

## On the adjective class in Gashua Bade

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### Abstract

This paper is an outline of the adjective class in Gashua Bade, a West Chadic-B language spoken in the area in and around Gashua in northern Yobe State, Nigeria. Gashua Bade, Western Bade, Duwai, and Ngizim are the major varieties that constitute the Bade-Ngizim group. The central question in this article is by what means Gashua Bade expresses concepts of qualification. I argue that, although adjectives in Gashua Bade share morphological features with nouns, e.g. patterns of pluralization, a distinct class of adjectives can nevertheless be distinguished from the class of nouns by means of syntactic criteria.

### Zusammenfassung

In diesem Artikel wird die Klasse der Adjektive im Gashua Bade, einer westtschadischen B Sprache des nördlichen Bundesstaates Yobe, Nigeria, dargestellt. Gashua Bade, Western Bade, Duwai und Ngizim sind wesentliche Varietäten, die die Bade-Ngizim Gruppe konstituieren. Die zentrale Frage in diesem Artikel ist, wie Konzepte der Qualifikation im Gashua Bade ausgedrückt werden. Obwohl im Gashua Bade Adjektive morphologisch gewisse Gemeinsamkeiten mit den Nomina aufweisen, z.B. im Bereich der Pluralisierung, kann dennoch gezeigt werden, dass sie anhand von syntaktischen Kriterien von den Nomina unterschieden werden können und eine eigene Wortklasse konstituieren.

### 1. Introduction

- <1> This article aims at illustrating features of the adjective class in Gashua Bade (GB) a West Chadic B language spoken in Yobe State, Nigeria, which together with other Bade varieties, Ngizim, and Duwai forms the Bade-Ngizim group. Comparative remarks from Western Bade (WB) are brought in where they clarify issues that are not revealed in GB alone. For a classification of Bade dialects and the major structural differences between GB and WB see Schuh (1981). The central question is by what means GB expresses concepts of qualification which correspond to attributive and predicative adjectives, e.g. in English<sup>1</sup>.
- <2> In recent years increased attention has been paid on the lexical category of adjectives, e.g. in Dixon (2004, 2010). Discussions on parts of speech such as adjectives against verbs or nouns are also common in African linguistics, e.g. Segerer (2008), and Tröbs, Rothmaler & Winkelmann (2008). When it comes to descriptions of Chadic languages a distinct lexical class of adjectives is not always recognized. Instead adjectives sometimes constitute a subclass of nouns, i.e. qualitative nouns or *nomina qualitatis*, e.g. proposed in Wolff (1993) for Hausa<sup>2</sup>, and in Löhr (2002: 102) for Malgwa:

Das Malgwa besitzt keine Adjektiva im traditionellen Sinn einer eigenen Wortart. Es handelt sich eher um eine bestimmte Klasse von Nomina, sog. Nomina qualitatis, die funktional und semantisch den Adjektiva in anderen Sprachen entspricht.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that for Hausa other authors, e.g. Jaggar (2001) and Newman (2000), have identified a class of adjectives which can be distinguished from nouns. “First, there are some derivations ... whose sole function is to create adjectives, not nouns. Second, adjectives have syntactic properties that set them apart from nouns ...” (Newman 2000: 22).

<3> Reading on a few lines reveals that Löhr (2002: 102) nevertheless identifies some grammatical criteria for distinguishing so called qualitative nouns from other nouns:

Sie lassen sich durch ihre Stellung im Syntagma von Nomina im engeren Sinne ... abgrenzen ... Bei attributivem Gebrauch können Nomina qualitatis im Gegensatz zu anderen Nomina an das Bestimmungswort angeschlossen werden, ohne eine Genitivverbindung einzugehen.

It is interesting that this is exactly the criterion which is often proposed to set apart a class of adjectives from the class of nouns, e.g. for Gidar in Frajzyngier (2008: 97):

The defining characteristic of the category “adjective” is its ability to modify a noun without any additional markers occurring between the head noun and the modifier.

<4> Although Bade adjectives share morphological features with nouns, e.g. patterns of pluralization, I will argue that nevertheless adjectives can be distinguished from the class of nouns by means of syntactic criteria. My argumentation follows Dixon (2004, 2010) who claims that, when all relevant facts are taken into account, an adjective class can be recognized for every language:

I suggest that a distinct word class “adjectives” can be recognized for every human language. In some languages adjectives have similar grammatical properties to nouns, in some to verbs, in some to both nouns and verbs, and in some to neither. I suggest that there are always some grammatical criteria – sometimes rather subtle – for distinguishing the adjective class from other word classes.

<5> African languages are sometimes said to have small and closed sets of adjectives, e.g. Igbo is said to have only eight adjectives organized in four pairs of antonyms (Dixon 2010, Segerer 2008). Segerer (2008) furthermore identifies closed adjective classes and classes of primary adjectives with a somehow arbitrary limit of 30 members. Screening Bade dictionaries, i.e. Tarbutu (2004) for GB and Dagona (2004) for WB reveals that in GB approx. 80 entries are marked as adjectives, i.e. 3% of the total, and about 130 adjectives in WB, i.e. approx. 4% of the total. These figures, however, include derived adjectives, ideophonic adjectives and some words that have dual class membership<sup>3</sup>.

<6> Section 2 outlines primary adjectives, whereas in section 3 the major characteristics of secondary, or derived, adjectives are illustrated. In section 4 pluralization patterns of adjectives are outlined, and in section 5 we will have a look at syntactic characteristics, i.e. attributive and predicative use of adjectives. Finally in section 6 some conclusions will be drawn.

## 2. Primary adjectives

<7> In this section I will present a list of primary adjectives, i.e. adjectives which are obviously not derived from other word classes. The list is organized according to Dixon’s (2004) classification of semantic types. Following (Dixon 2004: 3): “... lexical roots in every language can be arranged in a number of semantic types. Certain types have prototypical association with a given word class, while others vary in their word class associations. ... There are four core semantic types, which are typically associated with both large and small adjective classes”: **1. Dimension**, e.g. big, small, long, short; **2. Age**, e.g. young, old, new; **3. Value**, e.g. good, bad, perfect, lovely; **4. Colour**, e.g. black, white, red. Table 1 displays primary adjectives which belong to Dixon’s core semantic types.

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<sup>3</sup> Data for this article predominantly come from the Bade dictionaries, i.e. Dagona (2004) and Tarbutu (2004), and from my own field work in Gashua between 2007 and 2010.

**Table 1: Primary adjectives of core semantic types**

<u>GB</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Comment</u>
DIMENSION		
<i>dīndīilā</i> <sup>4</sup>	‘small’	
<i>japà</i>	‘small’	
<i>kūzvər̃</i>	‘tall, long’	
<i>kàdar̃â</i>	‘short’	< Kan. <i>kàtarà</i> adj. ‘short or undersized’
<i>màar̃əm</i>	‘big, large’	
<i>ngur̃jam</i>	‘huge’	< Kan. <i>gurzàm</i> n. ‘big or heavy person’
AGE		
<i>dīinà</i>	‘old (of things)’	< Kan. <i>dīn</i> adj. ‘old, used (of things, etc.)’
<i>kəlâ</i>	‘new’	
<i>gàna</i>	‘young’	< Kan. <i>gàna</i> adj. ‘small, little, few’
VALUE		
<i>bəlân</i>	‘good, beautiful, nice’	
<i>bàksau</i>	‘bad, evil’	
<i>jəbà</i>	‘correct’	
<i>kàmangər̃</i>	‘evil, wicked, malicious’	< Kan. <i>kəmangər̃</i> n. ‘cruel or wicked person’
<i>kalkalà</i>	‘correct’	< Kan. <i>kalkal</i> n. ‘sameness, likeness’
<i>kùuli</i>	‘pleasant, nice’	
COLOUR		
<i>buwâ</i>	‘red’	
<i>peetà</i>	‘white’	
<i>pəlkâ</i>	‘black’	
<i>tlər̃tà</i>	‘green’	
<i>àarîn</i>	‘blue’	< Kan. <i>àlîn</i> n. ‘indigo plant’
<i>kar̃gòm</i>	‘yellow’	< Kan. <i>kurwùm</i> adj. ‘yellow’
<i>rìipilla</i>	‘blue’	< Kan. <i>liwùla</i> adj. ‘blue’
<i>àr̀̀̀pilla</i>	‘silver’	< Kan. <i>liwulà</i> n. ‘silver’

<8> A second group of Dixon’s semantic types are considered to be peripheral and “are typically associated with medium sized and large adjective classes” (Dixon 2004:4): **5. Physical property**, e.g. hard, soft, heavy, wet; **6. Human propensity**, e.g. jealous, happy, kind, clever; **7. Speed**, e.g. fast, quick, slow. Finally, according to Dixon (2004:5) “a number of semantic types are associated with large adjective classes in some languages”; **8. Difficulty**, e.g. easy, difficult, tough, hard; **9. Similarity**, e.g. like, unlike, similar, different; **10. Qualification**, e.g. definite, true, possible, usual; **11. Quantification**, e.g. all, many, some, few; **12. Position**, e.g. high, low, near, far, right, left; **13. Cardinal numbers** (in some languages), and first, last (and other ordinal numbers). Table 2 displays primary adjectives associated with Dixon’s peripheral semantic types.

<sup>4</sup> Transcription: *aa, ii*, etc. = long vowel; *a, i*, etc. = short vowel; *ə* = high central vowel; *à(a)* = low tone; *â(a)* = falling tone; *ǎ(a)* rising tone; high tone is unmarked; *b, d* = laryngeal implosives; *ʔ* = glottalized palatal glide; *tl* and *jl* = lateral fricatives, *r̃* = apical tap/roll, *c* and *j* = palato-alveolar affricates.

**Table 2: Primary adjectives of peripheral semantic type**

<u>GB</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Comment</u>
PHYSICAL PROPERTY		
<i>atlàbà</i>	‘clumsy, disorderly’	
<i>câ</i>	‘sour, fermented’	
<i>dùksi</i>	‘heavy’	
<i>dìunau</i>	‘strong’	< Kan. <i>dunò</i> n. ‘strength’
<i>gàatla</i>	‘raw, unripe’	
<i>jlàrgàgà</i>	‘serrated, saw-toothed’	
<i>jlàṛa</i>	‘bitter; expensive’	
<i>kəffà</i>	‘warm’	
<i>ṅgàà</i>	‘healthy’	< Kan. <i>ngá</i> adj. ‘healthy, clever’
<i>sàl</i>	‘staple (e.g. food)’	
HUMAN PROPENSITY		
<i>kàakaabù</i>	‘foolish, stupid’	
DIFFICULTY		
<i>kàskê</i>	‘easy’	< Kan. <i>kàskâ</i> adj. ‘easy, simple, unimportant’
<i>tàtà</i>	‘difficult, painful’	
SIMILARITY		
<i>bâm</i>	‘different, another’	
<i>càapən</i>	‘like, similar’	
POSITION		
<i>dàmtau</i>	‘near’	
<i>pàlam</i>	‘far, distant’	

<9> We can observe in Tables 1 and 2 that GB has not only primary adjectives which are associated with small classes, but also primary adjectives which are typically associated with medium sized and also large adjective classes. Although in the group of peripheral semantic types not all types are represented, e.g. adjectives expressing speed are not attested, we nevertheless may conclude that GB would not qualify as a language with a closed adjective class in the sense of Segerer (2008). First of all GB has more than 30 primary adjectives, and secondly, it integrates loanwords from Kanuri<sup>5</sup> into the class of adjectives.

<10> It seems that segmentally primary adjectives do not have unifying formal patterns. Although several adjectives end in the vowel /a/, other vowels as well as consonants are possible, and there seem to be no obvious unifying tonal patterns or syllable structures. Although morphologically primary adjectives in GB are basically indistinguishable from nouns, comparison with WB leaves no doubt that in fact there is a lexical category of primary adjectives distinct from nouns. In WB nouns in their citation, or indefinite form take nunation, i.e. a suffix *-n*<sup>6</sup>, whereas

<sup>5</sup> It appears that Bade dictionaries, i.e. Tarbutu (2004) and Dagona (2004), do not include many Hausa loanwords. Note, however, that data for the dictionaries were primarily collected in the 1960s and 70s. Although it is difficult to demarcate fully integrated loanwords from code-switching, my impression is that in present-day Bade Hausa vocabulary is much more pervasive than reflected in the dictionaries.

<sup>6</sup> Nunation in WB was first described by Lukas (1968). Historically nunation goes back to a definite determiner *\*-ni* (cf. Schuh 1981: 213).

adjectives are always cited without nunation. Note, however, that many adjectives can be converted to nouns by adding nunation, e.g. *bàkso* ‘evil (adj.)’ vs. *bàkson* ‘evil, wickedness (n.)’.

### 3. Secondary adjectives

<11> I use the term secondary adjectives for those adjectives which are derived from other word classes such as verbs, nouns, ideophones, or even other adjectives. Derivation of adjectives in GB is basically done by affixation and by reduplication.

#### 3.1. Derivational processes by means of the prefix *ga(a)-*

<12> In GB the prefix *ga-* is commonly used to derive participial adjectives from intransitive verbs. What may or may not be the same prefix can derive descriptive nouns and language names.

##### 3.1.1. Participial adjectives

<13> In GB the prefix *ga-* together with a suffix *-ak* typically derives participial adjectives from intransitive verbs. Although this derivational process is productive, some items have undergone semantic shifts that are not predictable from the meaning of the base. For participial adjectives in WB cf. Schuh (2007). The following formation rules can be observed.

Formation of participial adjectives:

- *ga-* + BASE + *-ak*
- BASE TONE → **L** on a syllable beginning in a voiced obstruent, **H** otherwise
- Final *-ak* → **H**
- *ga-* prefix → tone opposite following syllable

<i>gagàlak</i>	‘old’	<	<i>gàlu</i>	‘grow old’
<i>gagdàbak</i>	‘bent (over), crooked’	<	<i>ègdàbu</i> <sup>7</sup>	‘be bent over, be crooked’
<i>gagvàdak</i>	‘putrid (carrion)’	<	<i>ègvàdu</i>	‘smell putrid (carrion)’
<i>gajgwàmak</i>	‘chipped off’	<	<i>èjgwàm</i>	‘chip off’
<i>gazgàtak</i>	‘pierced’	<	<i>èzgàtu</i>	‘become pierced’
<i>gàbatlak</i>	‘clever, wise’	<	<i>bàtlu</i>	‘become clever’
<i>gàckak</i>	‘extracted, enlightened’	<	<i>àcku</i>	‘extract, become enlightened’
<i>gàtaatlak</i>	‘broken’	<	<i>tàatlu</i>	‘break into two’
<i>gànakwak</i>	‘full’	<	<i>nàku</i>	‘become full’
<i>gàràjlak</i>	‘wet’	<	<i>ràjlu</i>	‘become wet’

##### 3.1.2. Nominal use of *ga-* participles

<14> In GB many adjectives can be used nominally, or should be analysed as having dual class membership<sup>8</sup>. Participial adjectives also can function as nouns. This becomes obvious especially in WB where the normal nominal suffixes are added, i.e. in particular nunation in the citation form. Moreover, in WB some nominally used participial adjectives are marked for gender. Masculine forms take the typical nunation suffix *-aan*, and feminine forms are sometimes marked by the derivational suffix *-ako-*, i.e. a feminine and in some cases a diminutive formative (cf. Schuh 2007), e.g. *gàtlàkparaan* ‘mad person sg.m.’, *gàtlàkparakon* ‘mad person sg.f.’, and

<sup>7</sup> Historically words of the structure #əCCV... go back to #CəCV... if the two consonants form a permissible sequence. This change has affected all varieties of Bade (cf. Schuh 1981: 227).

<sup>8</sup> Note that according to Newman (2000: 24) Hausa also has an ‘open-ended list of noun/adjective items ... which have dual class membership’.

*gàtlàkparənən* “mad persons pl.” < *tlàkpàru* “go mad”. In GB no gender differentiation can be observed, however, both varieties have plural forms for nominally used *ga-* participles.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>			
<i>gàalak</i>	<i>kaalgən</i>	‘old, important person’	<	<i>gàlu</i>
<i>gasaktak</i>	<i>gasaktən</i>	‘stingy person’	<	<i>sàktu</i>
<i>gàtlàkpalak</i>	<i>gàtlàkpapələn</i>	‘mad person’	<	<i>tlàkpàlu</i>

### 3.1.3. Descriptive nouns with the prefix *ga(a)-*

<15> In GB the use of the prefix *ga(a)-* is not restricted to the formation of participial adjectives as illustrated above, but also serves as a formative in other derivational processes, e.g. descriptive nouns which are derived from other nouns and/or adjectives. In GB these forms differ from the participial adjectives insofar as they usually do not take the suffix *-ak*, and most of the attested forms have a long vowel in the prefix, i.e. *gaa-*. Although the resemblance between the prefixes *ga-* and *gaa-* probably is not just a chance resemblance, it seems that the forms discussed here constitute a derivational pattern distinct from that of the participial adjectives. The following examples probably have dual class membership and may be used as nouns or adjectives.

<i>gàmsək, m̀sət</i> (pl.)	‘male, man’	<	<i>m̀sək</i>	‘husband’
<i>gàamà, àmat</i> (pl.)	‘female, woman’	<	<i>amà</i>	‘wife’
<i>gàmàjlàwài</i>	‘left-handed (person)’	<	<i>màjlàwài</i>	‘left, left hand’
<i>gàamayà, gàmamayət</i> (pl.)	‘hungry (person)’	<	<i>mayà</i>	‘hunger’
<i>gaabàksau</i>	‘bad, evil’	<	<i>bàksau</i>	‘bad, evil’

In addition to these examples we find several descriptive nouns which are derived with the prefix *gaa-*. Typically these nouns also include the noun *si* ‘bottom, base, anus’.

<i>gàapiici, g̀asəpiici</i>	‘liar’	<	<i>p̀ici</i>	‘lie’
<i>g̀asivə̀dau</i>	‘urinator’	<	<i>v̀ə̀dau</i>	‘urine’
<i>g̀asidala</i>	‘blabber’	<	<i>d̀alà</i>	‘talking’
<i>g̀asimàlwai</i>	‘coward’	<	<i>m̀l̀iyu</i>	‘be frightened’

### 3.1.4. Language names derived with the prefix *gà-*

<16> Finally, language names are systematically derived from ethnonyms by prefixing *gà-*, which may or may not have the same origin as the prefix used for participial adjectives. The prefix *gà-* always carries a low tone. In most cases all syllables of the derived word carry low tones, but there are also some words with a high tone on the last syllable. Semantically language names derived via the prefix *gà-* can also mean ‘in the language of X, or in the manner of X’, and they can be used adjectivally with the general ethnonymic meaning (cf. ethnonymic adjectives in Hausa, e.g. *bàfaarishèn bàrgoo* ‘Persian blanket’).

<i>gàbàdài</i>	‘Bade language’	<	<i>Badài</i>	‘Bade person’
<i>gàbòolài</i>	‘Bole language’	<	<i>Bòolài</i>	‘Bole person’
<i>gànàsàr̀a</i>	‘English language’	<	<i>Nàsàr̀a</i>	‘European, white person’
<i>g̀ap̀ə̀nau</i>	‘Hausa language’	<	<i>Àp̀ə̀nau</i>	‘Hausa person’
<i>g̀abòor̀ài</i>	‘Fulfulde language’	<	?	
<i>g̀az̀anz̀anau</i>	‘Kanuri language’	<	<i>Z̀anz̀anau/Zan</i>	‘Kanuri person’
<i>g̀am̀ang̀a</i>	‘Manga language’	<	<i>M̀ang̀a</i>	‘Manga person’

Examples:

<i>tàṛžəná gàbàdàì</i>	‘Bade-type folktale/riddle’
<i>mootà gànàsàṛà</i>	‘European car’
<i>daagwzak gàzànzànu</i>	‘Kanuri-type sceptre’

### 3.2. Statives

<17> In GB the prefix *də-* productively derives statives from transitive verbs. Statives are nearly in complementary distribution with *ga-* participial adjectives. The prefix *ga-* is basically applied to intransitive verbs and *də-* basically to transitive verbs. For statives in WB cf. Schuh (2007). The formation rules are as follows.

Formation of statives:

- *də-* + BASE + *-à*
- BASE TONE → **L** on a syllable beginning in a voiced obstruent<sup>9</sup>, **H** otherwise
- Final *-à* → **L**
- *də-* prefix → tone opposite following syllable

<i>dəbənà</i>	‘cooked’	<	<i>bənu</i>	‘cook’
<i>dəṛdà</i>	‘crawling’	<	<i>əṛdu</i>	‘crawl’
<i>dənkwà</i>	‘full’	<	<i>ṅku</i>	‘fill’
<i>dəmasà</i>	‘bought’	<	<i>màsu</i>	‘buy’
<i>dàdəbdà</i>	‘sold’	<	<i>dəbdu</i>	‘sell’
<i>dàdàyà</i>	‘castrated’	<	<i>dāyu</i>	‘castrate’
<i>dàtatlà</i>	‘broken’	<	<i>tàtlu</i>	‘break’

Normally verbs with only transitive usage have only statives, whereas verbs with only intransitive usage have only participial adjectives.

<i>màsu</i>	‘buy’	<i>dəmasà</i>	* <i>gəmasak</i>
<i>pàtu</i>	‘get lost’	* <i>dəpatà</i>	<i>gəpatak</i>

Verbs with a transitive and an intransitive stem form can derive both forms.

<i>ərbəcu</i>	‘open’	<i>dərbəcà</i>	‘open’
<i>ərbəcu</i>	‘be open’	<i>garbəcà</i>	‘open’
<i>əzdəvu</i>	‘put up guests, lodge’	<i>dəzdəva</i>	‘lodged’
<i>əzdəvu</i>	‘stay as a guest, lodge’	<i>gəzdəvak</i>	‘lodged’
<i>sàapəṛàatu</i>	‘prepare’	<i>dəsaapəṛàatà</i>	‘prepared’
<i>sàapəṛàatu</i>	‘get ready’	<i>gəsapaṛàatak</i>	‘ready’
<i>ṅku</i>	‘fill’	<i>dənkwà</i>	‘filled’
<i>nàku</i>	‘become full’	<i>gənakwak</i>	‘full’

<18> The *ga-* form refers to the *state as a property*, whereas the *də-* form has a *resultative sense*, e.g. fried meat as a state vs. raw meat/the meat [has now been] fried (cf. German ‘voll’ vs. ‘gefüllt’). Syntactically *ga-* forms serve as attributive modifiers, whereas *də-* forms can only be used as predicates.

<sup>9</sup> The base tone seems to be also low, if the verb began in a historically open \*Cə- syllable, e.g. *əṛdu* < \*ṛədu ‘crawl’, or *ṅku* < \*ṅəku ‘fill’.

*f̂na ĝnakwak* ‘a full calabash’; \*‘the calabash is full’  
*f̂nà d̂ankwà*<sup>10</sup> ‘the calabash is filled/full’; \*‘a full calabash’

In contrast to *d̂-* forms *ga-* forms can be used nominally to indicate an entity embodying the property in question. This also explains why *ga-* can be used with nominal roots, whereas *d̂-* can only be used with verbs that lead to a resultant state (cf. Schuh 2007).

### 3.3. Reduplication

<19> In GB, like several other Chadic languages, adjectives can be derived by reduplication. Adjectives may be reduplicated and sometimes get an attenuated meaning. GB shows full and partial reduplication of adjectives. Many of the reduplicated adjectives fall semantically between ideophones and adjectives and could be sub-classified as so called ideophonic adjectives<sup>11</sup>. Ideophonic adjectives have characteristics of both adjectives and ideophones. Like adjectives, they predicate qualities to nominal referents, but like ideophones they tend to indicate highly specific properties, or sometimes combinations of properties. Also like ideophones they exhibit a limited number of phonological shapes, most of which are not shared by ‘mainstream’ lexical categories, such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs. In an attributive sense they can be used pre-nominally and post-nominally, and they can be used alone as predicates of equational sentences. Unlike adjectives, ideophonic adjectives cannot be used nominally, and they have no plural forms. There are several forms that look like reduplicated forms, but where the source is unknown. Reduplication of the following colour terms in GB gives an attenuated meaning<sup>12</sup>, like English ‘-ish’.

<i>buwâ-buwâ</i>	‘reddish’	<	<i>buwâ</i>	‘red’
<i>peetâ-peetâ</i>	‘whitish’	<	<i>peetâ</i>	‘white’
<i>palkâ-palkâ</i>	‘blackish’	<	<i>palkâ</i>	‘black’
<i>tlartâ-tlartâ</i>	‘greenish’	<	<i>tlartâ</i>	‘green’

<20> In GB several frozen forms of adjectives and ideophonic adjectives can be found, i.e. they are formally reduplicated forms, but the respective non-reduplicated form is either unknown or uncertain.

<i>boolà-boolà</i>	‘red and white spotted’	<	? <i>boolà</i>	‘dog with a white neck’
<i>dârwa-dârwa</i>	‘spotted, e.g. hyena’	<	? <i>dârwa</i>	‘black dog’
<i>jârɓàbà-jârɓàbà</i>	‘spotted’	<	?	
<i>laulawà</i>	‘very thin’	<	?	
<i>dàvdàfa</i>	‘greasy’	<	?	
<i>dâbdabà</i>	‘sweet’	<	?	
<i>gamàgamà</i>	‘feeling better after injury or illness’	<	?	
<i>ngàaɗngàaɗ</i>	‘astringent’	<	?	
<i>pàlàkpàlàaka</i>	‘slick (e.g. silk)’	<	?	
<i>pàlùdpàlùuda</i>	‘slick (e.g. silk)’	<	?	
<i>pàlpàla</i>	‘hot, painful’	<	?	

<sup>10</sup> Unlike Hausa Bade has no copula, i.e. a noun phrase plus a predicative adjective can constitute a full sentence.

<sup>11</sup> Newman (2000) uses the term ideophonic adjectives for a subgroup of ideophones which pattern with normal adjectives in functioning to modify nouns in Hausa.

<sup>12</sup> Interestingly in WB it is the other way round, where reduplication of colour terms gives an intensified meaning, e.g. *pàlak-pàlakà* ‘very black’ < *palka* ‘black’ (cf. Dagona 2004: 64).



<i>sə̀laaksə̀laaka</i>	‘slickness of cloth, such as silk’	< ?
<i>saksakà</i>	‘cold’	< ?

In addition to this we find also a few adjectives where only the last syllable is reduplicated.

<i>gùtlə̀mtlə̀m</i>	‘stinky (e.g. fish, raw cornstalks, onion)’	< ?
<i>kwàtlà̀r̀tlà̀r̀a</i>	‘huge’	< ?kwatlẫr̃ ‘calyxes of sorrel’
<i>tlà̀kwà̀r̀kwà̀r̀a</i>	‘huge’	< ?

### 3.4. Adjectives derived by the suffix -Cà

<21> Some adjectives in GB are derived from other adjectives by means of the suffix -Cà. The consonant of the suffix is a copy of the last consonant of the word, if it ends in a consonant. These partially reduplicated adjectives may either indicate intensification (frequently translated with ‘very’), or are lexicalized and have a neutral meaning.

<i>bə̀lannà</i>	<	<i>bə̀lân</i>	‘good, beautiful’
<i>kùzvə̀r̀r̀à</i>	<	<i>kùzvə̀r̀</i>	‘tall, long’
<i>màar̀ə̀mmà</i>	<	<i>màar̀ə̀m</i>	‘big’

## 4. Pluralization of adjectives

<22> Although in GB nouns in the singular have intrinsic gender, i.e. masculine or feminine, gender is not a feature of adjectives. Adjectives have a singular form and several also have a plural form. Basically pluralization of adjectives does not differ from pluralization of nouns. The following pluralization patterns are attested for adjectives.

### 4.1. Plural type 1: Plural pattern -ən or -əRən

<i>buwâ</i>	<i>buwən</i>	‘red’
<i>dùunau</i>	<i>dùunən</i>	‘strong’

Note that several plural forms ending in -ən reduplicate the last consonant.

<i>câ</i>	<i>cə̀cən</i>	‘sour, fermented’
<i>gàatla</i>	<i>gàatlə̀tlə̀n</i>	‘raw, unripe’
<i>jə̀bâ</i>	<i>jə̀bə̀bən</i>	‘correct’
<i>jlə̀r̀a</i>	<i>jlə̀r̀ə̀r̀ən</i>	‘bitter; expensive’
<i>kə̀lâ</i>	<i>kə̀lələn</i>	‘new’
<i>kùuli</i>	<i>kuulələn</i>	‘pleasant’

cf. noun plurals

<i>daajl̀ə̀ra</i>	<i>daajl̀ə̀rən</i>	‘vulture’
<i>kùbdu</i>	<i>kubdə̀də̀n</i>	‘second weeding’

#### 4.2. Plural type 2: Plural pattern *-aaCau* or *-əCau*

<i>kúzvãř</i>	<i>kwazvãarau</i>	‘tall, long’
<i>kàdařâ</i>	<i>kàdařau</i>	‘short’
<i>nguřjãm</i>	<i>nguřjãamau</i>	‘huge’

cf. noun plurals

<i>fãnà</i>	<i>fãnàanau</i>	‘calabash’
<i>gut</i>	<i>gwaatau</i>	‘ear’
<i>dà</i>	<i>dàdau</i>	‘eye’
<i>adâ</i>	<i>adâdau</i>	‘head’
<i>basâ</i>	<i>basasau</i>	‘loan of money’

#### 4.3. Plural type 4: Plural pattern *-cin*

<i>gazgatak</i>	<i>gãzgãkcin</i>	‘pierced’
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cf. noun plural

<i>mzam</i>	<i>mzãmcin</i>	‘hunter’
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#### 4.4. Suppletive and irregular plurals

<i>màařãm</i>	<i>kaalgãn</i>	‘big, large’
<i>japà</i>	<i>yadãdã</i>	‘small’
<i>gàalak</i>	<i>kàalãgãn</i>	‘important’
<i>gàkãdãk</i>	<i>gakãdãdũwun</i>	‘dry, dried up, hard’

### 5. Syntax of adjectives

<23> In GB adjectives have mainly two syntactic functions, i.e.: 1. as attributes, i.e. as a specification on the head noun in an NP, 2. as predicates, i.e. in a statement that something has a certain property. Section 5.1. illustrates the use of attributive adjectives, whereas in section 5.2. the use of adjectives as predicates is outlined.

#### 5.1. Attributive adjectives

<24> A feature of GB noun phrases containing attributive adjectives is that the adjective may either follow the head noun or precede it. This feature is also found in other West Chadic languages, e.g. Bole, Guruntum, Hausa, Kanakuru, Miya, and Zaar<sup>13</sup>. Postnominal adjectives are immediately juxtaposed to the head noun, whereas prenominal adjectives obligatorily connect to the head by means of the genitive linker *kə* > *-k*, *-ək* which is the same linker used with noun + noun genitives.

- |    |           |      |           |
|----|-----------|------|-----------|
| 1. |           | noun | adjective |
| 2. | adjective | /kə/ | noun      |

<sup>13</sup> According to Newman (2000: 30): “the standard word-order pattern in Chadic is noun + adjective ... Prenominal adjectives ... probably began as N of N constructions ...”

Many attributive adjectives may precede as well as follow the head noun, although there seems to be a tendency towards postnominal use<sup>14</sup>.

<i>vənyɪ</i>	<i>dùksi</i>	=	<i>dùksək</i>	<i>vənyɪ</i>	‘heavy stone’
stone	heavy		heavy.GEN	stone	
<i>madùwà</i>	<i>màarəm</i>	=	<i>màarəmək</i>	<i>madùwà</i>	‘big house’
house	big		big.GEN	house	
<i>jàkùwà</i>	<i>buwâ</i>	=	<i>buwak</i>	<i>jàkùwà</i>	‘red cap’
cap	red		red.GEN	cap	

<25> In principle, noun phrases with the two orders have the same meaning, although differences may exist. This is especially the case with words which have dual class membership, e.g. *dùksi* = n. ‘weight’ and adj. ‘heavy’. Thus *dùksək vənyɪ* can also mean ‘the weight of the stone’. When an attributive participial adjective precedes the head noun the genitive marker coincides with the final /k/ of the adjective (in GB), and there is no gemination. As already mentioned statives cannot be used as attributive adjectives. Ideophonic adjectives may also precede or follow their head noun.

#### Participial adjectives

<i>âulai gâbatlak</i>	=	<i>gâbatlak âulai</i>	‘clever hare’
<i>gudkwà gânakwak</i>	=	<i>gânakwak gudkwà</i>	‘full pot’
<i>mootà gâkwaadâk</i>	=	<i>gâkwaadâk mootà</i>	‘spoiled car’

#### Ideophonic adjectives

<i>aamən saksakà</i>	=	<i>saksakäk aamən</i>	‘cold water’
<i>maanyîm jabjapà</i>	=	<i>jabjapäk maanyîm</i>	‘small boy’

<26> The use in prenominal position can separate adjectives from other words like quantifiers, and numerals, which can be used only in a postnominal position. If the noun is followed by a quantifier or a numeral greater than one, the noun may be formally singular but semantically plural.

<i>ngìiwànàk gâawa</i>	‘many elephants’
<i>jləngmàayat gâawa aasâk</i>	‘(there are) many camels in the market’
<i>mângàkcin</i> (pl.) <i>gâawa</i> = <i>mânga</i> (sg.)	‘many friends’
<i>dìikwà</i> (sg.) <i>kwan</i> = <i>dìikwàangən</i> (pl.) <i>kwan</i>	‘three horses’
<i>soobà sərən</i>	‘two friends’

### 5.1.1. Adjectival phrases

<27> Adjectival phrases are headed by adjectives and typically function as posthead modifiers. They often consist of a simple adjective which is followed by an intensifying ideophone, or an adverbial intensifiers such as *hùwa*, *ngəla*, *řantu* ‘very (much), extremely, really, etc.’.

<i>mootà buwâ cittä</i>	‘a flame red car’
<i>zanài peetà pakpakà</i>	‘a snow-white gown’
<i>goorau jlərə pittà</i>	‘a very bitter cola nut’

<sup>14</sup> Very often my language consultants preferred the postnominal use of attributive adjectives.

<i>mootà hɛ̀lâ cawwà</i>	‘a brand new car’
<i>àwai kùuli ñgə̀la</i>	‘a very sweet soup’
<i>dùwu màaãəm hùwa</i>	‘an extremely big horse’
<i>àwai jaurò kùuli</i>	‘a very sweet soup’
<i>madùwà màaãəm ã̀antu</i>	‘an extremely big house’

### 5.1.2. NPs modified by two or more adjectives

<28> A noun may be modified by more than one adjective. In my examples multiple adjectives are always placed after the head noun<sup>15</sup>.

<i>gàamà kuzvãrã̀a bɛ̀lân</i>	‘a tall, good-looking woman’
<i>ùktliik amat kwan bɛ̀lâncən</i>	‘three beautiful girls’
<i>gàtlabak bɛ̀lânnà kɛ̀lapiya</i>	‘a good, peaceful settlement’

### 5.1.3. Strictly postnominal adjectives

<29> There are some adjectives in GB which can be used attributively only after the head noun. This is the case, e.g. with ethnonymic adjectives, with fully reduplicated adjectives and adjectives that are modified by adverbial intensifiers<sup>16</sup>.

<i>tã̀rzanã̀ gàbàdài</i>	* <i>gàbàdàk tã̀rzanã̀</i>	‘Bade-type folktale/riddle’
<i>jàkùwa buwá-buwá</i>	* <i>buwá-buwák jákùwa</i>	‘reddish (orange) cap’
<i>goorau jlàrà pitta</i>	* <i>jlàrà pittak goorau</i>	‘a very bitter cola nut’
<i>dùwu màaãəm hùwa</i>	* <i>màaãəm hùwak dùwu</i>	‘an extremely big horse’

### 5.1.4. Headless adjectives

<30> GB has no overt pronominal ‘one’ to accompany adjectives. If a head noun is deleted from a NP modified by an adjective, the surface result is a simple adjective. When the adjective is the only element that appears on the surface it can serve as the host for the previous reference marker. Headless adjectives may be the result of syntactic ellipsis, or because the head is inferable from the context.

- (1) *Audù ə̀lmə madùwà màaãəm Muusa yi talmì Ø dɛ̀ndiilà*  
 Audu build.COMP house big Musa TOP AUX.build.SUB Ø small  
 ‘Audu built a big house, as for Musa, he built a small one.’
- (2) *nən màsə mootà peetà biin Ø palká bai*  
 1sg. buy.COMP car white but.not Ø black NEG  
 ‘I bought a white car, not a black one.’

<sup>15</sup> I cannot determine whether multiple adjectives may also be placed before their head noun, as I didn’t explicitly check this with language consultants. By the same token I cannot say whether one adjective may occur before the head noun while a second one is placed after the head noun. This would be possible e.g. in Hausa (cf. Hausa *mafãdã̀acin kã̀re bakii* = a vicious black dog).

<sup>16</sup> I cannot say which simple adjectives may exclusively be in postnominal position. This would probably deserve a study which is based on a huge corpus. When it comes to the position of simple adjectives there is also much dialectal and idiolectal variation, e.g. some of my consultants accepted colour terms exclusively in postnominal position, whereas others allowed them in prenominal and postnominal position.

(3) *kàd̥au zaniiwu tàwàn? Ø həl̀àwu dàma Ø gàm̀ànakuw*  
 surpass.COMP gown.PRM which Ø new.PRM or Ø old.PRM  
 ‘Which gown is better? The new one or the old one?’

(4) *atə d̀àahwə zanii həl̀à biinà Ø gàm̀ànak bai*  
 3f. put.on.COMP gown new but.not Ø old NEG  
 ‘She put on a new gown, not an old one.’

### 5.1.5. Number agreement

<31> GB NPs containing attributive adjectives have the special feature that in the plural, there need be only one overt sign of plurality. Either the plural of the noun, the plural of the adjective, or a cardinal number greater than one can code the plurality of the NP. Leaving away modification by cardinal numbers, this leaves us with five possibilities to code plurality. The only combination which is not possible is a formally singular adjective preceding a formally plural noun.

	noun sg.	adjective sg.		adjective sg.	noun sg.
<b>1</b>	noun pl.	adjective pl.	<b>2</b>	adjective pl.	noun pl.
<b>3</b>	noun pl.	adjective sg.	<b>4</b>	adjective pl.	noun sg.
<b>5</b>	noun sg.	adjective pl.	*	adjective sg.	noun pl.

<32> However, acceptance of the five possibilities among language consultants was not consistent<sup>17</sup>. NPs where the noun and the adjective are either both singular, or both plural were always accepted. It is far from being clear why other combinations were sometimes accepted, and sometimes rejected. Below some examples with all possible combinations are given.

<i>goomâk</i>	<i>màar̥əm</i>	=	<i>màar̥əmək</i>	<i>goomâk</i>	‘big ram’
<i>gòomən</i>	<i>kaalg̀ən</i>	=	<i>kaalg̀ənək</i>	<i>gòomən</i>	‘big rams’
<i>gòomən</i>	<i>màar̥əm</i>	=	<i>kaalg̀ənək</i>	<i>goomâk</i>	‘big rams’
<i>goomâk</i>	<i>kaalg̀ən</i>	=	<i>*màar̥əmək</i>	<i>gòomən</i>	‘big rams’
<i>jl̀âgmau</i>	<i>g̀əms̀ək</i>	=	<i>g̀əms̀əkək</i>	<i>jl̀âgmau</i>	‘male camel’
<i>jl̀âgmeetən</i>	<i>̀m̀s̀ət</i>	=	<i>̀m̀s̀ətək</i>	<i>jl̀âgmeetən</i>	‘male camels’
<i>jl̀âgmeetən</i>	<i>g̀əms̀ək</i>	=	<i>̀m̀s̀ətək</i>	<i>jl̀âgmau</i>	‘male camels’
<i>jl̀âgmau</i>	<i>̀m̀s̀ət</i>	=	<i>*g̀əms̀əkək</i>	<i>jl̀âgmeetən</i>	‘male camels’
<i>zawâ</i>	<i>k̀àdarà</i>	=	<i>k̀àdaràk</i>	<i>zawâ</i>	‘short stick’
<i>zawuwun</i>	<i>k̀àdarau</i>	=	<i>k̀àdaruuk</i>	<i>zawuwun</i>	‘short sticks’
<i>zawuwun</i>	<i>k̀àdarà</i>	=	<i>k̀àdaruuk</i>	<i>zawâ</i>	‘short sticks’
<i>zawâ</i>	<i>k̀àdarau</i>	=	<i>*k̀àdaràk</i>	<i>zawuwun</i>	‘short sticks’

### 5.1.6. Number agreement with participial adjectives

<33> According to Schuh (2007) in WB participial adjectives in their function as attributive adjectives do not agree for gender and number. In GB, although not obligatory, yet number agreement is still possible.

<sup>17</sup> Schuh (1972) makes a similar observation for Ngizim.

### Gashua Bade

<i>pagà gàtaatlak</i>	‘broken shelter’	<i>pagə̀gau gàtaatlak</i>	‘broken shelters’
<i>ndì gàbatlak</i>	‘wise person’	<i>nda gàbatlak</i>	‘wise persons’
<i>màlàpà gàràjlak</i>	‘wet palm leaf mat’	<i>màlàlpən gàràjlak</i>	‘wet palm leaf mats’

but

<i>màlàpà gagàlak</i>	‘old mat’	<i>màlàlpən gagàlàkcən</i>	‘old mats’
<i>kàm gahədək</i>	‘dry farm’	<i>kaamayət gahədəkcən</i>	‘dry farms’

### Western Bade

<i>əfcaan gagwàba</i>	‘wet mat’	<i>əfcə̀cənən gagwàba</i>	‘wet mats’
<i>gudkwan</i>	‘full pot’	<i>gə̀dkaanon gànahwa</i>	‘full pots’
<i>gànahwa</i>			

## 5.2. Predicative adjectives

<34> In GB adjectives can function as predicates in equational or identificational sentences<sup>18</sup>. As GB does not have a copula, the adjective is immediately juxtaposed to the subject. In the same way nouns can be juxtaposed to a subject in equational sentences.

<i>acì màařəm</i>	‘he is big’
<i>acì maaləm</i>	‘he is a teacher’

However, there are at least two syntactic reasons to separate noun phrases as predicates from adjectival phrases as predicates:

1. NPs obligatorily require number agreement between the subject and the predicate, whereas APs do not.
2. APs can be modified by certain adverbs, e.g. *řàntu*, *huwà*, *ngə̀la*, *jaurò*, *gàawa*.

These differences in the syntactic behaviour of NPs and APs are also major reasons to identify separate word classes, i.e. a word class of nouns and a word class of adjectives.

<u>predicate = plural</u>	<u>predicate = singular</u>	
<i>akcì kaalgən</i>	<i>akcì màařəm</i>	‘they are big’
<i>akcì Badàyat</i>	* <i>akcì Badài</i>	‘they are Bade’

- (5) *maduwà mcau màařəm hùwa/řàntu*  
house DET big very  
‘This house is very big.’

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<sup>18</sup> Adjectives in GB are not gradable, therefore comparison is usually expressed by affirmative or negative sentences of the structure [X (subject) *kə̀dau* ‘exceed, surpass’ Y (object) Z (standard-of-comparison)]. The standard-of-comparison (Z) constituent is typically a property-denoting abstract noun, verbal noun, colour term, etc. The standard-of-comparison may be preceded by the preposition *ii* ‘to, towards, in direction to, with respect to, etc.’, e.g. *Bàlaa kə̀dau Mammàn (ii) tə̀gwda* ‘Bala is wealthier than Mamman’.

- (6) *àbzàku kazàáli gàkwsàdak ñgàla*  
 today heart.his spoiled very  
 ‘Today he is very angry.’

## 6. Conclusions

- <35> In the previous chapters some semantic, morphological, and syntactic features of adjectives in GB have been illustrated. Following Dixon (2004) we put forward the hypothesis that GB has a distinct word class of adjectives which can be set apart from other word classes. Although morphologically simple adjectives cannot be neatly distinguished from nouns (i.e. they look like nouns, form plurals essentially like nouns, and in attributive pre-head position they use the same genitive linker as nouns), there are, nevertheless, semantic and syntactic criteria to define a class of adjectives.
- <36> According to Dixon (2004:2) “a lexical root cannot be assigned to a word class on the basis of its meaning’. However, he continues that ‘word classes can be identified between languages (and assigned the same names) on two criteria – similarity of syntactic function and similarity of meaning” (Dixon 2004:3). Similarly, Givón (2001:49) states that:
- “...membership in each major word-class is not defined by a single (Platonic) necessary-and-sufficient feature, but rather by three baskets of criteria:
- Semantic criteria:** The kind of meanings (‘semantic features’) that tend to be coded by words of a particular class.
- Morphological criteria:** The kind of bound morphemes – both grammatical and derivational – that tend to be affixed to words of a particular class.
- Syntactic criteria:** The typical position(s) in the clause the words of a particular class tend to occupy.”
- <37> We have seen in paragraph 2 that GB has a fair number words which are obviously not derived from other word classes (thus primary adjectives), and which have meanings typically associated with the word class adjective. Out of Dixon’s (2004) thirteen semantic types primary adjectives are attested in nine categories, some of which are typically associated with large adjective classes. We may also conclude that GB does not qualify as a language with a closed set of adjectives in the sense of Segerer (2008), i.e. less than 30 primary adjectives. In fact GB has an open adjective class which includes loanwords from neighbouring languages, especially Kanuri.
- <38> As already mentioned, in GB adjectives cannot be neatly distinguished from nouns on morphological grounds, however, what nevertheless sets them apart from nouns is the fact that in GB nouns have intrinsic gender. This is shown by agreement, e.g. with demonstratives, possessive linkers, and pronouns. In contrast to this, GB adjectives do not vary for gender. Pluralization of adjectives and nouns is essentially subject to identical patterns, and some derivations may create either adjectives or nouns. However, there is at least one derivation which is restricted to derive intensified adjectives out of “normal” adjectives. By the same token derived statives typically have the function of predicative adjectives, and in no way they can be used nominally. Morphological evidence in favour of a distinct adjective class also comes from comparison with WB. In WB nouns in their citation, or indefinite form take nunation, whereas adjectives are always cited without nunation.
- <39> What is probably most important is the fact that adjectives in GB have syntactic properties that set them apart from nouns. First of all a noun cannot modify another noun without being linked by a genitive marker, i.e. whereas there are alternative constructions for linking a head noun with an adjective modifier, only one of these constructions would also apply for head noun and

noun modifier. Thus, ‘adjective<sub>1</sub> genitive-linker noun<sub>2</sub>’ can also be expressed as ‘noun<sub>2</sub> adjective<sub>1</sub>’, but ‘noun<sub>1</sub> genitive-linker noun<sub>2</sub>’ cannot be expressed as ‘noun<sub>2</sub> noun<sub>1</sub>’. Secondly, number agreement plays a crucial role when it comes to distinguishing adjectives and nouns as predicates. Whereas predicative nouns have to agree in number with the subject of the sentence, adjectives may be used in their singular form even if the subject is plural.

<40> In favour of an adjective class we may finally bring in another comparative remark from WB where a couple of verbs are attested obviously being derived from adjectives, and not the other way round, e.g. in WB *bìtlàatu* v. ‘redden, become red’ < *bìtla* adj. ‘red’, *bòorìtu* v. ‘become large, attain full strength’ < *booriyò* ‘giant’, and *dàmtòotu* v. ‘draw near’ < *dàmto* adj. ‘near’.

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### **Abbreviations**

AUX	auxiliary
COMP	completive
DET	determiner
GB	Gashua Bade
GEN	genitive marker
KAN.	Kanuri
NEG	negation marker
PRM	previous reference marker
SUB	subjunctive
TOP	topicalizing particle
WB	Western Bade