of distinctive traits, it may not be accurate to consider the Basse variety a dialect of Standard Mandinka: the differences are mostly phonetic and lexical. On the other hand, it is obvious that the classification of a given linguistic organization as a dialect – or as a language – is not solely a linguistic issue, but rather is conditioned by several political, sociological and economic factors. Furthermore, it should be observed that some of the mentioned dissimilarities are not restricted to the Basse area but, quite the reverse, can be found in other parts of Gambia.

<sup>10</sup> The list has been arranged following the age of the informants introducing also the information concerning their occupation and residence place.

<sup>11</sup> The last two informants are entirely bilingual: Fula-Mandinka and Manjago-Mandinka. Their ethnic background is Fula and Manjago respectively.

## 2. EVIDENCE

In the present section we will design a meticulous map of the entire semantic content of the *NAATA* formation. This means that all specific and individual temporal, taxis, aspectual and modal meanings<sup>12</sup> – as well as some textual properties – displayed by the form will be presented and illustrated by instructive examples, provided by the above-mentioned informants.<sup>13</sup>

The *NAATA* formation offers various values which cover the semantic domain that usually characterizes the category of present perfects or present anteriors. For instance, approximating a resultative present perfect of current relevance, the gram expresses previous – already completed – actions whose accomplishment affects the present state of affairs. Put differently, certain effects of a formerly performed activity are currently available, determining the condition of the subject and his or her reality. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the reading of the *NAATA* form in these cases is invariably dynamic and the prominence is given to the prior action while the resulting state is merely suggested.

- (2a)        **ì**        **naata**        **kendeyaa**  
 they    come-TA    be.well  
 They have been cured (and they are well now)
- (2b)        **A**        **naata**        **faa**  
 he      come-TA    die  
 He has died (and he is dead now)
- (2c)        Saayinj n **naata**        **mur**u    karambuŋ    to    kotenke  
 now    I    come-TA    return    school        to    again  
 Now I have returned to school (and I am at school,  
 i.e. I am a student)

<sup>12</sup> It shall be noted that the partition of the total meaning of the *NAATA* gram into atomic senses is not arbitrary. The labels that are employed in the “decomposition” of the overall polysemy of the gram into more basic values follow three main principles. First, our categories respect the terminology commonly used in grammatical descriptions of African languages (cf. NURSE 2008 and WALTKE & O’CONNOR 1990) and in studies dedicated to general linguistics (cf. BYBEE et al. 1994 and HASPELMATH et al. 2001). Second, in certain languages, our labels correspond to realist and independent categories – they typologically exist. And third, these specific categories sometimes have a practical application. Namely, they enable linguists to establish an exact range of correspondence between constructions whose semantic potential, although similar, is not identical. For example, the category of an inclusive and hodiernal (and, in certain case, hesternal) definite past gives us a possibility to determine the precise difference in meaning between the English and Spanish present perfects (BYBEE et al. 1994: 98). In English, the present perfect gram (*I have done*) usually fails to appear with the sense of a definite hodiernal-hesternal past, while in Spanish a typologically equivalent formation (*he hecho*) does not provide the value of an inclusive perfect. The remaining perfect uses (resultative, experiential, iterative and indefinite) are conveyed by the English and Spanish form.

<sup>13</sup> In order to demonstrate that the *NAATA* construction provides a given sense, we will construct a context where this value is activated. Thus, when we state that the *NAATA* form functions as a present perfect, past perfect, future perfect or past, we mean that it is compatible with an environment where such nuances are made evident and palpable. Consequently, in our categorizations, the labels such as ‘present perfect’, ‘past perfect’, ‘future perfect’ etc. make reference to semantic domains. Inversely, they do not imply that the formation is an invariant present perfect, past perfect or future perfect grammatical category. This technique of decomposition of the total meaning into atomic senses harmonizes with a principle of cognitive linguistics whereby the overall meaning of a gram – its entire polysemy – constitutes a context induced phenomenon (see above in this section; cf. likewise DAHL 2000: 6–7, 14; CROFT & CRUSE 2004: 258; EVANS & GREEN 2006: 352–353, 368 and NIKIFORIDOU 2009: 16–17).

The formation may also appear with the force of an experiential present perfect, indicating that a given activity forms a part of the subject's experience, having occurred at least once during his or her life time. In such cases, the value of current relevance remains palpable while the properly resultative meaning fails to be present:

- (3a) Fo a nene **naata** a **ke**?  
 whether he ever come-TA it do  
 Has he ever done it?
- (3b) Haa, a **naata** **ke** siiṅaa kiliŋ!  
 yes it come-TA occur time one  
 Yes, it has occurred once!

The construction may likewise indicate that resultative or experiential actions have occurred several times or repeatedly, thus approximating the category of an iterative present perfect:

- (4) A **naata** **ke** bii siiṅaa naani  
 it come-TA occur today time four  
 It has occurred today four times

The gram seems to be able to carry out the sense of an inclusive perfect, suggesting that a certain activity or condition began at an overtly specified time in the past but has continued into the present moment in an uninterrupted manner (cf. the following use of the Present Perfect in *English: I have lived here for 10 year* or *I have lived here since 2000*):

- (5a) N **naata** **jiyaa** jaŋ sanji fula  
 I come-TA be.accommodated here year two  
 I have lived here for two years (I still live here)
- (5b) A **naata** **kuuraŋ** tili naani  
 he come-TA be.sick day four  
 He has been sick for four days (he is still sick)
- (5c) Kabiriŋ 1994 ñiŋ ne **naata** **ke** n na dookuwo ti  
 since 1994 this EMPH<sup>14</sup> come-TA be I of<sup>15</sup> job EXIS<sup>16</sup>  
 Since then, this has been my job
- (5d) Kabiriŋ 2000 a **naata** moolu **karandi**  
 since 2000 she come-TA people teach  
 Since 2000 she has taught / been teaching people  
 Mandinka kaŋo la  
 Mandinka language with/at<sup>17</sup>  
 the Mandinka language

<sup>14</sup> The lexeme *ne* (a phonetic variant of *le*) is an emphatic particle which will be glossed as EMPH.

<sup>15</sup> The slot *n na* (i.e. *n* 'I' + *la* of'; on the entity *la* see footnote 17 below) functionally corresponds to a possessive pronoun of the 1st person singular such as 'my' in English.

<sup>16</sup> The lexeme *ti* – besides functioning as a postposition 'into' – is an existential particle that accompanies certain verbs with the meaning of 'be' or 'become' (e.g., *mu* or *ke*). It will be glossed as EXIS.

<sup>17</sup> The word *la* is a postposition with a broad range of uses and values. Hereafter, we will gloss it as 'with/at' or – when employed in possessive (genitival) constructions – as 'of'.

The locution can also function as an indefinite perfect or, employing an alternative label, indefinite past. In that case, the gram expresses events that unquestionably belong to the past time sphere, without overly specifying their temporal position, for instance by means of adverbs or adverbial locutions (e.g., *yesterday*, *last week*, *a week ago* etc.).

- (6) N taata Basse anij n **naata** kewo ñij **faa**  
 I went Basse and I come-TA man this kill  
 I went to Basse and I killed the man

Besides that the *NAATA* form appears in various typically perfect functions, the construction is likewise commonly employed as a definite past tense. In that case, the past moment is specified by means of certain adverbs and adverbial locutions or it is inferred from to a general context, being, for instance, a part of a narrative flow of events. As for the temporal distance from the speaker or narrator's here-and-now, it may range from recent (e.g., immediate, hodiernal and hesternal; cf. 7a) to general (e.g., during a person's life; cf. 7b and 7c) and remote (e.g., ancient or legendary past; cf. 7d and 7e). This means that the *NAATA* gram may introduce activities which refer to any temporal point in the past, either nearby or distant.

- (7a) A **naata** **faa** bii  
 he come-TA die today  
 He died today
- (7b) Ì **naata** **faa** seruj  
 they come-TA die last.year  
 They died last year
- (7c) Sanji 1988 n **naata** **sawuj** Saragosa saatewo to  
 year 1988 I come-TA move Zaragoza city to  
 In 1988 I moved to Zaragoza
- (7d) Wo waatoo le mansa **naata** **taa** Damasikusi  
 that time EMPH king come-TA go Damascus  
 At that time, the king went to Damascus
- (7e) Judasi mej **naata** **ke** Yeesu jamfaalaa ti  
 Judas who come-TA be Jesus traitor EXIS  
 Judas who became a traitor of Jesus

In addition to its rather regular use in discourse and dialogues (cf. examples 2–6), as a past tense, the gram is also abundantly found in narrative – both written and recited – passages. In these instances, it may act as a narrative form of foreground introducing events of the narrative backbone. This use may be illustrated by the following examples extracted from the Mandinka Bible and subsequently recited by native speakers:

- (8a) A **naata** **faa** Noora Kuliijo le la  
 he come-TA be.filled spirit holly EMPH with/at  
 He was filled with the Holy Spirit
- (8b) A **naata** **bo** jee ka taa saatewo to  
 he come-TA come.from there to go<sup>18</sup> village to  
 He came from there to the village

<sup>18</sup> Nowadays, the slot *ka taa* (originally 'to go') functionally approximates the English preposition 'to'.

- (8c) A **naata** Yehohasi **samba** Misira, bituŋ a faata jee  
 he come-TA Jehoahaz take Egypt, and.then he died there  
 Jehoahaz was taken to Egypt, and he died there

In such narrative uses, the gram is commonly preceded by the particle *bituŋ* ‘(and) then’:

- (9a) Bituŋ Yahuuda bankoo moolu  
 and.then Judea land people  
 And then the people of Judea  
     **naata** Yosiya dinkewo Yehohasi **tombon**  
     come-TA Josiah son Jehoahaz choose  
     chose Jehoahaz the son of Josiah
- (9b) Bituŋ i **naata** a dinkewo **ke** a noo to mansa ti  
 then they come-TA his son do his place at king into  
 Then they made his son king in his place

In respect to the aspectual value of the *NAATA* periphrasis, the construction most commonly denotes perfective – unique and punctual, terminative or ingressive – events:

- (10a) A **naata** **ke** kabiriŋ a be saatewo doo to  
 it come-TA happen when he is town certain at  
 It happened when he was in a certain town
- (10b) A **naata** **foo** a niyo la  
 he come-TA loose his soul with/at  
 He lost his [own] soul
- (10c) Wo kumoo **naata** **ke** hadamadiŋo le ti,  
 that word come-TA become human.being EMPH EXIS,  
 The word became human  
     aduŋ ate **naata** tara ñ kono  
     and.then it come-TA dwell us among  
     and dwelt among us (i.e.: The word made his home among us)
- (10d) i **naata** a **fo** mansa ye ko:  
 they come-TA it say king to saying  
 They told the king that...
- (10e) Elisa **naata** **taa** Damasikusi  
 Elisha come-TA go Damascus  
 Elisha went to Damascus
- (10f) Wo to le moolu seewoota,  
 that at EMPH people rejoiced,  
 Then the people rejoiced;  
     aduŋ saatewo **naata** tenkujo **soto**  
     and town come-TA quietness get  
     and the town became peaceful (lit.: gained the peacefulness)
- (10g) Wo koolaa, n **naata** sunkutu doo **futuu**,  
 that after, I come-TA girl another marry  
 After that, I married another girl

- (10h) Basse la lopitaani kutoo **naata** **paree** sanji taŋ kooma  
 Basse of hospital new come-TA be.ready year ten ago  
 The new hospital of Bass became ready ten years ago
- (10i) N **naata** **sawuŋ** Amerika bankoo kaŋ naŋ, 2003 saŋo le kono  
 I come-TA move America country to to.here 2003 year EMPH in  
 I moved to the United States of America in 2003

In certain cases, the *NAATA* formation – employed in the past perfective function – is equivalent to the TA construction, derived from punctual telic verbs. This means that in the following examples, the slots *naata faa* or *naata taa* and the forms *faata* or *taata* display the identical perfective force ‘he died’ and ‘he went’, respectively:

- (11a) Bituŋ ate **naata** **faa**  
 then he come-TA die  
 Then he died
- (11b) Bituŋ ate **faata**  
 then he die-TA  
 Then he died<sup>19</sup>
- (11c) A **naata** **taa** Basse  
 he come-TA go Basse  
 He went to Basse
- (11d) A **taata** Basse  
 he go-TA Basse  
 He went to Basse

This perfective – either completive-terminative or ingressive – value may clearly be observed if we compare the *NAATA* formation with the use of an analogous verb (with the exception of telic verbs in determined contexts, cf. the previous paragraph) in the *TA* or *YE*<sup>20</sup> grams. These constructions – besides appearing with a perfective force – may also act as simple preterites or even, when derived from some roots, as durative past tenses (cf. ANDRASON 2011c and 2012c). On the contrary, the value of the *NAATA* periphrasis is most commonly perfective. This can be illustrated by the following examples where the verbs *kuuraj* or *saasaa* ‘be sick’ and *koyi* ‘be white, clear’ appear in the *NAATA* gram and in the *TA* construction. While in the former case, the significance is clearly perfective (ingressive ‘get’), in the latter, two readings are equally possible: one perfective (analogous to the previous case) and the other – very frequent and, in fact, dominant – stative or durative:

- (12a) Wo waatoo la ate **naata** **kuuraj** baake  
 that time with/at he come-TA be.sick very.much  
 In those days, he became sick (cf. the Latin and Greek forms: *aegrotavit* [Perfectum = perfective past] and *ἡρρώσθησεν* [Aorist = perfective past])
- (12b) Wo waatoo la ate **kuuranta** le  
 that time with/at he be.sick-TA EMPH  
 In those days, he was sick (cf. the Latin and Greek forms: *erat* [imperfective past] and *ἦν* [imperfective past])

<sup>19</sup> However, *faata* may also mean ‘he is/was dead’ (cf. example 13.d below).

<sup>20</sup> The *YE* formation is formed by means of the auxiliary *ye* (or its variant in the first person singular and plural: *ya* and *ya* respectively), e.g. *a ke* ‘to do’ > *a ye a ke* ‘he has done it / he did it’. The lexeme *ye* will be glossed ‘YE’.

- (12c) Tili dantaŋ koolaa, Laamini **naata** **saasaa** bake  
 day few after, Lamin come-TA be.sick very.much  
 Few days later, Lamin got very sick (cf. the Polish translation: *zachorował* [perfective past])
- (12d) Kunuŋ, a **saasaata** bake  
 yesterday he be.sick-TA very.much  
 Yesterday he was very sick (cf. the Polish translation: *chorował* [imperfective past])
- (12e) A la feetoofatoolu **naata** **koyi** bake  
 he of<sup>21</sup> clothes come-TA be.white very.much  
 His clothes turned very white (cf. the Polish translation: *stały się* [perfective past] *białe*)
- (12f) Ñiŋ dendinkoo **koyita** nuŋ  
 this shirt be.white-TA then  
 This shirt was white (cf. the Polish translation: *była* [imperfective past] *biała*)

When the temporal reference is unspecified or general, the *NAATA* form may function as a perfective past or a dynamic perfect while the *TA* and *YE* constructions also provide additional stative (present or durative past) values.

- (13a) A **naata** kodoo **soto**  
 he come-TA money get  
 He has obtained money / He obtained money
- (13b) A **ye** kodoo **soto**  
 he YE money obtain  
 He has money
- (13c) A **naata** **fa**  
 he come-TA die  
 He has died / He died
- (13d) A **faata**  
 he die-TA  
 He is/was dead

This interaction of the *NAATA* form (perfective or dynamic perfect expression) and the *TA* gram (a construction which, besides perfective and perfect uses, also admits stative, durative and simple present values) may be illustrated by the following example where the two locutions coincide:

- (14) N **fankata** le. Nte **naata** fankoo **soto** le  
 I be.rich-TA EMPH. I come-TA riches have EMPH  
 I am rich. I have become rich (lit: I have acquired riches)

The dynamic perfective sense – as contrasted with the motionless stative value – may be observed in the following use of the verb *a loŋ* ‘to know’. In the *YE* formation, this root most commonly conveys the stative meaning of knowing (*a ye a loŋ* ‘he knows’ or ‘he knew’). However, when employed in the *NAATA* gram, the value of the entire locution corresponds either to a dynamic perfect or to a perfective past, offering a strong ingressive sense ‘get to know, understand, realize’.

<sup>21</sup> The sequence *a la* (literally ‘he of’) equals the English possessive pronouns of the 3rd person singular ‘his’.

- (15a) N ka tu kamfaariŋ,  
 I used.to continue being.angry  
 I continued being angry (I was angry / I used to be angry),  
 fo labajo la n **naata** a **loŋ** ko,  
 until last with/at I come-TA it know that  
 until finally I got to know (I understood) that  
 kamfaa maŋ nafaa soto n ye  
 anger not benefit has I for  
 anger had no benefit for me
- (15b) Aduŋ i **naata** wolu la suuloolu **loŋ**  
 and.then they come-TA those of needs know  
 And then they got to know (understood / realized) their needs
- (15c) Saayiŋ ite mu ñaatonkoo le ti cocoo kono  
 now you are leader EMPH EXIS church in  
 Now you are the leader in the church  
 I **naata** Alla la ñiŋ siloo **loŋ** ñaadii le?  
 you come-TA god of this way know how EMPH  
 How did you get to know this way of God?

All of this clearly demonstrates that the *NAATA* formation is invariably dynamic in contrast to common static readings offered by certain roots in the *TA* and *YE* grams.

Nevertheless, in some radically less common cases and certainly due to the lexical value offered by a specific verbal root, the sense of the *NAATA* form may approximate the category of a simple past: the event is portrayed in its entirety (as in the case of the perfective aspect), but punctual (either terminative or ingressive) sense is significantly less patent:

- (16a) Seruŋ, feetoo juuraloo **naata** **ke** Basse to  
 last.year feast celebration come-TA occur Basse at  
 A celebration was held in Basse last year (i.e.: people celebrated a feast)
- (16b) Moolu **naata** **lafi** ŋa i maakoyi kaŋo ñiŋ to  
 People come-TA want I.should them help language this in  
 People wanted that I would help them in this language (i.e.: people wanted me to help them)

In addition to the values introduced thus far – which roughly correspond to determined uses of the *TA* and *YE* grams (cf. ANDRASON 2011c and 2012c) – the *NAATA* formation provides certain “modal” nuances.<sup>22</sup> It indicates, especially in discourse, that a given perfect or past action has occurred spontaneously and accidentally, or due to the fact that the subject has changed his or her original intention:

- (17a) N **naata** **naa**  
 I come-TA come  
 It happened that I came (first, I was not going to come, but I came)
- (17b) N **naata** a **ke**  
 I come-TA it do  
 It happened that I did it (first, I was not going to do it, but I did it)

<sup>22</sup> We employ the term ‘modal’ since, by using the construction, the speaker expresses his or her attitude toward the activity conveyed by the main “meaning” verb. We are, however, aware of the fact that the gram is not a grammatical mood *sensu stricto*.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Let us first recapitulate the evidence introduced in the previous part of the article. The meaning of the *NAATA* construction frequently corresponds to a dynamic present perfect (resultative, iterative, experiential, inclusive and indefinite), to a past tense (immediate, recent, general and remote) and to a perfective aspect (punctual, terminative and ingressive). No less frequent are uses where the formation expresses the non-intentionality, accidentality or spontaneity of a corresponding perfect or past event. In all of the above-mentioned cases, the meaning of the gram is invariably dynamic. This dynamic undertone is clearly related to the dynamic sense of the auxiliary *naa* ‘come’. Besides these typical values, the formation may rarely approximate the category of a simple past – a preterite. Finally, as for its textual properties, the locution is found both in discourse and narration, being able, in the latter case, to introduce events of the narrative foreground.

Having presented all individual values offered by the *NAATA* formation, the following question may be asked: is it possible to relate the particular senses and, consequently, grasp the gram’s overall meaning in its totality? Put differently, can we explain the construction as a solid rational and homogenous phenomenon instead of offering a classification which is limited to a mere taxonomy of uses?

The connection between all values offered by the *NAATA* locution is evident – and thus a definition which exceeds a simple inventory of values becomes feasible – if one views the gram from a dynamic evolutionary perspective, i.e. as a manifestation of certain developmental processes. Namely, all concrete atomic values almost perfectly match stages on the anterior path: one of the developmental scenarios governing the grammatical evolution of original resultative constructions (cf. BYBEE et al. 1994; DAHL 2000 and ANDRASON 2011a and 2012a). According to the anterior path, resultative grams first develop into perfects (in the beginning, resultative and inclusive present perfects, later experiential and indefinite varieties) and next into past tenses (initially, recent and discursive, subsequently general, remote and narrative ones). When passing from the domain of a present perfect to the “realm” of a definite past tense, original resultative locutions frequently (although not always) acquire an explicit aspectual marking and function as perfective pasts (for a far more detailed treatment of the anterior path, see ANDRASON 2011a and 2012a). The values – various perfect, past and perfective meanings – offered by *NAATA* construction nearly ideally harmonize with the anterior path and match its consecutive stages. As a result, the formation may be classified in its totality as a manifestation of the anterior diachrony, covering the phases of this path from the resultative perfect to the narrative past tense. Such a label enables us to encapsulate and preserve the entire semantic potential of the gram.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Such a use of evolutionary processes in studying contemporary data where the diachronic framework constitutes an explanation for forms that are all viewed as synchronic has been referred to as ‘panchrony’ (ANDRASON 2011b). In linguistics, one usually distinguishes two types of analysis: diachrony and synchrony. The former presents the historical development of a given grammatical element while the latter depicts its contemporary behavior. Panchrony combines these two – usually understood as separated – methods, unifying them into a single global view which may be applied for the description of historically inert grammatical objects and systems, explaining them as dynamic “time-sensitive” phenomena. Under this view, synchrony is understood as a static materialization of a diachronic progress, while dynamic diachrony constitutes a mold – a template – for all possible synchronic mappings. The panchronic method is clearly connected to the grammaticalization theory (for

However, one may not ignore the fact that the *NAATA* form also expresses the concepts of non-intentionality, accidentality and spontaneity of perfect or past activities. Such modally tinted values are not posited by the anterior path model. However linguistic typology does conceive an evolutionary possibility (referred to as ‘evidential track’) which links the grammatical life of original resultatives with determined modal domains. In accordance with this cline, resultatives develop into evidential grams following three subsequent stages: a) inferential based upon resulting visible traces; b) inferential based upon general assumption and hearsay; and c) broad non-first hand evidential (cf. LINDSTEDT 2000; JOHANSON 2000 and 2003; AIKHENVALD 2004: 112–117, 279–281, and ANDRASON 2010). Nevertheless, the connection between the evidential value and the sense of non-intentionality, accidentality and spontaneity is far from being straightforward, and needs further studies. The attempt to explain this relation – and thus to connect the modal meaning of the *NAATA* gram to its source, i.e. to a resultative expression built on the verb *naa* ‘come’ – will constitute one of the future research activities conducted by the author.

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