# THE HAUSA PERFECTIVE TENSE-ASPECT USED IN *WH-*/FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS AND HISTORICAL NARRATIVES: A UNIFIED ACCOUNT

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## 1. Introduction[*]

Russell Schuh has always been attracted to the linguistic study of tense, aspect and mood categories in various genres of Hausa discourse. In the early 1980s he wrote up an insightful paper entitled "Hausa tense/aspect/mood (TAM) system" (Schuh, n.d.a), mainly for the benefit of UCLA students (of which I was one at the time). Around the same period, he also produced a paper dealing more specifically with the two Perfective tense-aspects in Hausa (Schuh, n.d.b). We were aware that the Hausa TAM system was poorly understood and would benefit by detailed and robust examination, and so I wrote a paper entitled "The two perfective aspects and their roles in the flow-control of narrative structures" (1981) as part of my graduate linguistics training, although I did not follow up on that line of research.

In this paper I want to revisit and elaborate some of the ideas I outlined in the earlier paper, concentrating on the semantic characteristics of the paired Perfective tense-aspects in a major discourse context—spontaneously-produced past-time narrative. The main focus is on the role of the paradigm known traditionally as the "Relative Perfective", a set that is in partial complementary distribution with the "General/Neutral Perfective". This tense-aspect form is the one exploited at discourse-level to assert prominent events on the time-axis in foregrounded narrative sequences, but it is also required in classic clause-level *wh*-constructions, i.e., *wh*-

interrogatives, declarative focus constructions, and relative clauses, operations which often share structural properties across languages. (The corresponding "Relative Imperfective" is also obligatory in these movement operations but is not required in narrative, because past-time historical narrative event-lines are carried by the "Relative Perfective".) Formal descriptions, e.g., Tuller (1986) and Green & Reintges (2005), essentially treat the two Perfectives as syntactically-conditioned variants of the *same semantic unit*, i.e., the assumption is that there is no specifiable (or interesting) correlation between the morphosyntactic signal and the meanings/functions of these variants. But the obvious question to be asked is: assuming that we are dealing with a single aspectual category here, what semantic properties do all these constructions share which account for their shared morphosyntactic properties and so explain why they constitute a natural class? I suspect that one reason this form-function question has not been properly addressed relates to the fact that, unlike foreground narrative clauses, *wh-*/focus/relative constructions all entail visible movement and so the various phenomena do not obviously fall together structurally.

Partly in response to earlier formal approaches, which leave various contrasts unexplained, both Schuh and myself have argued (and intuitively felt) for some time that the so-called "Relative Perfective" set is not simply a syntactically-governed replacement for the "General/Neutral Perfective" in fronting operations, but has a distinct *semantic* property which unifies all these related constructions with its role as the marker of narrative event-clauses, i.e., we are dealing with a single morphological and functional entity. Schuh (n.d.a) characterizes the superordinate semantic attribute as "definite" and the tense-aspect itself as the "Definite Perfective", but I prefer the cover-terms "prominence" and "Focus Perfective" for reasons outlined below (§3.3).

I am aware that "prominence" is an intuitive notion which is difficult to define in a totally satisfactory manner, but I hope to refine and validate this concept by pulling together a large body of evidence for the underlying semantic-pragmatic unity of these constructions. I also take a look at the TAMs which occur in background clauses, especially the General Perfective, examining how discourse-semantic constraints either restrict or favour the switch between the two Perfective sets. The corpus I am using consists of two naturally-produced oral narratives: a "brush-with-death" account and a *Pear Film* story-retelling task, see Chafe (1980). (For other discourse analyses of Hausa narratives, see Burquest (1991).)

My central claim is that the fronted focus/*wh-* constructions and pivotal foregrounded portions of past-time narratives utilize the same specialized Perfective tense-aspect morphology because they achieve the same *discourse-pragmatic*

goals—they all supply the most communicatively *prominent* and focal *new* information. At sentence-level, i.e., in focus constructions and interrogatives, it is typically an NP constituent (any syntactic function) which is given prominence via focus-fronting, and this will represent new information focus in response to a *wh*-question (and often in corrective focus); at discourse-level in foreground narrative, it is typically the verbal *predicate* which is highlighted as the pivotal new information, and the syntactic (topical) subject is presupposed, addressee-old information (though this is not an absolute requirement, since new subjects *can* be introduced in foreground). Verbal predicates, or alternatively verbs as heads of their VPs, correspond to the semantic predicate, and because they fill the central role of laying out individual narrative events they are logical recipients for focus marking (Hopper 1979). All these constructions, moreover, involve grammaticalized foregrounding or highlighting/focussing of an addressee-new element as the most informative element in the clause. (Relative clauses do not always manifest these co-varying features but they do share important semantic and syntactic attributes with focus/*wh*- and narrative sequences.) The hypothesis is supported by an empirical study of contexts in which the two Perfective paradigms align with both syntactic and semantic-pragmatic properties.

## 2. An Overview of the Hausa TAM System

Hausa is a discourse-configurational, pro-drop, SVO language in which TAM distinctions are marked by an obligatory inflectional element to the right of the (overt) subject, e.g., *yâaraa [sun]*$_{\text{infl}}$ *kaawoo àbinci* 'the children [3pl.pfv] have brought the food'.[1] This independent preverbal word contains a subject-agreement element (marking person, number and gender) and an auxiliary TAM-marker, and is known as the "person-aspect complex" (PAC) (Newman 2000; Jaggar 2001). Some of these inflectional heads are fusional, e.g., *sun* (3pl.pfv), others are segmentable, e.g., *su-nàa* (3pl subject pronoun-impfv auxiliary). West Chadic languages typically present a basic three-way TAM system which distinguishes "Perfective",

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[1] Transcription: *à(a)* = Low tone, *â(a)* = Falling tone, High tone is unmarked; *aa, ii*, etc. = long, *a, i*, etc. = short; *ɓ, ɗ* = laryngeal implosives, *ƙ* = ejective, *ř* = apical tap/roll, *c* and *j* = palato-alveolar affricates. Abbreviations: COP = (NON-VERBAL) COPULA; DD = definite determiner; EXIST = existential; F = feminine; FOC-IMPFV = focus (relative) imperfective; FOC-PFV = focus (relative) perfective; FUT = future; IMPFV = imperfective; i.o. = indirect object; M = masculine; NARR-PFV = narrative perfective; NEG = negative; PFV = (general) perfective; PL = plural; PRESENT = presentative; RELPRO = relative pronoun; SG = singular; SID = specific indefinite marker; SJNCTV = subjunctive; SUBORD = subordinator; VN = verbal noun; 1/2/3/4 = first/second/third/fourth person.

"Imperfective", and "Subjunctive" (Schuh 1977). The meanings of the two tense-aspect verbal paradigms correspond closely to the standard semantic definitions of perfective and imperfective aspectuality, i.e., the perspective adopted by the speaker in viewing the event—the Perfective describes situations in their entirety from the outside, whereas the Imperfective refers to the internal temporal structure (Comrie 1976). The basic syntactic cut in Hausa is between the Imperfective/Continuous forms (e.g., with non-finite VPs, possessive and adverbial complements), and Perfective/Completive TAMs (governing finite verbs), e.g.,

(1)                        English                      Hausa
a. *Tense*: [non-past] 'he studies Hausa'        =    yanàa kòoyon Hausa
                        PRESENT                      3msg.impfv study.vn.of Hausa
                                                     IMPERFECTIVE

   [past]               'he studied Hausa'       =    yaa kòoyi Hausa
                        PAST                         3msg.pfv study Hausa
                        'he has studied Hausa'       PERFECTIVE
                        PERFECT

b. *Aspect*:            'he is studying Hausa'   =    yanàa kòoyon Hausa
                        PROGRESSIVE PRESENT          IMPERFECTIVE
                        'he was studying Hausa' =    yanàa kòoyon Hausa
                        PROGRESSIVE PAST             IMPERFECTIVE

In (1a) English makes a formal tense distinction between non-past (Present Tense) and past time (Past Tense/Preterite), with Hausa using an Imperfective and Perfective tense-aspect respectively, locating the situation at a specific point in time (usually the moment of speaking). The Hausa (General) Perfective also encompasses both the Simple Past and Perfect in English, depending on context. In (1b), the formal switch in English from (Progressive Present) 'he is studying Hausa' to (Progressive Past) 'he was studying Hausa' is an obligatory reflex of the change from present to past-time reference, but Hausa expresses both meanings with the same Imperfective form (relying on context or an overt temporal adverbial to locate the event in time). The Imperfective views the situation from the inside, and the basic meaning is linked to "the internal temporal consistency of the situation" (Comrie 1976:4). Hausa can also use the non-completed Imperfective to encode both aspectual non-progressive 'he smokes' and progressive ongoing 'he is smoking' (situation coextensive with utterance), i.e., *yanàa shân taabàa* (3msg.impfv drink.vn.of tobacco).

## 3. The Perfective and Focus (inc. Narrative) Perfective Tense-Aspects

### 3.1. Forms

Hausa has two formally distinct affirmative Perfective paradigms, and one negative set (which functions as the negative to both). In the affirmative conjugations, Hausa displays a paradigmatic morphological cut between "General" and what I will term "Focus" inflection. All three sets are exemplified in Table 1 with the finite verb *daawoo* 'return':

*Table 1. Hausa General Perfective, Focus Perfective, and Negative Perfective TAMs*

|       | General Perfective | Focus Perfective | Negative Perfective |
|-------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1sg   | naa daawoo         | na daawoo        | bàn daawoo ba       |
| 2msg  | kaa daawoo         | ka daawoo        | bà kà daawoo ba     |
| 2fsg  | kin daawoo         | kikà daawoo      | bà kì daawoo ba     |
| 3msg  | yaa daawoo         | ya daawoo        | bài daawoo ba       |
| 3fsg  | taa daawoo         | ta daawoo        | bà tà daawoo ba     |
| 1pl   | mun daawoo         | mukà daawoo      | bà mù daawoo ba     |
| 2pl   | kun daawoo         | kukà daawoo      | bà kù daawoo ba     |
| 3pl   | sun daawoo         | sukà daawoo      | bà sù daawoo ba     |
| 4pl   | an daawoo          | akà daawoo       | bà à daawoo ba      |

From a West Chadic perspective, Hausa is unusual in distinguishing two paired Perfective paradigms (Schuh, n.d.c:10), though Kanakuru does exhibit the same pattern (Newman 1974:65ff.). Newman & Schuh (1974:7) claim that the *kà* is a reflex of a proto-Chadic perfective marker *\*kà* or *\*kə̀*, though Schuh (n.d.c:11) now relates this morpheme to a copular element derived from a *\*kV* deictic determiner (see also Jaggar 2001:205). The Focus/Narrative Perfective paradigm was the historically original set which became restricted to focus environments (including predicate "focus" in historical narrative, §6.1), when the new General Perfective was introduced. The General Perfective itself was originally a non-bound independent paradigm which was reworked as a preverbal subject pronoun set (Newman & Schuh 1974).

### 3.2. Basic Functions and Meanings of the Two Affirmative Perfective TAMs

The two affirmative Perfective tense-aspects are the main concern of this paper. Semantically they both express the temporal notion of *anteriority*, i.e., they locate a situation at a time preceding the time-orientation expressed by other elements in the

sentence (or speech context). To account for these (and other) temporal relationships between past, present and future time, and following Declerck (1986, 1991), I will use the following three concepts. (I have taken the liberty of simplifying her model for purposes of this discussion.)

a.  The "time of orientation" (TO) = usually the time of speaking (or writing)
b.  The "time referred to" (TR) = past time, present time, future time
c.   The "time of situation" (TS) = locating the situation in time (perfective and imperfective aspectuality)

In the default case, the core function of both Perfectives is to express the past-time relation [TR is anterior to (<) TO], i.e., where TO is the moment of speaking, e.g., (TAM markers and verbs underlined):

(2)   <u>taa hàifi</u> ɗaa namijì                        [Gen. Perfective = past time]
      3fsg.pfv give birth to son male
      '<u>she gave birth to</u> a boy'
(3)   suu nèe <u>sukà zoo</u>                            [Focus Perfective = past time]
      3pl cop 3pl.foc-pfv come
      'they were the ones <u>(they) came</u>'

When we look at the General Perfective, however, the association between form and past-time reference is not a neat one-to-one match. Because perfective aspectuality expresses situations and events as complete wholes which are not time-related (Comrie 1976, 1985), past-time reference is not a necessary condition for selection of the General Perfective. It can be used, for example, in contexts which do not refer to the moment of speaking (§5.2.4), and can be regarded as the pragmatically neutral, unmarked form of the paired set. (It is also the form compatible with canonical declarative clauses, §5.2.1.) Thus, a future construal of the default General Perfective is found in subordinate conditional clauses, where it indicates that the reference time is posterior (>) to the orientation time, i.e., TR > TO, e.g.,

(4)   koo <u>kin zoo</u> gòobe, bàa zaa kì sàamee sù ba [Gen. Perf. = future time]
      even if 2fsg.pfv come tomorrow neg fut 2fsg find 3pl neg
      'even if you come [<u>have come</u>] tomorrow, you won't find them'

In contrast, the affirmative Focus/Narrative Perfective is *deictic* in the sense that it is almost always interpreted in relation to the time of the utterance and in its primary use is restricted to expressing bounded single-occurrence events and situations

which are *anterior to the utterance-time only* (with the marginal exception of open *if*-conditional clauses, §5.2.4), i.e., the relationship must be TR < TO. The Focus form of the Perfective is therefore much closer to being a tense. Interestingly, if Schuh (n.d.c:11) is correct in identifying the Focus Perfective *kà* morpheme as a copular *\*kV* element derived from a deictic determiner, then we have a possible diachronic match in spatiotemporal deictic function.

## 3.3. Previous Descriptions and Definitions of the Two Perfectives

There are probably as many terms for the two paradigm sets in the literature as there are Hausaists who have described them, some based on semantic attributes and others on the grammatical properties, e.g., "Past Indicative/Relative Past" (Abraham 1959); "Perfect/Aorist" (Parsons 1960); "Accompli I/Accompli II" (Gouffé 1963/66, Caron 1991); "General Past/Relative Past" (Galadanci 1976); "Absolute Past/Relative Past" (Jungraithmayr & Munkaila 1985); "Completive/Relative Completive" (Burquest 1992); "Perfekt/Relative Perfekt (Historicus)" (Wolff 1993); "Completive/Preterite (Relative Completive)" (Newman 2000); "General/Focus Perfective" (Jaggar 2001); "General/Relative Completive" (Schuh, n.d.c).

The set I refer to here as the "Focus/Narrative Perfective" is probably best known to Hausaists as the "Relative Perfective" (because of its occurrence in relative clauses), and most descriptions analyze it simply as a syntactically-determined (obligatory) replacement for the "General Perfective" in focus, *wh-*, and relative constructions. Most treatments, however, ignore its key narrative-tracking function. Bagari (1987: chap. 4) and Schubert (1971/72:270-73) discuss environments where the two sets contrast in meaning, e.g., in subordinate clauses, but neither proposes a uniform compositional meaning which would generalize to all occurrences, i.e., including narrative sequences.

Schuh (n.d.a), responding to a term ("Relative Perfective") he considered narrow and misleading, proposed a semantic/pragmatic characterization. He used the label "Definite Perfective" to capture the semantic generalization that it "represents events understood as specific to a time and/or place and already instantiated" (p. 14). Following Bagari (1976, 1987: chap. 4), he also claimed that in *wh-*/focus/relative environments the event is pragmatically "presupposed" in the sense that it "is taken as given by speaker and hearer" (see also Creissels 1991). This definition is on the right track, but close examination reveals some weaknesses. In the first place, if we look at how linguists such as Quirk et al. (1985:183ff.) appeal to the semantic notion of "definiteness" to explain the distribution of the simple Past Tense in English, it turns out that almost all the past-time contexts they exemplify would in fact require a *General* Perfective in Hausa, not a "Definite Perfective". Another drawback relates

to the fact that although pragmatic presupposition does represent information which is "given", "taken for granted", "old", etc., the standard view of presupposed information is that it is "backgrounded" as "something that is not currently at issue" (Huddleston & Pullum 2002:41-42, 1007ff., 1414ff.). The problem is that the Hausa "Definite Perfective" is normally used to highlight and assert elements which are *"foregrounded"* as informationally prominent and addressee-new, i.e., fronted focus and *wh*-constituents and foregrounded past-time narrative events, not "backgrounded" information which is not at issue (see also Bearth 1993:92).

In Jaggar (1998, 2001:161ff.), I adopted the term "focus" for the special inflectional categories of the Perfective (and Imperfective) tense-aspects used in *wh*-/focus/relative environments, and appealed to the superordinate notion "semantic specificity" to explain its distribution in these environments in addition to narrative discourse. The criterion "specific" is certainly applicable in some cases, but it fails to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of the Focus Perfective. On the other hand, the cover-term "prominent" is preferable because it has a more general information-packaging range (especially as regards the syntactically associated movement constructions). Whatever the merits of these earlier attempts by Schuh and myself at a unified semantic characterization, they reflect our shared view that the alternation between the two Perfective tense-aspects is not simply a matter of syntactic conditioning, but that the selection of one or the other is also motivated by semantic and pragmatic factors.

## 4. The Hypothesis

My core claim is that the use of the "Focus Perfective" in fronted focus/*wh*-constructions and the pivotal foregrounded portions of past-time narratives is a function of the fact that they all supply the most communicatively PROMINENT and focal NEW information and so achieve the same *discourse-pragmatic* goals. This is the key semantic/pragmatic link without which these distinct constructions have only an arbitrary relationship and appear to be functionally dissimilar. The psychological focus of attention is therefore syntactically signalled by the special focus tense-aspect. In focus/*wh*-constructions at the level of sentence grammar, it morpho-logically flags preposed focal elements, typically NP constituents which are given prominence via fronting, and this will represent unpredictable, addressee-new information focus in response to a *wh*-question. In foreground narrative, as pointed out by Hopper (1979), it is the chains of discrete events expressed in verbal predicates which are most frequently highlighted by special TAMs (such as the Focus/Narrative Perfective in Hausa) as the pivotal new intersentential information,

and the syntactic subject (topic) is typically presupposed and addressee-old information.[2] All these related constructions, moreover—focus/wh- and event-line predicate focus—involve *foregrounding* or highlighting of an unpredictable element as the most informative element in the clause—cf. Dorfman's (1969:5) reference to "central or core incidents, whose function is to serve as the *central focus* [my italics] or core of the larger episode..." (cited in Hopper & Thompson 1980:281). Grounding, therefore, is a function of speaker choices at sentence-level and also across discourse. Relative clauses are more problematical in that they do not always manifest these co-varying properties, but they do share one important semantic feature with focus/wh- and narrative event-clauses—the use of the Focus Perfective serves to restrict and so highlight the denotation of the fronted head nominal modified by the relative clause.

For the specific purposes of this paper, I will continue to use the term "Focus Perfective" when referring to the occurrence of this TAM in clause-level focus/wh-/relative environments, but will switch to "Narrative Perfective" when discussing its intersentential narrative-tracking role, with the understanding that this narrative function is simply a related discourse-level manifestation of the semantic content inherent in the Focus Perfective.

In order to validate the hypothesis, I bring together supportive evidence based on distinctive grammatical characteristics and meaning. I investigate declarative main clauses and subordinate clauses, looking at structural contexts where: (1) the two paradigms are in complementary syntactic distribution, e.g., where *wh-* and focus-fronting require the Focus Perfective, whereas *yes/no* questions and topicalization occur with the General Perfective (§5); (2) both Perfectives are attested, e.g., historical narratives where prominent foregrounded event-clauses carrying the story-line require the Focus/Narrative Perfective, but less salient background clauses occur with the General Perfective (§6). The correlations between form and meaning are complex, but significant generalizations are observable (see also Caron 1991, 2000).

## 5. The Focus Perfective and General Perfective in Complementary Environments

In main clauses relating to past time, the major distinction is that the default General Perfective occurs in canonical declarative constructions which are syntactically basic

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[2] Longacre (1990:1-10) also points to a correlation between foreground information and salience and suggests that his own schema for ranking narrative clauses is in fact closely linked to the categories of transitivity set up by Hopper & Thompson (1980).

and pragmatically neutral. The Focus Perfective, on the other hand, is compatible with the derivative non-canonical counterparts which entail syntactic reordering and are pragmatically marked, i.e., focus constructions, interrogatives, and modifying (subordinate) relative clauses.

### 5.1. Focus Perfective Only: Focus, wh-, and Relative Clauses

Constituent ex situ *wh*-questions, declarative focus constructions and relative clauses in Hausa constitute a family of syntactically allied constructions that entail *wh*-movement and are marked by special inflectional morphology. Generative approaches assume that extracted *wh*-phrases carry an inherent focus feature which enables them to target the same position as focus movement, see, e.g., Schachter (1973), Hyman & Watters (1984), Tuller (1986, and Green (1997). Example (5) illustrates a main clause ex situ *wh*-question (a), followed by a new information focus response (b), and entailing: (1) fronting of the discourse/addressee-new WH-/focus elements to left periphery; (2) special inflectional focus marking on the preverbal Focus-Perfective TAMs; (3) an optional post-focus copula/focus marker:

(5) a. [wàa$_i$]$_{WH}$ kukà (*kun) [ganii ____$_i$] à kàasuwaa?
       who 2pl.foc-pfv (*2pl.pfv) see at market
       'who did you see at the market?'
   b. [yaarònkà$_i$]$_{FOC}$ nee mukà (*mun) [ganii ____$_i$]
       boy.of.2msg cop 1 pl.foc-pfv (*1pl.pfv) see
       'it was your boy we saw'

Even though the obligatory choice of the Focus Perfective is syntactically-determined, these displacement operations have a common semantic-pragmatic property, namely the specific prominence given to the foregrounded pre-TAM element, i.e., the fronted focal *wh*-word 'who?' in (5a), and the fronted new information focal response 'your boy' in (5b).

The one environment where the Focus Perfective does not seem to fit semantically is in syntactically associated restrictive relative clauses, where it occurs obligatorily following movement to clause-initial position, e.g.,

(6)  gàa [àbincîn$_i$] dà mukà (*mun) [sayoo ____$_i$]
       pres food.dd subord 1pl.foc-pfv (*1pl.pfv) buy
       'here is the food that we bought'

Although it is not immediately obvious how the semantic-pragmatic properties "foreground/highlighting/prominence" and "new information" might be extended to

cover such relative clause constructions—subordinate relative clauses and their antecedents can (and often do) specify addressee-old information for example — the information encoded by the headed relative clause might be regarded as "new" in terms of the association between the referent of the antecedent and the proposition concerned. Of greater relevance, however, is their specific identifying function. In (6) the postmodifying (restrictive) relative clause 'that we bought' asserts a property of the fronted NP antecedent 'the food' and so restricts/specifies/delimits etc. its denotation, and the whole clause is closely integrated into the matrix.

Important independent evidence for this form-meaning correspondence comes from the recent discovery that *non*-restrictive relative clauses can differ in their syntactic (TAM-selection) structure. Some speakers, for example, will allow a General Perfective (or Imperfective), as an alternative to the (more common) Focus Perfective in the non-restrictive version (Jaggar 1998), e.g.,

(7)  ɗàalìbân, wàɗàndà <u>sun (sukà) gamà</u> aikìnsù, duk sun tàfi
     students.dd relpro 3pl.pfv (3pl.foc-pfv) finish work.of.3pl all 3pl.pfv leave
     'the students, who <u>have finished</u> their work, have all left'

Compare the corresponding restrictive relative where only the Focus Perfective is licensed:

(8)  ɗàalìbân dà <u>sukà (*sun) gamà</u> aikìnsù duk sun tàfi
     students.dd subord 3pl.foc-pfv (*3pl.pfv) finish work.of.3pl all 3pl.pfv leave
     'the students who <u>have finished</u> their work have all left'

This variation is of real interest and is explicable in semantic-pragmatic terms. Nonrestrictives such as (7) are only loosely connected to surrounding materials and so, like topicalization (§5.2.3), do not restrict/affect the designational properties of the head. The additional information they convey is supplementary and backgrounded ("de-emphasized"), and plays no role in identifying the referent.

## 5.2. General Perfective Only

   *5.2.1. Declarative statements in main clauses.* In simple affirmative declarative clauses which denote past-time propositions, only the General Perfective occurs, and it overlaps in meaning with both the English Simple Past (Preterite) and Perfect, e.g.,

(9)  <u>taa yařr dà</u> makullìntà
     3fsg.pfv lose key.of.3fsg
     'she lost her key'

Sentence (9) is equivalent to either a context-dependent 'she lost her key' (Simple Past), or 'she has lost her key' (Perfect) where the action has just been completed in the recent past and is relevant to the time of speaking. The General Perfective can therefore be used to describe the occurrence of events and situations within a time-frame up to 'here-and-now', i.e., situations viewed as the consequence of some (recent) past event. The TAM remains the same even if it occurs in a subordinate clause which is embedded within a matrix clause containing a Focus Perfective, e.g.,

(10) Bàlaa nèe ya gayàa minì <u>taa yaɾ dà</u> makullìntà
     Bala  cop 3msg.foc-pfv tell 1sg.i.o. 3fsg.pfv lose key.of.3fsg
     'it was Bala (who) told me <u>she (had) lost</u> her key'

The General Perfective is also used with future time-reference (= English Future Perfect), e.g., (anterior to future),

(11) raanaa yì ta gòobe <u>naa kammàlà</u> aikìn
     day    like tomorrow 1sg.pfv finish   work.dd
     'a week tomorrow <u>I will have finished</u> the work'

The pragmatically neutral General Perfective is used in a number of related "timeless" contexts where no specific time is entailed, and where English would use a simple present tense, for example, with most semantically stative verbs such as perceptual, cognitive and entry-into-state verbs:

(12) naa yàɾda               'I agree'
     1sg.pfv agree
(13) mun gaanèe           'we understand'
     1pl.pfv understand
(14) naa ƙòoshi           'I'm full (sated)'
     1sg.pfv be full

In (12-14) the atelic states are construed as still existing completed wholes, but persisting over an unlimited time (Comrie 1976:48). The same grammatical TAM construction is used with (dynamic) performative verbs, where the action is seen as completed by being stated, and with communicative verbs, e.g.,

(15) <u>naa yi àlƙawàɾii</u> zân kaawoo makà
     1sg.pfv do promise fut.1sg bring 2msg.io
     'I <u>promise</u> I'll bring (it) to you'

(16) maalàminkà <u>yaa gayàa</u> minì kaa ci jaɍàbâawâɍ
      teacher.of.2msg 3msg.pfv tell 1sg.io 2msg.pfv pass exam.dd
      'your teacher <u>tells</u> me you passed the exam'

Linked to its stative usage, the General Completive is also used to express generic events which hold for all time, including proverbs, e.g.,[3]

(17) shiddà <u>taa fi</u> biyu          'six <u>is greater than</u> two'
      six 3fsg.pfv exceed two
(18) ganii <u>yaa kòori</u> jîi          'seeing <u>is [has driven away]</u> believing'
      seeing 3msg.pfv drive away believing

The General Perfective can also occur in past-time sequences of multiple (two or more) coordinate clauses., e.g.,

(19) yâaraa <u>sun yi aikìi sun gàji</u>
      children 3pl.pfv do work 3pl.pfv be tired
      'the children <u>(have) worked and (have) got tired</u>'

A timeless General Perfective is used in coordinate stage directions, e.g.,

(20) <u>sun</u> shigoo, <u>sun</u> tuuɓèe tàakàlmii, <u>sun</u> zaunàa
      3pl.pfv come in 3pl.pfv take off shoes 3pl.pfv sit down
      'they come in, take off their shoes, and sit down'

One of the defining properties of historical narrative event-clauses is that they are linked in sequence. In (19) and (20), the events are sequential but do not relate to a real narrative discourse with discrete time-points viewed in their totality. Such a narrative sequence would require the Narrative/Focus Perfective, and would also typically include a connective adjunct such as *sai* 'then', e.g.,

(21) <u>sukà</u> shigoo, <u>sukà</u> tuuɓèe tàakàlmii, sai <u>sukà</u> zaunàa
      3pl.narr-pfv come in 3pl.narr-pfv take off shoes then 3pl. narr-pfv sit down
      'they came in, (they) took off their shoes, then (they) sat down'

---

[3] Hausa also has a set of forms, equivalent to English *wh*-ever compounds, composed of *koo* 'whether, if' plus a *wh*-word, e.g., *koowàa = koowaa* 'whoever'. The *koo*-word is in pre-TAM position and functions as the head NP of a modifying relative clause (§5.1), e.g., *zân bâa koowàa ya zoo* 'I'll give (it) to whoever comes' (fut.1sg give whoever 3msg.foc-pfv come). Although the *koo*-word is semantically non-referential, the Focus Perfective is forced here by the syntax.

The General Perfective is also used in headlines, story titles, and captions, e.g.,

(22) <u>An Har̃àmtà</u> Auren Yâaraa  'Marrying Children <u>is/has been Outlawed</u>'
    4pl.pfv outlaw marrying.of children

The General Perfective is also common in past-time reportative news contexts, and a string of recent-past situations can all use the TAM in multiple coordinate main clauses, e.g., (Jaggar 2001:157):

(23) wani ɗan-jàr̃iidàa <u>yaa faɗàa</u> wà gidan r̃eediyòn BBC cêewaa har̃kookin cìnikii
    <u>sun tsayàa</u> cik à yawancin ƙasâr̃. <u>An tsai dà</u> yawancin har̃kookin cìnikii <u>an</u>
    kuma <u>rufèe</u> shaagunàa.
    'A reporter <u>(has) told</u> the BBC that trading activities <u>(have) ground</u> to a halt in
    most of the country. Most trading activities <u>have been stopped</u> and shops <u>have</u>
    <u>been closed</u>.'

The Perfective TAM in (23) assumes the General form because the past situation is viewed as having "current relevance"—hence the Past Perfect English equivalents— and so could comfortably take a present-time adverb such as *yànzun-nàn* 'just now'. Again, however, if the reported events in (23) were being related as a historical narrative sequence, then only the Narrative Perfective would be admissible, i.e., ... *har̃kookin cìnikii <u>sukà tsayàa</u> cik à yawancin ƙasâr̃, <u>akà tsai dà</u> yawancin har̃kookin cìnikii <u>akà</u> kuma <u>rufèe</u> shaagunàa* '...trading activities <u>ground</u> to a halt in most of the country, most trading activities <u>were stopped</u> and shops <u>were closed</u>'. Here the focus is on the realization of the temporally-ordered mainline events in the past, not their "current relevance", since the Focus Perfective is indifferent to the temporal distance between the reference time and utterance time. Notice, however, that if a focus/*wh*- or relative construction intervened within a reportative General Perfective fragment, this would force a Focus Perfective TAM, e.g. (in the middle of a news report), ... *dàa jirgin samà nee <u>ya yi hatsàr̃în</u>*... '... if a plane <u>had had the</u> <u>accident</u>...' (if plane cop(msg) 3msg.foc-pfv do accident.dd), with a focussed constituent 'plane'.

*5.2.2. Yes/no questions.* Unlike *wh*-questions which require the Focus Perfective following movement of the inherently focal *wh*-element, *yes/no* questions preserve the declarative structure and only allow a default General Perfective, e.g.,

(24)    <u>kin kaawoo</u> ruwaa koo?       'did you bring the water or not?'
       2fsg.pfv bring water or

(25)   Audù <u>yaa sàyi</u> mootàa?          'did Audu buy a car?'
         Audu 3msg.pfv buy car

*5.2.3. Topicalization.*   When a constituent is topicalized in front position with a relevant discourse-old link to other items in the preceding discourse (a rule also known as "non–focus preposing"), only the General Perfective is admissible, e.g.,

(26) a.   Àkwai màalàmai dà yawàa à makaȓantaȓmù.
            exist teachers many at school.of.1pl
      b.   [Wasu naa (*na) sanìi], [wasu bàn sanìi ba]
            sid 1sg.pfv (*1sg.foc-pfv) know sid neg.pfv.1sg know neg
            'There are many teachers at our school. [Some I know], [some I don't know]'

Although left-dislocated topics and focus-fronted constituents occur sentence-initial, a major syntactic difference is the absence of special inflection on the TAM which indicates that topics are base-generated, i.e., not displaced like focus constituents (see Green & Reintges 2005:38ff. for a detailed account of the formal properties). There are also key semantic-pragmatic differences. In topicalized constructions, the topic expression often represents addressee/discourse-*old* information and so is independently specified/ identified. This is in contrast to focus constructions, both new information or exhaustive/exclusive, where the focus expression typically represents the salient addressee/discourse-new information.

*5.2.4. Subordinate adverbial clauses.*   Although the form-function correlations of the two Perfectives are typically complex rather than one-to-one, the distribution of the two sets in subordinate environments is basically consistent with the pervasive structural-semantic correlation that the primary (deictic) use of the Focus Perfective is to signal realis, single-occurrence events which are anterior to the utterance time, and so is much closer to being a tense. When these conditions do not apply, the default General Perfective occurs. (For more supportive data see Wolff (1993: chap. 7), Newman (2000: chap. 70), Jaggar (2001: chap. 6), and especially Bagari (1987) and Schuh (n.d.a, n.d.b).)
   One set of constructions that is especially instructive is the conditional. Because conditional clauses entail non-factuality, and are not used to make a positive assertion of any kind, with the partial exception of open conditionals (29), there is a systematic association with the General Perfective. In remote and concessive conditional clauses, the Focus Perfective would be semantically incompatible, and only the unmarked default General Perfective occurs, e.g.,

(27) dàa <u>kin (*kikà) gayàa</u> manà dàa <u>mun (*mukà) shiryàa</u> mikì àbinci
    if 2fsg.pfv (*2fsg.foc-pfv) tell 1pl.i.o. then 1pl.pfv (*1pl.foc-pfv) prepare 2fsg.i.o. food
    'if <u>you had told</u> us then <u>we would have prepared</u> some food for you'

In (27) the past-time remote (counterfactual) conditional describes an imaginary situation which is different from the real world—we understand that you did not tell us—so only the General Perfective is licensed in both the protasis and apodosis to express this modal remoteness (notice that English would use a modal auxiliary in the matrix apodosis).

(28) kanàa iyà gaanèe shi koo <u>yaa canzà</u> muryàr̃sà
    2msg.impfv can recognize 3msg even if 3msg.pfv change voice.of.3msg
    'you can recognize him even if <u>he changes (has changed)</u> his voice'

In (28) the truth of the initial main clause might be considered false in the light of the information in the subordinate concessive clause. The form-meaning correlation is strong but not exceptionless, however. In open *if*-conditional clauses the two Perfectives actually compete and can both be used in contexts without specific reference to present time, e.g.,

(29) ìdan <u>kin/kikà kaawoo</u> aikìn gòobe, zân duubàa shi [future time]
    if 2fsg.pfv/2fsg.foc-pfv bring work.dd tomorrow fut.1sg look at 3msg
    'if <u>you bring (have brought)</u> the work tomorrow, I'll look at it'

In (29) the time of [you bringing the work] is understood as a future time later (posterior to) than now, but still anterior to [me looking at it]. Speakers seem to have a free choice in open conditionals, i.e., the two sets unusually share syntactic distribution here, and the semantic distinction between the Focus Perfective and General Perfective is breaking (or has broken) down. (Cf. English, where the basically deictic Past/Preterite tense can depart from its past-time primary meaning and be used in a subordinate clause to express a modal remote conditional in the future, e.g., 'if you <u>came</u> tomorrow, that would be better'.)

    In subordinate temporal 'when' clauses, the conjunction *dà* 'when' is used with the Focus Perfective to recapitulate a past-time event-clause in foreground narrative (§6.2), e.g.,

(30) sai ya ɗâukee kwàndôn ... <u>dà ya ɗâukee</u> kwàndoo ɗaya ...
    then 3msg.narr-pfv take basket.dd when 3msg.foc-pfv take basket one
    'then he took the basket ... <u>when he had taken</u> the one basket ...'

In (30) the background clause 'when he had taken the one basket' repeats the event-clause just mentioned and is introduced by dà 'when' + Focus Perfective (this subordinate clause is not part of the narrative sequence and the Focus Perfective is syntactically required here after the (relative) dà conjunction, see §6.2). If the same conjunction is used to introduce a subordinate 'when (as soon as)' clause in the *future*, however, then it takes the General Perfective, e.g.,

(31) <u>dà kaayân sun isoo</u>, zân gayàa makà
     when goods.dd 3pl.pfv arrive fut.1sg tell 2msg.i.o.
     '<u>when/as soon as the goods arrive (have arrived)</u>, I'll tell you'

There are also some paired subordinators with equivalent past-time meaning such as *baayân dà* and *baayan* 'after' where the relative form *baayân dà* (back.the which) takes a syntactically required Focus Perfective and the non-relative counterpart *baayan* (back.of) takes a General Perfective, e.g. (from Bagari 1987:87),

(32)  a.     sun yi barcii <u>baayân dà sukà ci àbinci</u>
            3pl.pfv do sleep after 3pl.foc-pfv eat food
=  b.     sun yi barcii <u>baayan sun ci àbinci</u>
            3pl.pfv do sleep after 3pl.pfv eat food
            'they slept <u>after they had eaten</u>'

With future time reference, however, only *baayan* 'after' + General Perfective is licensed in the subordinate clause (the essentially "past time in relation to the here-and-now" Focus Perfective would again be semantically inadmissible), e.g.,

(33) <u>baayan kun gamàa</u>, sai mù tàfi
     after 2pl.pfv finish then 1pl.sjnctv go
     '<u>after you have finished</u>, then we can go'

As regularly exemplifed throughout, the connective adjunct *sai* 'then' frequently occurs in foreground narrative event-clauses with a following Narrative Perfective, e.g. (non-subordinate clauses, see Appendix B),

(34) <u>sai ya yi karòo dà</u> duutsèe, <u>sai ya faaɗì dà</u> kèekên,
     then 3msg.narr-pfv do collision with rock then 3msg.narr-pfv fall with bike.dd
     <u>duk sai mangwàr̃on ya zubèe</u>
     all then mango.dd 3msg.narr-pfv spill
     '<u>then he bumped into</u> a rock, <u>then he fell</u> with the bike, <u>then the mangoes all spilled</u>'

*Sai* can also function as a negative-oriented subordinator '(not) until', indicating a future-time endpoint. In such contexts, however, it takes the neutral General Perfective in the subordinate clause, e.g.,

(35) bàa zân biyaa kà ba <u>sai kaa gamà</u> aikìn
     neg fut.1sg pay 2msg neg until 2msg.pfv finish work.dd
     'I won't pay you <u>until you have finished</u> the work'

## 6. The Narrative (Focus) Perfective and General Perfective: Contrastive Functions in Narrative

Past-time narrative is a key domain where both Perfective paradigms are attested but where the on-line selection is based on intrinsic meaning and pragmatics. As already noted, the core function of both the General Perfective and Focus Perfective is to express the temporal notion of *anteriority*, i.e., a time preceding the time-orientation expressed by other elements in the sentence (or the speech context), typically the moment of speaking. Examples (36) and (37) are declarative statements containing General and Narrative Perfective forms respectively, and both locate the time referred to (TR) as *anterior* to (<) the time of speaking (or writing), i.e., the time of orientation (TO), and TR also coincides with the time of situation (TS):

(36) TR/TS < TO    <u>yaa</u> mutù        [past time]
                  3msg.pfv die
                  'he (has) died'
(37)                  a.    … dà ya daawoo,
                        when 3msg.foc-pfv return
        TR/TS < TO    b.    sai <u>ya</u> mutù    [past time]
                        then 3msg.narr-pfv die
                        '… when he had returned, then he died'

In both (36) and (37) the time of dying (TR) is coextensive with the time of situation (TS) and is construed as a time-point earlier than the here-and-now time of orientation (TO). Despite this unified semantic property of anteriority, however, there is an important functional difference—whereas use of the General Perfective *yaa mutù* in (36) simply denotes a state (and is translatable with a context-dependent English Past/Preterite 'he died' or Present Perfect 'he has died'), the Focus Perfective *ya mutù* in (37b) is performing its canonical discourse function of tracking a specific occurrence on the past time-axis. This is a prototypical narrative sequence: the initial background subordinate clause (37a) 'when he had returned'

interrupts the narrative flow by repeating the foreground event-clause just mentioned, and is introduced by the subordinator *dà* 'when' and a Focus Perfective (this is syntactically required because *dà* is in fact an elliptical variant of the complex relative NP subordinator *lookàcîn dà* 'the time that'). The narrative is then resumed in (37b) with an event-clause *sai ya mutù* 'then he died' introduced with the connective adjunct *sai* 'then' and a Narrative Perfective. In such contexts the two paradigms are in complementary syntactic distribution—substituting the narrative form *ya* in (36), or the neutral form *yaa* in (37b) would result in ungrammaticality.

Note that because there is no single overt tense-aspect marker of narrative foregrounding in English, an out-of-context sentence like 'she went to university' (simple Past Tense) could occur simply as: (a) a background, marginal event or statement/response in conversation, e.g., '*she went to university* and got a degree', or (b) as one in a series of foregrounded events in a narrative sequence, e.g., '...then *she went to university* and got a degree and became a teacher'. In Hausa, however, the two clauses would be unambiguously distinguished in the syntax because narrative foregrounding is grammaticalized, cf. (38) and (39).

(38) <u>taa</u> jee jaami'àa <u>taa sàami</u> dìgìr̃i
    3fsg.pfv go university 3fsg.pfv get degree
    '*she went to university* and <u>(she) got</u> a degree'

(39) sai <u>ta</u> jee jaami'àa <u>ta sàami</u> dìgìr̃i <u>ta zama</u> maalàmaa
    then 3fsg.narr-pfv go university 3fsg.narr-pfv get degree 3fsg.narr-pfv become teacher
    '...then *she went to university* and <u>(she) got</u> a degree and <u>(she) became</u> a teacher'

We now turn to consider the use of the Focus Perfective to guide the addressee through the fabric of the story by highlighting new, foreground events as expressed in the verbal predicates of past-time narratives. As we have seen (§5.1), these criterial semantic/pragmatic features—foregrounding and addressee-new information status—also characterize fronted focus and *wh*-constructions, and it is this key observation which explains why these intersentential and sentence-internal constructions form a natural class and so are marked by the same tense-aspect morphology.

## 6.1. The Focus Perfective in Foreground Historical Narrative Sequences

A historical narrative discourse, as defined by Longacre (1990:1-2), is a storyline developed by clauses in which the verbs encode a series of often punctual and

volitional/agential actions in chronological sequence, each of which initiates a new situation, and directed to a climax. A canonical past-time narrative also differs from other discourse types by including what Longacre terms "cohesive" clauses which contribute to the textual cohesion and narrative progression. In Hausa these clauses are usually initiated by connective adjuncts such as (sequential and anaphoric) *sai* 'then (after that)', *sànnan* = *sânnan* 'then' (that time), or (recapitulatory) *dà* 'when' (see exx. above). There are several related semantic/pragmatic properties which together characterize and motivate the Hausa Narrative Perfective in foregrounded narrative main clauses, features which are generally accepted as the important defining characteristics across languages. Thus, the backbone chain events encoded by the Narrative Perfective have the following criterial design features. They must be: (1) anterior to the utterance-time (as specified above); (2) single-occurrence, telic, complete units; (3) linked in sequence by the speaker to specific time-points. (This definition is in fact close to Quirk et al's (1985:183) characterization of the English "Definite Past" tense, minus the sequentiality condition (3).) The verbs in the Narrative Perfective predicates also usually express punctual and conceptually bounded actions (though the link between perfective marking and situations involving telic punctual accomplishments requires another paper).

Cross-linguistic studies also indicate that the distinction between background and foreground clauses is a universal attribute of narrative discourse (see Hopper 1979, 1982 on aspectual markers in narrative). Speakers need to distinguish reference to the main (foreground) actions from supporting (background) information and so exploit tense-aspect to navigate their way through the storyline, often using a specific verbal paradigm for foregrounding. Foregrounded clauses are the backbone of the narrative and assert realis events and results, functioning to move the sequential narrative forward; settings and causes, on the other hand, are interpreted as background, with states usually serving supporting roles. In the prototypical case, and except when a new (agential) subject is introduced, foregrounded pivotal clauses in narrative also contain in their predicates the communicatively *prominent* addressee/discourse *new* information, i.e., each event leads to a new situation. In Hausa this is a key compositional property shared with new information focus (and *wh*-) constructions, and so they attract the same Focus/Narrative Perfective marking.[4] (For various treatments of the universal foreground vs. background

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[4] Biber (1984) documents an analogous situation in Central Somali, where clause-level constituent focus and foregrounded narrative clauses use the same focus particle *yaa*. See also Anderson (1979:86ff.) and Hyman & Watters (1984:258) on Aghem, a Cameroonian Grassfields Bantoid

distinction, see Labov (1972), Grimes (1975), Reinhart (1984), Matthiessen & Thompson (1988), Longacre (1990), and especially Hopper (1979, 1982) and Hopper & Thompson (1980).) Fragment (40), taken from the narrative in Appendix B, illustrates a prototypical sequence of foreground, same-subject clauses:

(40) a.   Shiikèenan, sai ya [hau kân]...
          that was that then 3msg.narr-pfv climb on
     b.   ya [faarà tuurà kèekènshì],
          3msg.narr-pfv begin push bike.of.3msg
     c.   ya [yi tàfiyàr̃shì].
          3msg.narr-pfv do go.vn.of.3msg
          'That was that, then he got on ... he started to push his bike, and he went on his way.'

In (40) the verb, as the syntactic predicator and head of the VP, is the principle mechanism for advancing the flow of new information in the narrative. The new events are introduced in the three predicates (a) [got on], (b) [started to push his bike], and (c) [went on his way], and the presupposed subject referent is identical throughout. The discourse status of this new focal information is marked by the recurring affirmative Narrative Perfective subject element *ya*.

 Although foregrounded clauses typically refer to the same subject participant performing the sequential narrative actions, i.e., there is continuity of referent, action, time, and place, it is of course possible to get a change of subject, e.g.,

(41) a. Ya yi tàfiyàr̃shì
          3msg.narr-pfv do go.vn.of.3msg
     b. Tôo, àshee yaa bar̃ hùular̃sà à wur̃în dà akà yi karòn,
          well but 3msg.pfv leave hat.of.3msg in place.dd subord 4pl.foc-pfv do collision.dd
     c. sai wani yaaròo sai ya ga hùulâr̃.
          then sid boy then 3msg.narr-pfv see hat.dd
          'He went on his way. Well, but he had left his hat where the collision had taken place, then a boy saw the hat.'

In (41c) it is in fact the whole proposition expressed in the event-clause 'then a boy saw the hat' which represents the new foregrounded information (or alternatively the subject + (predicator) verb without the old information complement 'the hat'). Example (42) illustrates another typical narrative device entailing repetitious co-

ordination of a string of event-line clauses each initiated by connective-anaphoric *sai* 'then (after that)'. Temporal *sai* refers to a time closely following the antecedent event in the preceding clause and signals entry into the next new foreground event, each with a Narrative Perfective, i.e., *sai* [event 1] ..., *sai* [event 2] ..., *sai* [event 3] ... etc., with *sai* identifying each subsequent point in the narrative, e.g.,

(42)  a. ... <u>sai</u> ƙarfèn tayàa ya kaŕcèe tiitìi,
        then metal.of tyre 3msg.narr-pfv scrape road
     b. <u>sai</u> wutaa ta yi tàŕtsatsii hakà.
        then fire 3fsg.narr-pfv do sparks thus
     c. Shiikèenan <u>sai</u> ya tàfi can.
        that was that then 3msg.narr-pfv go there
     '... <u>then</u> the metal rim scraped on the road, <u>then</u> the fire produced sparks like that. That was that <u>then</u> he (the driver) went off.'

The clause-initial *shiikèenan* 'that was that' in (42c) is another common anaphoric connective in discourse—its antecedent event is signaled by the Narrative Perfective tense-aspect in the preceding clause (b)—and it can in fact combine with *sai* 'then' as here. *Shiikèenan* tends to be more "disruptive" than *sai*, however, and can signal a juncture in the narrative flow, e.g., a theme-switch or transition to a new episode, action sequence, or "idea unit" (Chafe 1980):

(43) a. Mukà jee bìkin wani àbookinmù.
        1pl.narr-pfv go party.of sid friend.of.1pl
     b. <u>Shiikèenan</u> mun jee can gàban Bàgàuda nèe, à Kanòo.
        OK/that was that 1pl.pfv go there beyond Bagauda cop in Kano
        'We went to the party of one of our friends. <u>OK/that was that</u>, we had gone way beyond Bagauda, in Kano.'

*6.2. TAMs and other Strategies in Background Narrative Clauses*
    Although it is impossible to do justice to all aspects of the phenomenon of grounding in Hausa narrative discourse, we now turn briefly to consideration of the various non-Narrative Perfective TAMs and other strategies which are commonplace in the background portions of narratives. In historical narratives, as we have seen, speakers distinguish the foreground from the background largely by the use of tense-aspect morphology. The background functions to provide supportive material that elaborates or evaluates the focal events in the foreground, and like subordinate clauses, it often signals causes, reasons, conditions, means, etc. Background may also provide orientation, or explanation and identification, and I

will draw on some of Longacre's (1990:4) terminology to describe the various departures from the linear sequence of event-clauses, e.g., scene-setting, evaluations (author intrusions), etc. The TAMs frequently encountered in background contexts are the General Perfective, the quasi-modal Subjunctive and Future, and the Imperfective (see also Burquest 1991, 1992).

As already noted, the General Perfective encodes a non-deictic past event in background narrative sequences, locating a situation as anterior to an intermediate time referred to which is itself anterior to the time of the utterance, and so is equivalent to a 'had' Past Perfect in English, e.g., (see text Appendix A),

(44) a.  na buuɗèe, tôo daree <u>yaa faarà yîi</u>
         1sg.narr-pfv open well night 3msg.pfv start do.vn
     b.  sai ƙarfèn tayàa ya kaȓcèe tiitìi.
         then metal.of tyre 3msg.narr-pfv scrape road
         'I opened (the door), well night-time <u>had arrived</u>, then the metal rim scraped on the road.'

In terms of information processing the General Perfective form in clause (44a) maps supportive background information, and contributes to the interpretation of the key foreground events by signalling prior events outside the main sequential time-line. The same TAMs in (45) are evaluative and external to the narrative itself:

(45) a.  Na kaasà maa buuɗèe ƙoofàa
         1sg.narr-pfv be unable even open door
     b.  sabòodà <u>naa giggìcee,</u>
         because 1sg.pfv panic
     c.  duk <u>naa zàtaa</u> duk <u>sun rìgaa sun mutù</u>.
         all 1sg.pfv think all 3pl.pfv do already 3pl.pfv die
     d.  Na buuɗèe ....
         1sg.narr-pfv open
         'I couldn't even open the door because <u>I'd panicked,</u> <u>I thought</u> that <u>they had all died already</u>. I opened...'

In (45) the narrative temporal sequence (45a) is interrupted by a string of General Perfective verbs which provide causal evaluation on the part of the speaker. The subordinate clause (45b) *sabòodà naa giggìcee* 'because I'd panicked' contains a stative (emotion) verb *giggìcee,* followed by evaluative (c) *duk naa zàtaa duk sun rìgaa sun mutù* 'I thought that they had all died already'. Together, they provide an assessment of the speaker's state of mind and motivation at the time, before he then re-enters the narrative flow in (45d).

Future and subjunctive TAMs in background clauses are used to make a prediction about the outcome of an irrealis event (located after the event on the main time-line), e.g. (from Appendix B),

(46) a.  Shiikèenan, yaa cikà kwàndoo gùdaa biyu,
     OK 3msg.pfv fill basket unit two

   b.  yaa hau kân mangwàr̃òn,
     3msg.pfv climb top.of mango tree.dd

   c.  <u>zâi jee</u>,
     fut.3msg go

   d.  don <u>yà tsinkoo mangwàr̃òn</u>
     so as to 3msg.sjnctv pick mango.dd

   e.  dà <u>zâi cikà kwàndonshì na k̃àrshee</u>,
     subord fut.3msg fill basket.of.3msg of last

   f.  shii kwàndoo na ukù.
     3msg basket of three
     '(a) OK, he had filled two baskets, (b) he had climbed the mango tree, (c) and <u>he was about to go</u>, (d) so <u>he could pick the mangoes</u> (e) that <u>he would fill his last basket with</u>, (f) the third basket.'

In (46) the narrative is suspended by two flashback General Perfective clauses (a, b), followed by a projective Future TAM (c) and a Subjunctive clause (d) with another Future embedded in the relative clause (e). These elaborative background clauses serve to explain and justify the subsequent narrative action.

The temporal adjunct *dà* 'when', as noted above, is regularly used as a narrative device to initiate a cohesive background clause which anaphorically recapitulates the event in a previous clause, e.g.,

(47) a.  <u>ya baa shì</u>, ya cèe gàa hùular̃shì.
     3msg.narr-pfv give 3msg 3msg.narr-pfv say present hat.of.3msg

   b.  Shiikèenan, <u>dà ya baa shì hùular̃</u> ...
     OK when 3msg.foc-pfv give 3msg hat.dd
     '<u>he gave him</u> (the hat), he said here was his hat. OK, <u>when he had given him the hat</u>...'

In (47b) the orientation subordinate clause 'when he had given him the hat' is interpolated to repeat the event in the preceding clause (47a). Notice that because *dà* 'when' requires the Focus Perfective—it is a reduced form of the complex relative NP subordinator *lookàcîn dà* 'the time that', cf. 48c—the formal contrast between

the foreground Narrative Perfective and background (past-in-the-past) General Perfective is neutralized. An identical neutralization is exemplified in (48b):

(48) a.  ... mù duubà                b. mèe <u>ya</u> fàaru.
      1pl.sjnctv see                      what 3msg.foc-pfv happen
   c.  Àshee lookàcîn dà <u>sukà</u> faaɗàa raamìn,
      well when 3pl.foc-pfv fall into hole.dd
   d.  sai <u>sukà</u> faaɗàa cikin tàɓoo ...
      then 3pl.narr-pfv fall into mud
      '... to see what <u>had happened</u>. Well, when <u>they had fallen</u> into the ditch,
      then <u>they fell into</u> some mud...'

Although (48b) *mèe ya fàaru* 'what had happened' is a flashback clause, the presence of the *wh*-word triggers an obligatory Focus Perfective, together with the grammatically required form in (48c) *lookàcîn dà sukà faaɗàa raamìn* 'when they had fallen into the ditch'. Notice how the speaker then initiates another narrative sequence with *sai* 'then' in (48d).

    The Imperfective expresses incomplete durative-progressive action, and often occurs in narrative background to express an event simultaneous with the narrative progression. Such orientation clauses provide background information, e.g.,

(49) a.  <u>Munàa daawôowaa dàgà lìyaafàa</u>.
      1pl.impfv return.vn from entertainment
   b.  Tôo, àkwai mootoocii wajen goomà dà mukà tàfi dà suu.
      OK exist cars about ten subord 1pl.foc-pfv go with 3pl
   c.  Muu <u>munàa cikin ƙaramar̃ mootàa nee</u>, Daihatsu.
      1pl 1pl.impfv in small.of car cop Daihatsu
      '<u>We were returning from the entertainment</u>. OK, there were about ten  cars
      that we'd taken. <u>We were in a small car</u>, a Daihatsu.'

In (49a, c) the Imperfective is used to signal the background circumstantial clauses 'we were returning from the entertainment' and 'we were in a small car, a Daihatsu'. These orientational TAMs express ongoing actions which overlap with the mainline narrative events.

    Finally, new participants (or props) are typically introduced by deictic function words such as existential *àkwai* 'there is/are' (49b, 50d), presentative *gàa* 'here/there is/are' (47a, 51a), and the copula *nee* (msg/pl), *cee* (fsg) (52a), and all such non-verbal clauses provide descriptive orientation for the ensuing material. The following clause often contains a motion verb, with a Narrative Perfective TAM

if the speaker views it as part of the foreground narrative (52b), or a default General Perfective if the event is perceived as part of the background (50e, 51b). Examples:

(50) a. Shiikèenan sai ya tàfi can.
    that was that then 3msg.narr-pfv go there
  b. Mun ɗâukee kân mootàa            c. don kâr̃ mù bugèe shi,
    1pl.pfv take head.of car                in order neg 1pl.sjnctv hit 3msg
  d. can kuma <u>àkwai bàbbar̃ mootàa,</u>    e. taa tahoo.
    there and exist big.of car              3fsg.pfv appear
    '(a) That was that then he went off. (b) We had changed direction (c) so as not to hit him, (d) and in the distance <u>there was a lorry</u>, (e) it had appeared.'

(51) a. Can à kân hanyàa sai kuma <u>gàa wata yaarinyàa,</u>
    there on road then also present sid girl
  b. taa tahoo dàgà wani gurii.
    3fsg.pfv appear from sid place
    'Later on <u>there was a girl</u>, she had appeared from somewhere'

(52) a. Dà farkoo dai <u>wani mùtûm nee,</u>    b. ya jee...
    at first actually sid man cop            3msg.narr-pfv go
    'First of all actually <u>there's (it's) a man</u>, he went....'

Following the single Narrative Perfective clause in (52b), the speaker then moves off the event-line and sets the scene with a string of ten background clauses before re-entering the narrative (see Appendix B).

## 7. Summary and Conclusions

The key claim advanced and supported here is that the obligatory occurrence of the Focus/Narrative Perfective TAM in both focus/*wh*-constructions and main clause historical narrative is not accidental, despite the apparent diversity of these phenomena. Various structural, semantic and pragmatic constraints either restrict or favour the variation in the use of the two Perfective paradigms. Thus, in contrast to the unmarked default General Perfective, the Focus Perfective is a specialized inflectional set whose primary use is to encode bounded single-occurrence events and situations which are anterior to the utterance-time. Focus/*wh*-and foreground narratives all involve elements that are highly salient/prominent in the discourse context. Focus/*wh*- expressions entail syntactic fronting/preposing of constituents,

and pragmatically foregrounded event-clauses in narrative sequences are formally marked with the same special tense-aspect morphology. All these related constructions—sentence-level focus/*wh-* and intersentential event-line predicate focus—involve foregrounding or highlighting of an addressee-new element as the most informative element in the clause and so constitute a natural class. Finally, this unified account owes its stimulus to some of Russell Schuh's earlier insights into the Hausa TAM system, where he investigated the distinctive syntactic and semantic features of the various inflectional categories in order to explain their functional distribution in naturally-occurring discourse.

APPENDIX A: *Rân Dà Na Yi Kusan Mutuwàa "The Day I Nearly Died"*
(Note: Single underlining, e.g., ya, indicates (affirmative) Narrative/Focus Perfective; broken underlining, e.g., yaa, indicates General Perfective.)

| (1) Wata raanaa nèe dai, | (1) It was one day actually, |
|---|---|
| (2) mukà jee bìkin wani àbookinmù. | (2) we went to the party of one of our friends. |
| (3) Shiikèenan mun jee can gàban Bàgàuda nèe, à Kanòo. | (3) OK we had gone way beyond Bagauda, in Kano. |
| (4) Munàa daawôowaa dàgà lìyaafàa. | (4) We were returning home from the entertainment. |
| (5) Tôo, àkwai mootoocii wajen goomà dà mukà tàfi dà suu. | (5) OK, there were about ten cars which we had taken. |
| (6) Muu munàa cikin ƙàramař mootàa nee, Daihatsu. | (6) We, we were in a small car, a Daihatsu. |
| (7) Shiikèenan àkwai mootàř àbookinmù, | (7) OK, there was our friend's car, |
| (8) tanàa baaya. | (8) it was behind. |
| (9) Sai ya zoo | (9) Then he came up |
| (10) ya ficèe mu. | (10) and passed us. |
| (11) Yaa ficèe mu kèenan, | (11) Just as he had passed us, |
| (12) sai tayàřsà ta baaya ta yi bindigàa. | (12) then his back tyre blew out |
| (13) Shiikèenan, sai ya yi 'jaaaaa' à gàbanmù, | (13) That was that, then he went 'rrrr' in front of us, |
| (14) mootàa ta yi juuyàa | (14) the car turned over |
| (15) ta kaɗàa à gàbanmù. | (15) and swerved in front of us. |
| (16) Yanàa kaɗàawaa, | (16) He was swerving, |
| (17) tôo daree yaa faarà yîi, | (17) well night-time had come, |

| | |
|---|---|
| (18) sai ƙarfèn tayàa <u>ya</u> kařcèe tiitìi, | (18) then the metal rim of the tyre scraped on the road |
| (19) sai wutaa <u>ta</u> yi tàřtsatsii hakà. | (19) then the fire made sparks like that. |
| (20) Shiikèenan sai <u>ya</u> tàfi can. | (20) That was that then he went off. |
| (21) <u>Mun</u> ɗaukee kân mootàa | (21) We had changed direction |
| (22) don kâř mù bugèe shi, | (22) so as not to hit him, |
| (23) can kuma àkwai bàbbař mootàa, | (23) and in the distance there was a lorry, |
| (24) <u>taa</u> tahoo. | (24) it had appeared. |
| (25) <u>Mun</u> zàci maa | (25) We even thought |
| (26) mootàa ta baayanmù zaa tà zoo | (26) the car behind us would come |
| (27) tà haɗàa dà ta gàbanmù, | (27) and collide with the one in front of us, |
| (28) tà naanèe gàbaa ɗaya, | (28) and crush (it) in one go, |
| (29) duk mù tàfi. | (29) and we would all die. |
| (30) Àmmaa Allàh <u>ya</u> kiyàayee, | (30) But God protected us, |
| (31) sai ita mootář <u>ta</u> yi can | (31) then that car went off |
| (32) <u>ta</u> faaɗàa cikin wani raamìi. | (32) and plunged into a ditch. |
| (33) Tôo, kàafìn mù jee | (33) OK, before we could go |
| (34) mù tsayàa à bàakin tiitìi, | (34) and stand by the side of the road, |
| (35) duk gàbanmù yanàa ta faaɗùwaa, | (35) we were in a state of shock, |
| (36) don <u>mun</u> ɗaukàa | (36) because we assumed |
| (37) waɗàncân <u>sun</u> faaɗàa raamìi | (37) those people had fallen into the ditch |
| (38) duk gàbaa ɗaya <u>sun</u> mutù. | (38) and had all instantly died. |
| (39) <u>Akà</u> cêe | (39) I was told |
| (40) nii ìn buuɗèe ƙoofàa, | (40) I should open the door, |
| (41) nii dà nakè gidan gàba. | (41) I who was in the passenger seat. |
| (42) <u>Na</u> kaasà maa buuɗèe ƙoofàa | (42) I couldn't even open the door |
| (43) sabòo dà <u>naa</u> giggìcee, | (43) because I had panicked, |
| (44) duk <u>naa</u> zàtaa | (44) I assumed |
| (45) duk <u>sun</u> rìgaa <u>sun</u> mutù. | (45) they had all already died. |
| (46) <u>Na</u> buuɗèe, | (46) I opened (it), |
| (47) <u>mukà</u> yi saurii dà kyař dai, | (47) we moved quickly with real difficulty, |
| (48) sai wani maalàmii <u>ya</u> buuɗèe mîn ƙoofàa, | (48) then a teacher opened the door for me, |
| (49) <u>mukà</u> yi saurii, | (49) we moved fast, |
| (50) <u>mukà</u> jee, | (50) we went, |
| (51) <u>mukà</u> buuɗèe, | (51) we opened (it), |
| (52) mù jee | (52) to go |
| (53) mù duubà | (53) and see |

| | |
|---|---|
| (54) mèe ya fàaru. | (54) what had happened. |
| (55) Àshee lookàcîn dà <u>sukà</u> faaɗàa raamìn, | (55) Well, when they had plunged into the ditch, |
| (56) sai <u>sukà</u> faaɗàa cikin tàɓoo, | (56) then they landed in some mud, |
| (57) sai mootàa <u>ta</u> kafèe, | (57) then the car got stuck, |
| (58) bà tà juuyàa ba. | (58) and didn't roll over. |
| (59) Shiikèenan <u>mukà</u> jee, | (59) That was that we went over, |
| (60) kàafìn mù jee maa, | (60) before we even went (to them), |
| (61) <u>sun</u> faarà fitôowaa, | (61) they had started to get out, |
| (62) duk gàbaa ɗaya <u>sukà</u> fitoo. | (62) and they all got out together. |
| (63) Allàah <u>ya</u> kiyàayee, | (63) God protected them, |
| (64) bâa wandà ya yi ràunii. | (64) no one was injured. |
| (65) Shiikèenan <u>mukà</u> jee, | (65) That was that we went, |
| (66) <u>mukà</u> tsai dà wasu mootoocii, | (66) and we stopped some cars, |
| (67) <u>mukà</u> taimàkaa, | (67) and we helped out, |
| (68) <u>akà</u> ɗagà mootàa, | (68) the car was lifted up, |
| (69) <u>akâ</u> fitoo dà ita. | (69) and it was pulled out. |
| (70) Mukà yi ƙòoƙarii, | (70) We made an effort, |
| (71) dà <u>mukà</u> jaawoo tà, | (71) when we had pulled it out, |
| (72) <u>mukà</u> canjà tayàa, | (72) we changed the tyre, |
| (73) <u>mukà</u> daawoo gidaa laafiyàa. | (73) and we returned home safely. |

APPENDIX B: *The Pear Film Narrative*
(Note: Single underlining, e.g., <u>ya</u>, indicates (affirmative) Narrative/Focus Perfective; broken underlining, e.g., <u>yaa</u>, indicates General Perfective.)

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Dà farkoo dai wani mùtûm nee, | (1) First of all actually there's a man, |
| (2) <u>ya</u> jee... | (2) he went |
| (3) yanàa tsìnkaȓ mangwàrònshì. | (3) he's picking his mangoes. |
| (4) Yanàa dà kwandunàa gùdaa ukù. | (4) He has three baskets. |
| (5) Shiikèenan, <u>yaa</u> cikà kwàndoo gùdaa biyu, | (5) OK, he had filled two baskets, |
| (6) <u>yaa</u> hau kân mangwàȓòn, | (6) he had climbed to the top of the mango tree, |
| (7) zâi jee, | (7) he was about to go, |
| (8) don yà tsinkoo mangwàȓòn | (8) to pick the mangoes |
| (9) dà zâi cikà kwàndonshì na ƙàrshee, shii kwàndoo na ukù. | (9) that he would fill his last basket with, the third basket. |
| (10) <u>Yaa</u> hau can, | (10) He had climbed up there, |

| | |
|---|---|
| (11) yanàa ƙòoƙarin | (11) he was trying |
| (12 yà tsittsinkoo, | (12) to pick (them), |
| (13) sai wani yaaròo ya zoo à kân kèekè, | (13) then a boy came on a bike, |
| (14) sai ya duubà mùtumìn. | (14) then he looked at the man. |
| (15) Dà ya ga | (15) When he had seen |
| (16) mùtumìn baa yàa kallonshì | (16) the man wasn't watching him, |
| (17) sai ya ɗaukee kwàndôn. | (17) then he took the basket. |
| (18) Dà ya ɗaukee kwàndoo ɗaya | (18) When he had taken the one basket |
| (19) wandà ya cikàa, | (19) that he had filled, |
| (20) sai ya ɗooràa à kân kàaɍiyàɍsà, | (20) then he put it on his bike-rack, |
| (21) sai ya fìta à gùje. | (21) then he left in a hurry. |
| (22) Yanàa ta gudùu à kân kèekènshì, | (22) He was speeding off on his bike, |
| (23) yanàa ta gudùu à kân kèekènshì. | (23) he was speeding off on his bike. |
| (24) Can à kân hanyàa sai kuma gàa wata yaarinyàa, | (24) And then there on the road was a girl, |
| (25) taa tahoo dàgà wani gurii. | (25) she had appeared from somewhere. |
| (26) Lookàcîn dà sukà zoo | (26) When they had arrived |
| (27) zaa sù giftàa. | (27) they were about to pass by. |
| (28) Sun giftà juunaa, | (28) They had passed each other, |
| (29) yanàa can | (29) he was there, |
| (30) yanàa kallon yaarinyàɍ, | (30) he was watching the girl |
| (31) sai ya yi karòo dà duutsèe, | (31) then he bumped into a rock, |
| (32) sai ya faaɗî dà kèekèn, | (32) then he fell down with the bike, |
| (33) duk sai mangwàɍòn ya zubèe. | (33) then the mangoes spilled all out. |
| (34) Shiikèenan sai ya yi saa'àa, | (34) OK then he was lucky, |
| (35) gàa wasu yâaraa, | (35) there were some boys, |
| (36) sun zoo daidai gurîn, | (36) they had come right to the place, |
| (37) sunàa wàasaa, | (37) they were playing. |
| (38) Sai yâarân sukà zoo, | (38) Then the boys came, |
| (39) sukà tàimàkee shì | (39) they helped him |
| (40) yà tsìntsìnci mangwàɍòn, | (40) to pick up the mangoes, |
| (41) nii dà nakè gidan gàba. | (41) they collected them for him in the basket. |
| (42) Shiikèenan, sai ya hau kân... | (42) That was that, then he climbed on... |
| (43) ya faarà tuurà kèekènshì, | (43) he started to push his bike, |
| (44) ya yi tàfiyàɍshì. | (44) he went on his way. |
| (45) Tôo, àshee yaa baɍ hùulaɍsà | (45) OK, but he had left his hat |
| (46) à wurîn dà akà yi karòn, | (46) at the place where he had crashed, |
| (47) sai wani yaaròo sai ya ga hùulâɍ. | (47) then a boy saw the hat. |

| | |
|---|---|
| (48) Sai ya̲ koomàa mishì dà ita, | (48) Then he returned it to him, |
| (49) ya̲ jee, | (49) he went, |
| (50) ya̲ baa shì, | (50) he gave it to him, |
| (51) ya̲ cèe gàa hùula̲r̃shì. | (51) he said here is his hat. |
| (52) Shiikèenan, dà ya̲ baa shì hùula̲r̃, | (52) OK, when he had given him the hat, |
| (53) shii kuma sai yaaròn sai ya̲ ɗaukoo mangwa̲r̃ò gùdaa ukù, | (53) then the boy took three mangoes, |
| (54) dâa maa yâarân suu ukù nee | (54) all along there were three boys, |
| (55) sai ya̲ baa sù | (55) then he gave them (the mangoes) |
| (56) sù jee | (56) to go |
| (57) sù shaa. | (57) and eat. |
| (58) Yâarân su̲n kàrɓi mangwa̲r̃òn, | (58) The boys had taken the mangoes, |
| (59) sunàa tàfiyàa can, | (59) they were going off, |
| (60) sai su̲kà̲ bi ta hanya̲r̃ mài mangwa̲r̃òn nan. | (60) then they followed the road of that mango-man. |
| (61) A'a shii kuma à lookàcîn ya̲a̲ saukoo | (61) Well he had climbed down at the time, |
| (62) yanàa duubàa | (62) he was looking |
| (63) ìnaa kwàndonsà ɗaya ya̲ faaɗì, | (63) where his one basket had fallen, |
| (64) sai ya̲ ga | (64) then he saw |
| (65) yâaraa kawài su̲n̲ ficèe, | (65) the boys had just passed by, |
| (66) sunàa shân mangwa̲r̃ò. | (66) they were eating the mangoes. |
| (67) Sai ya̲ tsayàa, | (67) Then he stopped, |
| (68) yanàa tùnàanin | (68) he was thinking |
| (69) a'a, yàayàa a̲kà̲ yi | (69) hey, how had it happened |
| (70) yâarân nan su̲kà̲ sàami mangwa̲r̃òn? | (70) those boys had got the mangoes? |
| (71) Kàrshen làabaar̃ii kèenan. | (71) That's the end of the story. |

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