Chapter 2: Pluractionality in Hausa

2.1. Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to present some basic information on Hausa and introduce the data that will be analyzed in Chapter 3. The data are with a few exceptions my own, collected at various points between 2007 and 2010. Roughly half of the overall amount of data came out of a number of elicitation sessions with various native speakers of Hausa living in Europe. These speakers are from different parts of Hausaland, one from Niger, the rest from Nigeria. The other half was collected during my field trip to Sokoto, Nigeria, in August – September 2009. Even though the speakers I have consulted speak different dialects, I have no reason to think that the use of pluractional verbs is subject to dialectal variation. There is a lot of variation but it seems to be a matter of individual idiolects and personal preferences, rather than dialects, since there is as much variation within the judgments of speakers of the same dialect as across dialects. As inter-speaker variation is something rather typical of Hausa pluractionals, it will be discussed throughout the chapter and a brief summary of the individual points of variation will be given in section 2.8.4. In the rest of this introduction a few general remarks concerning the variation will be made.

One general observation that can be made about how speakers vary in their use of pluractionals is that there are what I will call ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ speakers. Naturally, this distinction is gradual and thus one cannot speak of two clearly separate groups of speakers. Nevertheless, ‘conservative’ vs. ‘liberal’ is a distinction that can provide some insight into the ways speakers’ judgments vary. Below I discuss three different aspects or dimensions in which speakers can be conservative or liberal.

First, conservative speakers seem to require rather special contexts for an appropriate use of the pluractional form. Essentially, this means that for conservative speakers pluractionals clearly express meanings that go beyond simple event plurality. By contrast, liberal speakers often assign pluractionals interpretations that are simply plural (cf. the characterization of what I consider typical pluractionals and the distinction between the basic meaning and additional meanings of pluractionals given in (2) in Chapter 1).

1 It should be said, however, that probably none of the speakers I consulted speaks a ‘pure’ dialect. They are all rather well educated people, as a consequence of which their language is influenced by the standard variety of Hausa. However, as already mentioned, dialectal differences do not seem to play a role in the interpretation (or formation) of pluractional verbs. Nevertheless, they can play a role in the choice of the particular lexical item (verb that serves as the basis for the pluractional formation) the speakers use to express the given meaning.
The second aspect or dimension seems connected to the first one. It has to do with the extent of the regularity of the formation. For conservative speakers, the pluractional formation is clearly derivational and subject to restrictions. Such speakers do not derive pluractional forms equally easily from all verbs. They often reject forms that seem coined, that is, that are not recognized as commonly used or ‘well-established’. For a very small number of speakers the pluractional form is special to the extent that it does not seem to be productive at all. It almost seems that such speakers accept only a few lexicalized cases. In contrast, liberal speakers form pluractionals very regularly, to the extent that for some of them the formation has almost an inflectional character. There are few idiosyncrasies in their data and only few forms are rejected as non-existent.

Finally, some speakers are conservative in the sense that they accept pluractionals only in optimal contexts. This means that many forms are rejected for essentially pragmatic reasons, for instance, because the pluractionals were used to describe situations that do not arise naturally. Other speakers are more flexible in accepting unusual contexts or they even themselves invent scenarios that make sentences with pluractionals felicitous. Such speaker are willing to accept more cases than conservative speakers are and can thus be said to be more liberal.²

This brief and necessarily schematic characterization of the ‘conservative’ vs. ‘liberal’ speaker distinction does not exhaust the topic of inter-speaker variation. It should rather serve as a general background against which the individual points of variation can be evaluated. Concrete examples of idiolects, including the discussion of how their individual features are related to each other, will be given in section 3.8. of Chapter 3.

The chapter is organized as follows. First, I present some general information on Hausa and its grammatical system, which will be concluded by introducing the pluractional formation (section 2.2.). After that, the actual pluractional data will be presented. I start by discussing in some detail the plurality requirement and its different components (section 2.3.). Section 2.4. is dedicated to a discussion of the status of iterative interpretations. Section 2.5. deals with data showing that the number of events referred to by pluractionals should not be specified precisely but it should be large. Following that, some data will be presented that challenge the idea that a plurality of events analysis is sufficient for a proper treatment of Hausa pluractionals, namely pluractional verbs with high degree interpretations (section 2.6.). Section 2.7. discusses how certain meaning aspects of pluractional verbs interact with each other. Section 2.8. deals with some remaining issues, the most important of which is the inter-speaker variation in judgments. Section 2.9. concludes the chapter.

² Note that the distinction between conservative and liberal speakers is not a distinction between older and younger speakers. In fact, I have no evidence for saying that the differences in the use of pluractionals depend on the age of the speaker. Similarly, there seems to be no clear correlation between the conservativeness and the gender of the speaker.
2.2. Hausa

In this section, I present some background information on Hausa. I start by providing some general information and then discuss parts of the grammatical system that have relevance for the pluractional data.

The section is structured as follows. The general information is given in subsection 2.2.1. The following subsection (2.2.2.) provides the basics of the sentence structure. Subsection 2.2.3. deals with verb grades. After discussing some relevant deverbal categories in subsection 2.2.4., the focus is moved to the nominal system (subsection 2.2.5.). In the last two subsections, I discuss reduplication (2.2.6.) and pluractional formation (2.2.7.).

2.2.1. General information

Hausa is a language belonging to the Chadic family (Afroasiatic). It is spoken as a first language in northern Nigeria and southern Niger by at least 35 million people. Apart from Hausaland proper, it is spoken by Hausa communities in other countries as well (e.g. Ghana and Sudan). In addition, it is commonly used as a lingua franca by non-native speakers in various parts of West Africa. Unlike most other African languages, Hausa is actually expanding: it is rapidly replacing smaller languages spoken in the area.

Hausa is one of the best documented and most extensively studied of all sub-Saharan African languages, evidence of which are the two comprehensive grammars published recently: Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001). These two works are the most important sources of information for this general introduction of Hausa and its grammatical system. Moreover, the descriptions of pluractional verbs in Hausa given in these grammars were the starting point for my own investigations.

The standard variety of Hausa is based on the Kano dialect and this is the variety that is usually described. The various dialects can be divided roughly into two groups: the eastern dialects, which can be represented by the Kano dialect, and the western dialects, with one of its centers in Sokoto. The dialects vary in phonology, lexicon and grammatical morphemes.

Hausa is a tone language, with three distinct tones: low (L), high (H) and falling (F). The vowel system has a phonological distinction between short and long vowels. Vowel length and tone are not marked in standard Hausa orthography. However, in linguistic examples, they are marked as follows:

(1) a. vowel length: short  
   long (double vowels)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nan ‘there (near you)’</th>
<th>suunaa ‘name’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3 Alternatively, vowel length can be marked by a macron: sūnā ‘name’.
The consonant system is quite rich, thanks to the existence of glottalized, palatalized and labialized sets. Several special characters and digraphs are used in Hausa:

(2) ɓ laryngealized bilabial stop
d̄ laryngealized alveolar stop
ƙ glottalized velar ejective
ᵱ coronal tap/roll
ts ejective coronal sibilant
ɬ glottal stop
'y laryngealized semivowel

The Hausa phonological system plays a minor role in the discussion of pluractional verbs. I will only discuss it where relevant.

2.2.2. Sentence structure

In this section the basics of the sentence structure in Hausa are discussed. The focus of the discussion is on the basic elements forming a sentence, the main clause types and the tense-aspect-mood system. For this and the following five subsections, I am relying on the descriptions given by Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001). Most of the examples given in these sections are taken from these two grammars.

As illustrated in (3) below, Hausa is an SVO language, with an inflection-carrying element (INFL) between the subject and verb. INFL carries subject agreement and the tense/ aspect/ mood information (TAM, see below). Hausa is a pro-drop language, which means that a sentence can start directly with INFL if the subject is recoverable from the context.

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4 Note that the tone is marked only on the first vowel if the vowel is long, e.g. bà 'negative marker'.
5 There are two R’s in Hausa. An ‘r’ with no diacritic is a retroflex flap. The glottal stop is marked only in non-initial positions. Apart from the use of special characters, other differences in comparison to the English orthography include the following: c is pronounced as ch in church and g is always pronounced as g in get. In addition, there are geminate consonants, which are indicated by double letters. In the case of geminates of consonants represented by digraphs such as ts only the first letter of the digraph is doubled: tsaittsâyaa ‘stop,PLC’.
6 The glosses are my own.
7 This element is called person-aspect complex (PAC) in Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001) and auxiliary in Hartmann (2008).
Not only subjects but also objects can be dropped easily if they are recoverable from context:

Apart from verbal clauses, there are also two kinds of clauses in Hausa that do not contain a verb (i.e. not even a covert one). One type of non-verbal clauses are clauses that do not contain either a verb or INFL, for instance, equational (5a) or existential clauses (5b):

The second type of non-verbal clauses are clauses that contain INFL but no verb. These are e.g. possessive (6a) or locative (6b) constructions, or clauses with the so-called statives (6c), which are assumed to be non-verbal (cf. subsection 2.2.4.):

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8 The stabilizer (STAB) is a copula-like element used in equational sentences, but it also functions as a focus marker (if it is indeed the same element; cf. Green 2007). The masculine and plural form of the stabilizer is nee and the feminine form is cee. The tone is polar, i.e. opposite to that of the preceding syllable (cf. example (5a) above).
Having introduced the basic facts about clauses and the elements they are constituted by, the rest of the subsection will be devoted to verbs and the tense/aspect/mood system.

The most basic fact about verbs is that they do not inflect for tense, aspect or modality and do not carry agreement markers.\(^9\) Instead, this kind of information is encoded in the already mentioned INFL marker. INFL is composed of the tense/aspect/mood (TAM) morpheme and the subject agreement morpheme (person, gender and number). These two morphemes are sometimes clearly identifiable (or even written as separate words), as in the future form (7a), but often the two parts cannot be really distinguished, as in the perfective form (7b):

\[(7)\]
\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{a. Bà(a) zaa mù iyà zuwàa ba} & \text{FUTURE} \\
\text{NEG FUT 1PL be.able come NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘We won’t be able to come’

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{b. Naa ci goorò} & \text{PERFECTIVE} \\
\text{1SG.PF eat kolanut} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I ate a kolanut’

Tense and aspect are not realized as separate categories in Hausa. Rather, together with mood they constitute components of a single conjugational system: tense/aspect/mood (TAM). The TAM marker forms part of the INFL element, as demonstrated above. The TAM paradigms can be divided into three (syntactically determined) categories: general (affirmative clauses and yes-no questions), relative (focus, relativization and wh-questions) and negative (both general and focus negative clauses).\(^10\) The basic division is between imperfective and other than imperfective TAMs. Imperfective TAMs do not combine with verbs in the strict sense but rather with verbal nouns (comparable to the -ing forms of the English progressive), locative or stative predicates or possessive

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\(^9\) There is one verb form that does express grammatical features that are otherwise marked by the INFL morpheme, however: the imperative. The imperative is available for second person singular only (ia). In all other cases, commands have to be expressed by using the subjunctive TAM (ic). In fact, the subjunctive is a more common way to express commands in the second person singular as well (ib). As for the form of the imperative, it is usually segmentally identical to the non-imperative form but the tone is usually LH (overriding the tone of the non-imperative use):

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{(i) a. tàashi!} & < & \text{taashi} & \text{IMPERATIVE} \\
\text{‘get up!’} & < & \text{‘get up’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{b. kà/kì taashi} & \text{SUBJUNCTIVE} \\
\text{‘(you.SG,M/F) get up’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{c. kù taashi} & \text{‘(you.PL) get up!’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\(^{10}\) Only a subset of all TAMs have three distinct forms. In some TAMs, a single form is used in all three categories. In addition, some TAMs are restricted to certain categories.
Pluractionality in Hausa

Table 2.1 presents six variants of a single sentence, demonstrating six different TAM paradigms.

Table 2.1.: TAMs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>perfective</th>
<th>imperfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>general</td>
<td>Audù yaa fitooy</td>
<td>Audù yanaa fitowaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audu 3M.SG.PF come.out</td>
<td>Audu 3M.SG.IMPF come.out.VN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Audu came out’</td>
<td>‘Audu is coming out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative</td>
<td>Audù (nee) ya fitooy</td>
<td>Audù (nee) yakée fitowaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audu (STAB) 3SG.M.RELPF come.out</td>
<td>Audu (STAB) 3SG.M.RELIMPF come.out.VN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘It is Audu who went out’</td>
<td>‘It is Audu who is coming out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>Audù bai fitoo ba</td>
<td>Audù baa yaa fitowaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audu 3SG.M.NEGPF come.out NEG</td>
<td>Audu 3SG.M.NEGIMPF come.out.VN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Audu didn’t go out’</td>
<td>‘Audu isn’t going out’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As already mentioned above, the other, non-TAM, component of INFL reflects the person, gender and number features of the subject. This information is thus not encoded in the verb itself. This point is important in connection with pluractionality, since participant-based pluractionality could in principle be confused with agreement. In Hausa, however, the situation is very clear: pluractionality is marked on the verb, whereas agreement never is.

In the following subsection, more information on verbs is given. In particular, the subsection discusses the so-called ‘grade system’.

2.2.3. Verb grades

As indicated in the previous subsection, Hausa verbs are not morphologically marked for person, number or tense/aspect/mood. However, they do in some cases change their form depending on the syntactic environment. The syntactic environment relevant for the choice of the appropriate form is determined by what follows the verb. If the verb has no object or if the object has been fronted the so-called ‘A-form’ is used. If the verb is followed by a pronominal direct object it is necessary to use the ‘B-form’. In cases when the verb is followed by a noun in the direct object position the appropriate form is the ‘C-form’. The ‘D-form’ is used if an indirect object follows the verb. An example of a verb and its different forms is given in Table 2.2. below.

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11 Saying that imperfective TAMs are only used with non-verbal predicates is not quite precise because in some cases the verbal form is actually used, instead of a verbal noun, namely, if an object follows (cf. the discussion of verbal nouns below). Both Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001) use the term ‘infinitive phrase’ for such combinations of verbs and their objects in imperfective sentences, probably to be able to make a generalization that would cover all imperfective sentences, namely, that they do not contain finite verbs.

12 The time-reference point is fixed by adverbials or context, for example. If no context is provided, the default time reference is the time of speaking.
Table 2.2.: Forms of the verb sàyaa ‘buy’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A (pre-zero)</th>
<th>B (pronominal d.o.)</th>
<th>C (nominal d.o.)</th>
<th>D (i.o.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sàyaa</td>
<td>sàyeec</td>
<td>sàyic</td>
<td>sayàa/sayar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The verb sàyaa ‘buy’ exhibits a distinct morphological form in each of these four syntactic environments. This is not the case for all verbs. The number of distinct forms and their exact shape depend on the morphological class the particular verb belongs to. These morphological classes are called ‘grades’.

Verb grades are thus morphological classes of verbs that share certain formal and partly also semantic characteristics. There are eight grades described in the grammars, which can be divided into ‘primary grades’ and ‘secondary grades’. The primary grades are grades 0 to 3. Each of these grades is defined by certain formal characteristics, such as the final vowel and tone pattern. The following simplified characteristics of the primary grades can be given. Grade 0 are mostly monosyllabic verbs that typically end in -i or -aa, like ci ‘eat’ or shaa ‘drink’. Grade 1 contains both intransitive and transitive a(a)-final verbs, such as dafàa ‘cook’. Grade 2 verbs are all transitive verbs. They demonstrate the greatest variability in form, as exemplified in the table above. Grade 3 is an exclusively intransitive grade containing a-final verbs, like fita ‘go out’. Grades 4 to 7 are called secondary grades. The secondary grades, unlike the primary grades, can generally be characterized semantically as well, apart from being defined by certain formal features. Grade 4, the ‘totality’ grade, contains both transitive and intransitive verbs that “indicate an action totally done or affecting all the objects” (Newman 2000:629), e.g. sayèe ‘buy up’. Grade 5 verbs, called ‘efferential’ by Newman (traditionally ‘causative’) indicate “action directed away from the speaker” (Newman 2000:629), e.g. zubah ‘pour out’. It is characteristic for these verbs that “semantic direct objects” require the use of the oblique marker dà, as in yaa zubah dà giyàa ‘he poured out the beer’. Grade 6 verbs are called ‘ventive’ by Newman. They end in -oo and indicate action “in the direction of or for the benefit of the speaker” (Newman 2000:629), e.g. daawoo ‘come back’. Grade 7 indicates “an agentless passive, middle voice, action well done, or the potentiality of sustaining action” (Newman 2000:629), depending on the TAM. They end in -u, as in dáfù ‘be well cooked’. Despite the fact that secondary grades can be partly characterized semantically, it is often hard to provide a label that would cover all cases. Note that many verb stems occur in different grades, giving rise to slightly different meanings and uses. Typically, a verb will occur in one primary grade and possibly several secondary ones. The following table demonstrates that for the stem say- ‘buy’.13

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13 The citation form is the A form.
Table 2.3.: Verb stem say- ‘buy’ in different grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>grade</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>såyaa</td>
<td>gr2</td>
<td>‘buy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayée</td>
<td>gr4</td>
<td>‘buy up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayař</td>
<td>gr5</td>
<td>‘sell’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayoo</td>
<td>gr6</td>
<td>‘buy and bring’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>såyu</td>
<td>gr7</td>
<td>‘be well bought’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4. Deverbal categories

This section discusses three deverbal categories that are relevant for the discussion of pluractionality because they can be derived from pluractional as well as from non-pluractional verbs. When they are derived from pluractional verbs the derivation preserves the pluractional semantics. These categories are statives, adjectival participles and verbal nouns.

The so-called ‘statives’ are forms regularly derived from verbs by replacing the final vowel with a tone-integrating suffix -e\(^{14}\). The nature of statives is not completely clear to me. They are often translated as present or past participles:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(8) a. } & \text{ dàfè} & < & \text{dàfàa} \\
& \text{‘cooked’} & < & \text{‘cook’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{gùjè} & < & \text{gùdù} \\
& \text{‘running, on the run’} & < & \text{‘run’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{kwànçè} & < & \text{kwàntàa} \\
& \text{‘lying down’} & < & \text{‘lie down’}
\end{align*}
\]

Newman (2000) considers these forms adverbial. Nevertheless, adverbs usually do not follow prepositions, while statives can (the preposition à meaning ‘in/at’):\(^{15}\)

\(^{14}\) A tone-integrating suffix is a suffix with an associated tone melody that overrides the tones of the base the suffix is attached to. The tone pattern imposed by the suffix is indicated by the superscript following a right bracket.

\(^{15}\) Consider also the following characterization in Jaggar (2001:651): “[s]tatives denote the terminal state or condition resulting from the completion of a verbal action and are functionally equivalent to manner adverbs”. Jaggar’s formulation is rather cautious – he does not state directly that statives are adverbs. However, his definition is not quite precise either. Looking at the example in (8b), it is clear that the action has not been completed yet. Parsons (1981:30ff) calls statives VANS: ‘verbal adverbial nouns of state’. Newman (2000) rejects this because in his view there is nothing that would justify labeling statives as nouns. However, the fact that statives often follow the preposition à is exactly the right kind of evidence for treating statives as essentially nominal.
(9) Naà gan shì à řùbùuce
   1SG.PF see him PREP write.ST
   ‘I saw him writing’

As shown already above, a stative can also be the main predicate of a sentence:

(10) Sunàà (á) zàune
   3PL.IMPF (PREP) sit.ST
   ‘They are seated’

In such cases the stative can either follow the imperfective INFL morpheme directly or it is preceded by the preposition à.

Apart from statives, verbs generally allow the derivation of a corresponding adjectival past participle. Past participles are derived by a tone-integrating suffix -aCC(éé) and have a distinct masculine, feminine and plural form, like other adjectives.

(11) dàffàič m./ dáffàiyya ē f./ dàffàiùu pl. < dafáa
   ‘cooked’
   ‘cook’

An adjectival participle can be used in the same constructions as other adjectives:

(12) a. Shínkàafār bàà dàffàiyya ba cèe
    rice.the NEG cooked NEG STAB
    ‘The rice is not cooked’

b. Wani hòotoo sàataccce
   some picture stolen
   ‘a stolen picture’

In (12a), the participle is used as an equational predicate. In (12b) it functions as a (post-nominal) modifier of a noun.

The most important deverbal category that can be derived both from simple and pluractional verbs is the so-called ‘verbal noun’. Verbal nouns are used in imperfective sentences instead of verbs, which cannot follow imperfective TAMs (as discussed in subsection 2.2.2.; but see below). Two types of verbal nouns are distinguished: weak and strong.\(^\text{16}\)

Strong verbal nouns are either regular – their form can be predicted from the grade of the verb – or irregular. If followed by a direct object, a so-called linker is attached to the verbal noun. The linker has two forms: -n for masculine verbal nouns and -r for feminine verbal nouns.\(^\text{17}\)

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\(^\text{16}\) As a rule, weak verbal nouns are derived from grades 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 and strong verbal nouns from grades 0, 2, and 3.

\(^\text{17}\) The genitive linker, or simply linker, is generally translated as ‘of’. It is an element connecting e.g. two NPs in possessive constructions (mààtāta r Bello ‘Bello’s wife’, lit. wife.of Bello) or an adjective with a following
Pluractionality in Hausa

(13) a. Inàa ji
   1SG.IMPF listen.VN
   ‘I’m listening’

b. Inàa ji-n-kà
   1SG.IMPF listen.VN-of-you.SG.M
   ‘I’m listening to you’

Weak verbal nouns are all regular: they are derived by means of a suffix -`waa. If an object follows, the weak noun cannot be used and the verbal form is used instead:

(14) a. Tanàa kaawòwaa
   3SG.F.IMPF bring.VN
   ‘She’s bringing (it)’

b. Tanàa kaawoo kaayaa
   3SG.F.IMPF bring.VN stuff
   ‘She’s bringing (the) stuff’

This pattern is rather puzzling. Newman (2000:701) mentions that essentially all previous scholars treated forms like kaawoo in (14b) as verbal nouns that just happen to be identical to the verb. According to him, the reasons for saying that such forms are real verbs are, first, that they undergo the same vowel length and tone alternations in the A/B/C/D contexts as true verbs (cf. Table 2.2. above) and, second, that unlike all other verbal nouns that require the use of a linker when followed by a direct object (cf. (13b) above) these forms do not.

2.2.5. Nominal system

Verbal nouns, being a category that has some verbal and some nominal characteristics, bring us to the Hausa nominal system, some aspects of which are discussed in this section. Even though this thesis is mainly concerned with verbs, some properties of the nominal system are directly relevant for the discussion of pluractionality and plurality in general. I will start by discussing dynamic nouns, which are to be distinguished from verbal nouns but which, nevertheless, often express ‘verbal’ concepts. Next, it will be shown how number is expressed in the nominal domain. Finally, I will briefly describe nominal modifiers.

NP (saabo-n gidaa ‘new house’, lit. new.of house). The linker has a free variant: na(a) m./pl. and ta(a) f. (gidaa na Sulè ‘Sule’s house’), and a bound variant: -n m./pl. and -f.

18 The grave accent mark (””) preceding waa means that there is a floating tone associated with the suffix. A floating tone attaches to the immediately preceding syllable. If the tone of the preceding syllable is H, the attachment of the floating L tone produces a fall, as in (14a). If the tone is L, it remains L.
2.2.5.1. Dynamic nouns

Dynamic nouns are nouns referring to actions. They form ‘light verb constructions’ with *yi* ‘do’, a semantically empty verb:

(15)  yi aikii yi màganàa yi wàasaa  
     do work do talking do playing  
     ‘work’ ‘talk’ ‘play’

In the imperfective TAM, dynamic nouns can also directly follow INFL, just like verbal nouns. However, these cases are usually analyzed as involving a deletion of the verbal noun corresponding to *yi* ‘do’:

(16)  a. Baa sàa kuuka (< baa sàa yìn kuukaa)  
      NEG 3PL IMPF crying  
      ‘They are not crying’

     b. Sunàa kàɗé-kàɗé (< sunàa yìn kàɗé-kàɗé)  
      3PL IMPF drumming  
      ‘They are drumming’

Despite the fact that dynamic nouns, when used in imperfective sentences without *yìn*, can be almost indistinguishable from verbal nouns, they are essentially just regular nouns and not even necessarily deverbal. This also means that while there are ‘pluractional verbal nouns’ – verbal nouns formed on the basis of pluractional verbs (cf. subsection 2.2.7.) – there are no ‘pluractional dynamic nouns’. Nevertheless, in some cases, the so-called ‘frequentative’ form is available, which can be used with a pluractional-like interpretation. In fact, the reduplicated form in (16b) above is a frequentative. These forms will be discussed in more detail in the following subsection, since they are better discussed in the context of plural formation.

2.2.5.2. Number

From the perspective of the morphology employed, plural formation in Hausa is exceedingly complex. There are about 40 surface plural forms, reducible to roughly 14 major classes. In some cases, a single noun can have several plural forms. In addition (and possibly as a result of this), there is substantial dialectal and idiolectal variation. On the other hand, from the semantic point of view, the nominal number system is relatively simple, with a two-way opposition between singular and plural. The use of a plural form is generally obligatory to express plural meanings, just like in English. However, when modified by numerals and some other expressions of quantity singular forms are sometimes preferred.19 Below is an example of a noun, its plural form and the forms it can take when modified by a numeral:

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19 The facts are rather complicated here. Speakers differ in how they use plural forms of nouns, not only when modified by numerals and other quantity expressions – some prefer singular, others plural forms – but also in
In addition to the regular plural forms, there is a form that both Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001) list as a type of nominal plural, despite the fact that these are often derived directly from verbs. These forms are referred to as the ‘repetitive-frequentative’ formation, or, ‘frequentatives’. Frequentatives have the following form: the base combines with the suffix -e and receives the LH tone pattern, all of which is fully reduplicated. Frequentatives can refer to both events and objects. Sometimes the same form can have both uses. Frequentatives with an eventive meaning can be considered a type of dynamic nouns. Some examples are given below:

\[(17) \quad \text{a. taagàa taagoogii} \quad \text{‘window’ ‘windows’} \]
\[ \text{b. taagàa/ taagoogii biyař window/ windows five ‘five windows’} \]

Other contexts (see footnote 43 in section 2.3.4.). In addition, Hausa has a classifier \text{gùdaa ‘unit’} (called ‘enumerator’ in Newman 2000), which is optionally used with numerals. Newman (2000) mentions that according to Jaggar (p.e.), the noun is then usually in the plural form (ia). According to Newman, \text{gùdaa} is allowed with the singular form if the noun refers to a unit measure (ib):

\[(18) \quad \text{a. tàmbâyétàmbàye} \quad \text{(< tàmbayàa ‘to ask’) ‘questions/ repeated questioning ’} \]
\[ \text{b. ciiwâcè-ciïwâcè ‘illnesses’} \]
\[ \text{c. bùushe-bùushe ‘playing music’} \]
\[ \text{d. gîne-gîne ‘buildings’} \]

According to Zimmermann (2008), \text{gùdaa} combines both with grammatically plural and singular nouns (not just measure terms), which supports his claim that Hausa singular count nouns are number-neutral (cf. also Doetjes to appear; for a more general discussion of number-neutral interpretations see section 3.2. of Chapter 3).

\[ \text{Newman (2000) mentions that these forms are sometimes called ‘pseudoplurals of diversity’. According to my own data (cf. also Al-Hassan 1998:180) these are indeed not just regular plurals but rather express meanings like ‘different kinds of’. Some nouns can actually form both a regular plural form with a simple plural meaning and a ‘frequentative’, or ‘pseudoplural’ form that differs slightly from the regular plural. For example, \text{màfàrkii ‘dream’} can have a regular plural \text{màfàrokii ‘dreams’} and also a pseudoplural form \text{màfàrke-màfàrké, which, at least according to some speakers, means ‘all kinds of dreams’, with a rather negative connotation (i.e. bad dreams), and not simply ‘dreams’.} \]
Despite the fact that in some cases the frequentative seems to be the only plural form a noun can get, it is not a regular plural. As can be seen from (18), most frequentatives are derived from verbs. Even if there is no corresponding verb, the frequentative is often derived from an underlying verbal form, that is, from a form containing a verbalizing suffix -\textipa{\textipa{\textipa{ta}}} (/t/ palatalizes /c/ before the /-e/ suffix; cf. (18b)). Nevertheless, sometimes these forms are derived directly from nouns (\textit{irii} ‘kind’ > \textit{ire-ire}).

As already mentioned above, frequentatives can refer either to objects or events, and in some cases to both. For example, \textit{shùuke-shùuke} in (18e) can refer both to plants/crops (objects) and to a “repeated occurrence of an event or activity” (Jaggar 2001:86), in this case many events of planting something.\footnote{Notice that the frequentative can directly follow the imperfective INFL morpheme, just like other dynamic nouns – cf. examples (16) above.}

(19) Manöömi  yanàa  shùuke-shùuke
farmer  3SG.M.IMPF  plant. FREQ
‘The farmer is planting (various crops)’

Jaggar explicitly mentions that as such these forms can be considered nominal equivalents of pluractional verbs, which denote a plurality of action.\footnote{Notice the expression ‘various’ in the translation of (19), which suggests diversification/ high individuation. A similar effect can also be found in the following example from Jaggar (2001:87; forms that I gloss as ‘\textipa{\textipa{\textipa{ta}}}’ used in impersonal constructions, are labeled ‘4th person’ in Newman 2000 and Jaggar 2001; \textipa{\textipa{\textipa{ta}}} is a particle used to express repetition):}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Anàa  ta  soòke-soòke-n  gwannati}
  \hspace{1cm} IMP.IMPF  TA \textit{[criticism(s).FREQ]}-of government
  \hspace{1cm} ‘They (different factions) are criticizing the government’
\end{itemize}

Here the idea of different factions can only come from the use of the repetitive-frequentative form. It seems that, just like pluractional verbs, frequentatives refer to multiple events that are somehow differentiated from each other. In the case of (i), the events are differentiated by having different agents.\footnote{Cf. Zimmermann (2008).}
b. yaaròn
   ‘the boy’

c. wani yaaròo
   ‘a certain/ some boy’

The so-called ‘definite determiner’ is probably better referred to as ‘previous reference marker’. It is generally translated as *the*, which is just the closest equivalent, however. According to Newman (2000:143), “the exact meaning and uses of the [definite article] are not entirely clear”. Note also that the meaning of this element is probably changing as its use seems to be more common nowadays than before, perhaps under the influence of English. The form of the definite determiner is -n for masculine and plural and -f for feminine nouns.\(^{24}\) *Wani* m., *wata* f., *wa(ɗan)su* pl. ‘some’ are even more clearly not indefinite articles, which can be seen also from the fact that they can stand on their own (Newman 2000 calls them ‘specific indefinite demonstratives’):

\[(21)\] Wata taa iyàa
   someone.F 3SG.F.PF be.able
   ‘Someone is able’

Apart from the determiners discussed above, Hausa has a distributive universal quantifier (22a) and a non-distributive universal quantifier, comparable to *all* in English (22b):

\[(22)\]
a. koowànè yaaròo
   ‘every boy’

b. duk yāraa/ duk yārân  yāraa dukâ/ yārân dukâ
   ‘all boys/ all the boys’  ‘all boys/ all the boys’

*Koowànè* m. ‘every’ in (22a) combines with a singular noun, just like its English counterpart.\(^{25}\) *Duk(à)* ‘all’ combines with plural nouns and can both precede and follow the noun it modifies. In the post-head position, the form *dukâ* is generally required. In addition, *duk* also has an adverbial use, as in (23):

\[(23)\] Duk naa gâji
   all 1SG.PF be.tired
   ‘I’m tired out completely’

\(^{24}\) Recall that the grave accent represents a floating (low) tone, that is, a tone that attaches to the syllable the determiner merges with.

\(^{25}\) The distributive universal quantifier, apart from having a masculine and feminine singular form (*koowànè* m./ *koowàcë* f.), has also a plural form: *koowàɗànnè* pl.. According to Zimmermann (2008), the universal quantifier in the plural form appears to quantify over groups of entities:

\[\text{(i) Koowàɗànnè mutàamee đà dabboobi sun mutú} \]
   every.PL people with animals 3PL.PF die
   ‘All people and all animals have died’
Finally, nouns can be modified by numerals (24a) and other expressions of quantity (24b):

(24) a. yaaròó/ yàra biyu
   boy/ boys two
   ‘two boys’

b. yaaròó/ yàraa dà yawàa
   boy/ boys with many
   ‘many boys’

Other types of modifiers are less important with respect to the topic of this thesis and will not be discussed here.

2.2.6. Reduplication

Before moving on to pluractionals in the next subsection, this subsection gives an overview of different uses of reduplicative morphology in Hausa. Reduplicative morphology is employed very frequently in Hausa. Apart from the formation of pluractional verbs, reduplication can also be found with nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and numerals, with various semantic effects.

Newman (2000) distinguishes between active and frozen reduplication. Active reduplication is a “synchronously recognizable derivational or inflectional process”, which is more or less productive. The term ‘frozen (vestigial) reduplication’, by contrast, refers to forms that are phonologically reduplicated but which from a synchronic point of view are essentially unanalyzable. I will focus on cases of active reduplication, but note that lexicalized reduplicated cases are numerous. They can be found with nouns (kankanaa ‘water melon’), adjectives (tsòooloo ‘tall and skinny’) and verbs (sansànaa ‘smell’) alike.

In the case of nouns, reduplication plays a role in forming plurals. In many of the types of plural formation, the plural affix contains a copy of a consonant of the base, usually the final one:

(25) a. waaƙàa > waaƙookii -oCjH
   ‘song’  ‘songs’

b. zoobèe > zòbbaa -CCaHjH
   ‘ring’  ‘rings’

The examples in (25) are cases of copying a single consonant. There are cases of full reduplication as well. In particular, certain loan words form their plurals that way:

(26) fiřjii > fiřjii-fiřjii FULL REDUPLICATION
   ‘fridge’  ‘fridges’
Apart from these, there are also the above-mentioned ‘frequentative’ forms (cf. (18) above):

(27) tafiya > tafiye- tafiye
   ‘journey’ > ‘journeys, travels’

All in all, reduplication in its pure form (i.e. apart from suffixes containing a copied consonant) is not typical for plural formation in the nominal domain. On the other hand, full reduplication of nouns is commonly used to express other meanings, namely, distribution:

(28) a. oofis-oofis
    ‘office by office’
   b. lookacii-lookacii
    ‘from time to time’

Similarly, full reduplication of numerals leads to a distributive meaning as well:

(29) Naa baa sú nairaa biyu biyu (or: bibbiyu)
   1SG.PF give them naira two two
   ‘I gave them two naira each’

Turning to reduplication in adjectives, there are several cases to be considered. First, just like nouns, adjectives form plural forms. This is because adjectives agree in number (and gender) with the noun they modify. Adjectives make use of essentially the same plural formation types as nouns of the same shape. This means that plural forms of adjectives also include copies of the base consonants, as can be seen in the example below: 26

(30) farii m. > faraaaree pl.  cf. wuri > wuraaree  -aCeLILH
    ‘white’ > ‘white’
   ‘place’ > ‘places’

Similarly to some of the plural formations, the formation of participial adjectives also makes use of affixes containing copied consonants:

(31) rubuutaa > rubuutacee m.  -aCCLLH
    ‘write’ > rubuutacciyaa f.
    ‘written’
   rubuuttaatuu pl.
     e.g. kaatii rubuutacee daa ruwan ziinaarèe
     card written with water.of gold
     ‘a card written in gold’

26 Non-derived adjectives form a very small class in Hausa. To express adjectival notions, other constructions are often used. The so-called múi/ maris (‘having/ lacking’) constructions with abstract nouns are particularly common. Cf. riñiyaa mài zurfii ‘a deep well’, lit. well having depth, yàraa marisaa hankàlìi ‘senseless children’, lit. children lacking sense.
Apart from these cases, where copied elements are part of affixes that have grammatical functions, there are also cases where the lexical meaning is modified. In particular, there is a class of adjectives derived from nouns, generally referring to qualities, which have an intensified meaning:

(32) karfi > kàƙkarfaa m/f, karfiiafaa pl.
    ‘strength’ ‘very strong’

Another class of reduplicated adjectives consists of denominal adjectives whose meaning can be paraphrased as ‘N-like’:

(33) gàarii > gàari-gàari
    ‘flour’ ‘powdery’

The type of cases illustrated in (33) is similar to the one in (34) below where full reduplication of an adjective results in the meaning that can be paraphrased as ‘A-ish’:

(34) doogo m. > doogo-doogo m.
dooguwaa f. dooguwa-dooguwa f.
doogwàayee pl. doogwàaye-doogwàaye pl.
    ‘tall’ ‘tallish’

Adjectives that can undergo this type of reduplication typically refer to colors or physical attributes.

There are also adjectives involving reduplication that usually do not have non-reduplicated counterparts. These are e.g. diminutive (35a), augmentative (35b) or ‘negative-defective’ (expressive) (35c) adjectives:

(35) a. miitsiiti m., miitsiitsiyaa f., mitsii-mitsii pl. DIM
    ‘miniscule’
b. ribɗêéedee m., ribɗêéediyaa f., ribɗia-ribɗaa pl. AUGM
    ‘huge’
c. dòosoosòó m., dòosoosùwaa f., dòosoosàai pl. NEG
    ‘ugly, grubby’

27 The intensification effect is not present for all speakers, however. Cf. Jaggar (2001:141).
28 These derived adjectives do not have inflected feminine and plural forms but otherwise they are generally used like other reduplicated adjectives. Interestingly, however, according to Newman (2000:27), some speakers treat these forms as essentially nominal, which can be seen from the fact that they use the mài construction if these forms are to modify a noun (see footnote 26).
29 Note also that there is an interesting class of words called ‘ideophones’. These are phonaesthetic words that are “descriptive of sound, colour, smell, manner, appearance, state, action or intensity...” (Cole 1955:370, as quoted by Newman 2000:242). Not all ideophones involve reduplication. However, many do.
Despite the fact that they lack corresponding simple forms (and as such do not represent ‘active’ reduplication), these forms are worth mentioning here because they carry meanings typical for reduplication. These cases form clearly recognizable classes with regular semantics, and as such they differ from cases that are just lexicalized.

Adverbs can reduplicate as well, resulting in an intensified meaning:

(36) can > can-can
‘over there’ ‘way far away’

Interestingly, in the case of denominal adverbs, the same full reduplication leads to detensification:

(37) baaya > baaya-baaya
‘behind’ ‘slightly behind’

Finally, I would like to mention a case of partial reduplication of verbs that does not give rise to pluralactional meanings (pluralactionals will be discussed in the next subsection). These cases involve verbs that Newman (2000) calls ‘sensory quality verbs’, related to adjectives and nouns of the type mentioned above in (32):

(38) zaafāfaa cf. zàzzaafaa m./f., zaafāfaa pl.; zaafii
‘heat up’ ‘very hot’ ‘heat’

Note that the list of reduplicated forms I have given above is not exhaustive. However, the main types have been presented.

2.2.7. Pluractional formation

The pluractional formation is a very productive derivational process, applying to verbs of all grades (Newman 2000). In spite of that, pluractional forms are not used frequently and they are generally rather marked. The usage and meaning of pluralactional forms will be discussed in detail in the rest of the chapter, starting in the next section. The present subsection, the last subsection of this general introduction to Hausa, focuses on the formal side of the pluralactional formation.

Pluractional verbs in Hausa are derived from the corresponding non-pluralactional verbs by partial reduplication. In fact, there are two ways of forming pluralactional verbs but only one of them is truly productive: the prefixal reduplication, which itself comes in

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30 A very small number of speakers seem to exhibit some restrictions with respect to what grades pluralactional verbs can be derived from. These restrictions do not seem to be morphological in nature, however. Rather, they appear to be semantico-pragmatic: it seems that the semantics of certain secondary grades is not compatible with the pluralactional semantics for these speakers. I will not discuss these data because most speakers do derive pluralactionals from all grades without problems. But cf. section 3.7.5. for a similar phenomenon: restrictions some speakers seem to have with respect to compatibility of pluralactionals with certain TAMs.
two variants. The first variant is $C_1 VG$- ($C_1$ first consonant of the stem, $V$ – vowel, $G$ – geminate):

(39)  a. bugàa ‘beat’  >  bubbûgaa
    b. kiraa ‘call’  >  kikkiraa
    c. jëefaa ‘throw’  >  jàjjeefaa
    d. mutù ‘die’  >  mummutù
    e. tàmbayàa ‘ask’  >  tàttàmbayàa
    f. bi ‘follow’  >  bibbi

If the reduplicated vowel is underlyingly long, it undergoes shortening and adjustment rules that affect closed syllables ((39c); ee > a).

The other variant of the prefixal reduplication is $C_1 VC_2$-. It can be employed if the second consonant of the stem is a sonorant or any coronal:

(40)  a. kiraa ‘call’  >  kirkiraa
    b. mutù ‘die’  >  muṟmutù
    c. tàmbayàa ‘ask’  >  tàntàmbayàa

Reduplicated $C_2$ nasals assimilate to the position of the following consonant (cf. (40c)), coronal obstruents undergo rhotacism and appear as rolled /r/ (cf. (40b)). All verbs that form pluractionals by $C_1 VC_2$- reduplication also allow the $C_1 VG$- formation, but not vice versa. Pluractional formation does not affect tone per se. Reduplication operates on the segmental level and tone is assigned to the resulting form based on the grade and syllabic shape.

In addition to the prefixal formation, there is an archaic formation, which makes use of infixing a reduplicative -CVC- in the penultimate position:

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31 “Historically, the $C_1 VG$- prefix undoubtedly derived from $C_1 VC_2$- plus complete assimilation. Synchronically, however, the $C_1 VG$- variant has full and direct morphological status, i.e., one does not replicate the historical development and utilize an assimilation rule.” (Newman 2000:425)
Pluractionality in Hausa

(41) a. tafāsaa → tafarīsaa
   ‘boil’

b. rikita → riki̱kita
   ‘confuse’

What is copied in this formation is the second syllable plus the initial consonant of the third syllable. This formation is restricted to specific lexical items and these verbs usually allow the first formation as well.32 The two formations are usually equivalent in meaning, except for a few cases where one of the forms has a lexicalized meaning (presumably the archaic form; e.g. hāifaa ‘give birth’ > (a) hāhhaifāa ‘give birth many times or to many children’, (b) hāyāyvafāa ‘engender, proliferate’). In this thesis, I do not differentiate between the two forms as the meaning, if regular, appears to be the same in both cases. The vast majority of pluractionals that appear in my data are of the productive type, however.

Apart from active pluractionals, there are also cases of lexicalized, or so called ‘frozen pluractionals’. Frozen pluractionals lack non-reduplicated counterparts and often the pluractional semantics is not obvious anymore:

(42) a. famfāree
   ‘fall out (tooth)’

b. làllaasàa
   ‘soothe, coax’

Sometimes pluractionals are derived from forms that are already pluractional. This is only possible if the first formation is the infinal reduplication:

(43) gi̱rdàa → gi̱ri̱fīridàa > gígígífīridàa
   ‘uproot’

According to Newman, these ‘hyperpluractionals’ are semantically strengthened but he does not specify in what sense.

One fact to be stressed is that there are not only pluractional verbs but also pluractional verbal nouns, statives and adjectival past participles. More precisely, these are verbal nouns, statives and adjectival past participles derived from pluractional verbs, rather than pluractional forms formed on the basis of these categories:

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32 Newman suggests that these two formations used to be one in fact. The original formation was antepenultimate reduplication, which in the case of disyllabic verbs led to the same results as prefixal reduplication; e.g., gásàa ‘roast’ > gāgāsàa. In these cases, the antepenultimate formation can easily be reinterpreted as prefixal.
(44) *pluractional verbal nouns*

a. ɓuɓɓullo  >  ɓuɓɓullôwa
   ‘appear’  >  ‘appearing’
   N.B. in numbers or all over the place

*pluractional statives*

b.  zazzàuna  >  zàzzàune
   ‘sit down’  >  ‘seated’
   N.B. many people

*pluractional adjectival past participles*

c.  yagalgàlaa  >  yàgàlgàlalle
   ‘tear to pieces’  >  ‘torn into pieces’

As far as pluractional verbal nouns are concerned, it is important to say that not all pluractional verbs have corresponding verbal nouns. It seems to be much easier to derive a verbal noun from a pluractional verb if the verbal noun corresponding to the verb in question is weak, that is, formed in a regular and transparent way. Strong verbal nouns, on the other hand, often do not have pluractional counterparts, presumably because the formation is less transparent and often irregular.\(^{34}\) Recall also that sometimes there is an alternative way to express the intended meaning, namely by means of using a ‘frequentative’ form as in (19). Nevertheless, the frequent lack of pluractional verbal nouns is responsible for the fact that pluractional forms are more often found in perfective sentences than imperfective ones (recall that imperfective TAM generally requires the use of verbal nouns, rather than verbs). In this thesis, pluractional verbal nouns and statives will not be treated separately. The analysis of pluractional verbs is assumed to extend to these categories as well, since the semantic contribution of the pluractional marker is preserved in the derivations.\(^{35}\)

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to a detailed discussion of the meaning of Hausa pluractionals.

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33 I have no pluractional adjectival past participles in my own data (the example given above is from Newman 2000). Perhaps incidentally, the examples given in Newman (2000) are derived from frozen pluractionals. The participle yàgàlgàlalle ‘torn into pieces’ is derived from yapalgalala ‘tear to pieces’, which does not seem to have a simple counterpart. The other example, nininkàakee ‘multiplied’, is derived from nininkàa ‘multiply’, whose simple counterpart has a different meaning: ninníka ‘fold’. As can be seen from these two examples, however, the participle formation preserves the meaning of the pluractional.

34 This seems to be related to the distinction Newman (2000) makes between stem-derived verbal nouns (SDVN)s and base-derived verbal nouns (BDVN)s. SDVNs are derived from full verb stems (i.e. including the final vowel and tone). BDVN are derived from verbal bases (i.e. without the final vowel and tone). As a consequence, the formation of SDVN is rather straightforward and transparent, whereas the form of BDVN is less predictable. All weak nouns are stem-derived but strong verbal nouns are of both types. This is in accordance with the generalization that in contrast to strong verbal nouns, weak verbal nouns can be derived from pluractionals rather easily.

35 Cf. section 2.8.3. for more discussion, however.
2.3. Plurality and individuation

The basic generalization about pluractionals in Hausa, as well as in other languages, is that they refer to plural events. In what follows I will elaborate on this simple statement by going through the facts step by step. I will start by showing that pluractionals cannot be used to talk about singular or collective events (subsections 2.3.1. and 2.3.2.). In subsection 2.3.3., it will be demonstrated that Hausa pluractionals do not force a distributive interpretation in the sense of distribution to atoms. Next, I discuss cases where more than one argument of a pluractional is plural (subsection 2.3.4.) and I will show that even sentences with singular arguments can receive plural interpretations (subsection 2.3.5.). Subsection 2.3.6. presents some data showing that the individual subevents of a plural event should be separate from each other and possibly diverse. Finally, I present some potential counterexamples to the plurality and separateness requirement (subsection 2.3.7.).

Since there is a lot of variation, the data presented in this thesis are clearly always representative of a subset of speakers only. Where possible, I chose examples that most speakers would agree on or that illustrate properties of pluractionals that do not vary so much with speakers. Wherever I discuss examples that are less generally accepted or have less common interpretations this will be indicated. Example sentences that a majority of speakers agreed on will be presented as grammatical. Those accepted by only a minority of speakers are marked by a % sign. If an example was accepted by just one speaker it will be mentioned explicitly in the text. Note also that the translations assigned to the example sentences are usually simplified and do not capture the meanings of the Hausa sentences fully. With every particular example, just one specific aspect of the pluractional semantics is the focus of the discussion and other aspects might be ignored.

2.3.1. Pluractional vs. single action readings

Pluractional verbs in Hausa cannot be used to refer to singular events. This is illustrated in (45) where the pluractional form fitoo (or its variant ffitoo), derived from fitoo ‘come out’, is compatible with a plural subject like mutàanên ‘the people’ (45b) but not with a singular subject like mutùmin ‘the man/person’ (45a):36

(45) a. *Mùtùmin yaa fìf-fitoo
   man.the 3SG.M.PF RED-come.out
   b. Mutàanên sun fìf-fitoo
   people.the 3PL.PF RED-come.out
   ‘The people have come out’

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36 As mentioned in section 2.2.5.1., in some cases singular count nouns can have plural reference. However, unless indicated otherwise, singular count nouns used in example sentences are real singulars.
When the verb occurs in its non-plurational form, the subject can be both singular (46a) and plural (46b):

(46) a. Mútumin yaa fitoo  
    man.the 3SG.M.PF come.out  
    ‘The person has come out’

b. Mutàanèn sun fitoo  
    people.the 3PL.PF come.out  
    ‘The people have come out’

In the case of (45a), one could in principle expect the possibility of an iterative interpretation. However, such an interpretation is not possible. The sentence cannot be used to refer to a situation in which the same person came out repeatedly. I will come back to the lack of iterative interpretations for cases such as (45a) in section 2.4.

Turning to transitive cases now, we can see in (47b) that the plurality requirement can be satisfied by the plurality in the object argument as well:

(47) a. *Yuusùf yaa sàs-sàyì littaafìi  
    Yusuf 3SG.M.PF RED-buy book

b. Yuusùf yaa sàs-sàyì lìttàttàfái  
    Yusuf 3SG.M.PF RED-buy books  
    ‘Yusuf bought many (different) books’

(47a) is not well-formed because both the subject and object are singular.37 If the object is plural, as in (47b), however, the use of the plurational is felicitous. Again, the non-plurational form of the verb allows for both singular and plural arguments (48a-b):

(48) a. Yuusùf yaa sàyi littaafìi  
    Yusuf 3SG.M.PF buy book  
    ‘Yusuf bought a book’

b. Yuusùf yaa sàyi lìttàttàfái  
    Yusuf 3SG.M.PF buy books  
    ‘Yusuf bought some books’

Importantly, the plurality requirement does not have to be satisfied by a particular syntactic constituent. For many languages, it is reported that the plurational requires the subject to be plural in the case of intransitive verbs, and the object in the case of transitive verbs. This means that these languages follow the ergative pattern (cf. Corbett

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37 Again, structures like these are not felicitous, even when the verb refers to an action that can be easily repeated, as in (49a). Iterative readings will be ignored until section 2.4., which is devoted to describing under what conditions repetition is a possible interpretation of Hausa pluractionals.
Pluractionality in Hausa

2000). However, this is not true for Hausa, where both the subject and the object of transitive clauses may license the use of the pluractional:

(49) a. *Máïřוי taa ṭaɗ-dāgà kujèerâř
   Mairo 3SG.F.PF RED-lift chair.the
   ‘Mairo lifted the chair’
   N.B. the most natural interpretation: the chair is lifted one by one

b. ‘Yammaatân sun ṭaɗ-dāgà kujèerâř
   girls.the 3PL.PF RED-lift chair.the
   ‘The girls lifted the chair’
   N.B. the most natural interpretation: the girls lift the chair one by one

c. Máirọ taa ṭaɗ-dāgà kujèerûn
   Mairo 3SG.F.PF RED-lift chairs.the
   ‘Mairo lifted the chairs’
   N.B. the most natural interpretation: the chairs are lifted one by one

Sentence (49a) is ungrammatical because both the subject and the object are singular. Sentences (49b) and (49c) are both well-formed, however. The object can be singular if the subject is plural and vice versa. In other words, the pluractional can be used both in a situation in which the same chair is lifted consecutively by different girls and in a situation in which one girl lifts several chairs, one by one. In either case, the event is a plural one.

Moreover, not only do Hausa pluractionals not follow the ergative pattern, it does not seem to matter at all what element in the sentence licenses the pluractional. This can be illustrated by the following examples:

(50) indirect object

a. Yaa zuz-zùbagai musù shaayi
   3SG.M.PF RED-pour to.them tea
   ‘He poured tea for them’

goal

b. Yaa zuz-zùbà shaayi cikin koofúnàa
   3SG.M.PF RED-pour tea in cups
   ‘He poured tea into (different) cups’

location

c. Suunansà yaa fîf-fitoo à wuràaree dàban-dàban
   name.his 3SG.M.PF RED-come.out at places different-different
   ‘His name came up in different places’

38 It is possible that this pattern is typical for what I called, following Wood (2007), plural-participant verbs, rather than for real pluractionals. Nevertheless, there are clear cases of languages with restrictions as to what syntactic argument reflects the plurality of the verb (e.g. the internal argument in Kaqchikel; cf. Henderson 2010).

39 Often, the ‘licensor’ does not even have to be overt; cf. section 2.8.2.
To summarize, in this subsection I demonstrated that the event described by a pluractional verb cannot be singular. Moreover, I showed that different elements in the sentence can be ‘responsible’ for the plurality of the event. In the next subsection I will show that collective readings, which are also singular in nature, are excluded with pluractionals as well.

2.3.2. Pluractional vs. true collective readings

Consider again sentence (49b), repeated in (51):

(51) ‘Yammaatân sun dãf-dãgã kujìerâf
girls.the 3PL.PF RED-lift chair.the
‘The girls lifted the chair’
N.B. the most natural interpretation: the girls lift the chair one by one

Speakers typically translate sentences like (51) using expressions like ‘one by one’, which indicates that the sentence cannot be used to describe a situation in which a group of girls lift a chair together, that is, collectively. Similarly, if a plural object is involved in an event in a collective fashion, the pluractional cannot be used either. Thus, the sentence in (52a) can only be uttered in a situation in which the lights have been switched off one by one. It is not possible to use the pluractional if all the lights were switched off by using a single switch, i.e. in a single event.\(^{40}\) In (52b) the pluractional of *baa* ‘give’ can only be used if there were several separate events of book-giving and not if a group of people received a collective gift of a pile of books.

(52) a. Yaa kañ-kâshè fitilûn
3SG.M.PF RED-kill lights.the
‘He switched off the lights’
N.B. #with one switch/ OK: several switches, one by one
b. Naa bab-baa sù littàttàfai
1SG.PF RED-give them books
‘I gave them some books’
N.B. #if it is a collective gift/ OK: several separate events of giving

Thus, pluractional verbs cannot be used to refer to true collective action, which supports theories that treat collective events as singular in nature (to be discussed properly in section 3.5. of Chapter 3).

As already pointed out in section 1.5.2. of Chapter 1, the use of the term ‘collective’ requires some caution. Cocurrence with adverbs like *together* is often taken as a signal that a collective interpretation is involved. However, *together* and its counterparts in other languages do not necessarily imply joint action in the sense that the action is

\(^{40}\) The next subsection presents a correction to the claim that the entities referred to by the verb’s arguments have to be affected strictly one by one.
performed by a group as a whole and not individually by each member of the group. *Together* can also be used just to indicate accompaniment, spatio-temporal overlap and other related notions (cf. (56) in Chapter 1). Thus, for example, if several people sit down or stand up together, each of them still has to sit down or stand up by themselves — they only do it simultaneously or at the same place. This means that plural action and adverbials comparable to *together* are in principle compatible, at least if the predicate is inherently distributive as in (53a), which can be contrasted with (53b):

(53)  

(a) *Sun zaz-zàunaa tääare  
  3PL_PF RED-sit.down together  
  ‘They sat down together’

(b) *Sun ḏḏ-dāgā teebūţ tääare  
  3PL_PF RED-lift table together  
  ‘They lifted the table together’

In section 3.5.3. of Chapter 3, it will be shown that the facts regarding collective interpretations are still a bit more complicated. However, at this point, the following generalizations are sufficient: (a) pluractional verbs cannot be used to refer to truly collective events, and (b) the presence of a collectivizing adverb by itself does not imply that the sentence is to be interpreted as involving a truly collective action.

### 2.3.3. Pluractionality vs. distribution to atoms

Considering the fact that speakers tend to translate sentences like (51) above using expressions like *one by one*, one might conclude that pluractionals in Hausa are distributive in the sense of distribution to atomic individuals. However, sentence (51), repeated below as (54), can also be used in a scenario where not all the girls lift the chair by themselves, as long as there are multiple liftings. In other words, in a context where there are six girls, $a$, $b$, $c$, $d$, $e$ and $f$, and the table is lifted by $a$, $b$, $c$, $d$, $e+f$, the sentence is still felicitous:

\[\text{(54)}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
 & 3PL_PF RED-lift  
 & \text{taare} 
 & \text{with}\,\text{the}\,\text{table} 
 & \text{together} 
 & \text{gcome.out} 
 & \text{Mutāanên sun fid-fitoo} 
 & \text{people the 3PL_PF RED-come.out} 
 & \text{‘The people have come out (one by one or in smaller groups)’}
\end{align*}
\]

Notice, however, that *fitoo ‘come out’ is an inherently distributive predicate, which makes this case rather different from the one in (54): the predicate *fitoo* holds of every atomic individual in any case. This type of case will be discussed in section 3.5.3. of Chapter 3.

\[\text{41}\]\n
\[\text{42}\]

\[\text{41}\] A parallel interpretation is also available for examples like (45b), repeated below in (i). Similarly to (54), for the sentence in (i) to be true, the people do not have to come out necessarily one by one. The sentence is felicitous also in a situation in which the people come out in smaller groups:

\[\text{(i)}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
 & 3PL_PF RED-come.out 
 & \text{people the} 
 & \text{Mutāanên sun fid-fitoo} 
 & \text{‘The people have come out (one by one or in smaller groups)’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{42}\] Note that this is not a necessary property of pluractional markers in general. An example of a language where the pluractional marker does give rise to a distributive interpretation in the sense of distribution to atoms is Kaqchikel. If the following sentence is used, with the pluractional marker on the verb, it can only mean that every individual child was hugged. It cannot be used if any subset of the children got a collective hug (Henderson 2010):
(54) ‘Yammaatân sun daf-dágà kujëeràñ
girls.the 3PL.PF RED-lift chair.the
‘The girls lifted the chair’
N.B. the most natural interpretation: the girls lift the chair one by one

The same is true for the internal argument: it is not necessary that each atom in the plurality denoted by the plural object argument be affected individually. Sentence (55a) can also be used in a situation in which the things are not bought literally one by one but perhaps a few at a time. Sentence (55b) can describe a situation in which the books are put on the table in little piles.

(55) a. Yaa sás-sáyi abuubuwàà
3SG.M.PF RED-buy things
‘He bought a lot of different things’
b. Taa sas-sákà lítáttáfài à kán teeëùñ
3SG.F.PF RED-put books at top.of table
‘She put some books on the table, in various places/piles’

To conclude, what matters for the use of the pluractional form is whether there are multiple events that can be described by the basic verb. It does not seem to matter whether the individual subevents have atomic or collective participants.

2.3.4. Plural arguments

So far, only cases where one of the participants is plural have been discussed. Naturally, pluractional verbs allow more than one participant to be plural. Two examples are given below:

(56) a. Sun bub-búudë taagoogii
3PL.PF RED-open windows
‘They opened the windows’
b. Yárañ sun daf-dágà teeëùroñi
children.the 3PL.PF RED-lift tables
‘The children lifted some/ the tables’

When more than one participant is plural (e.g. both the subject and object), the number of possible scenarios increases. For example, sentence (56b) can be used in situations in

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(i) X-a'-in-q’ete-la ri ak’wal-a’
CP-A3p-E1s-bug-PDIST the child-PL
‘I hugged the children individually’

43 In this particular example, one speaker preferred the use of the singular form taag à ‘window’ as it is clear that the windows are plural from the form of the verb already. Cf. the discussion in section 2.2.5.2., esp. footnote 19.
which each of the children lifted one table, where each of the children lifted all tables (one by one), where all the children collectively lifted all the tables one by one, or where the children in smaller groups lifted the tables one by one, or a few at a time. The only excluded scenario is the one in which all the children collectively lift all the tables at once, for example, by putting them on top of each other and then lifting them together. In other words, the sentence cannot be used to refer to a single collective action but there are essentially no restrictions on how exactly the lifting is carried out as long as the event is plural.

2.3.5. Singular count and mass arguments

In this subsection I discuss sentences in which the ‘licensing’ participants of pluractional verbs are expressed either by singular count or mass nouns. These cases make it very clear that the phenomenon observed is not number agreement (cf. Durie 1986, Corbett 2000), and also that these verbs are not simply plural-argument verbs (in the sense of Wood 2007). Examples like the following thus demonstrate that the plurality requirement is not (morpho)syntactic in nature, but rather purely semantic:45

(57) a. Yanà mim-miike à kân gadoo
   3SG.M.IMPF RED-stretch ST at top of bed
   ‘He is sprawled out all over the bed’

b. Gidân yaa rur-rüshee
   house.the 3SG.M.PF RED-collapse
   ‘The house is completely demolished’
   N.B. all its parts

c. %Kankanàa yaa rur-rübee46
   watermelon 3SG.M.PF RED-rot
   ‘The watermelon is all rotten’
   N.B. all parts of it, it cannot be eaten anymore

d. Kwalabaàa taà faf-fãshee
   bottle 3SG.F.PF RED-break
   ‘The bottle broke’
   N.B. into many pieces, not just two

44 Cf. section 1.6.1. of Chapter 1.
45 Example (57a) is from Newman (2000:423). Examples like (57b–c) generally receive two types of interpretations, depending on the speaker. At this point I give only one of them. The other interpretation will be introduced in section 2.8.1.
46 For speakers who accept cases where it is parts of objects that are affected by the individual subevents, the size of the object seems to play a role. Thus, a speaker might not accept the example with mangwaɗo ‘mango’ but if kankanàa ‘watermelon’ is the subject of the sentence, the acceptability improves substantially. Naturally, nouns referring to objects like houses (57b), which are much bigger and have clear parts, are even better suited for such readings.
In the case of verbs with singular count arguments (like those above), the pluractional form is acceptable if the intended meaning is that the individual subevents of the plural event affect various parts of the object, rather than the object as a whole. For example, sentence (57a) is interpreted as an event in which different body parts stretch in different directions. Similarly, the sentence in (57b) expresses that (all the) different parts of a house are demolished. Sentence (57c) conveys the information that (all the) different parts of a melon are rotten. In (57d), a situation is described in which a single bottle breaks into many pieces. In other words, it refers to a situation involving more than one breaking event.47

Similar effects can be found with mass nouns in the position of the verbs’ arguments:

(58) a. Ruwaa yaa ɓuɓgɓullo water 3SG.M.PF RED-appear
   ‘Water appeared’
   N.B. in various places

b. %Shinkaafa yaa dàd-dàfu rice 3SG.M.PF RED-cook
   ‘The rice is (all) cooked’
   N.B. the rice is in different pots

c. %Yaa shas-shànyè madařaa 3SG.M.PF RED-drink.up milk
   ‘He drank up all the milk’
   N.B. either all the bottles, or all subquantities of milk in a single bottle

In the situation described by sentence (58a), the water is understood to have appeared in different places, which means that separate quantities of water are involved. Similarly for (58b): if the sentence is acceptable at all it usually means that the rice is being cooked in different pots. As for the sentence in (58c), two different scenarios are possible: either the milk was divided into spatially separate quantities (e.g. several bottles; this is the preferred option), or it means that all the subquantities of milk in a single container were consumed (a less natural option).

Note that not all speakers accept sentences like the ones in (57) and (58) equally easily. The availability of this type of interpretation is influenced by various factors. For example, body parts are salient parts of humans and thus verbs referring to events that can involve the individual body parts more or less separately can be pluralized in such contexts quite easily. It seems that it is more difficult to obtain a ‘distribution to parts’

47 One could think that the pluractional is licensed by an implicit plural argument or adjunct in (57d) (cf. 2.8.2.), e.g. a resultative phrase like ‘into many pieces’. However, it would often be hard to determine what the particular argument/adjunct should be. One could imagine that the non-overt expression is something like ‘many times’ or ‘in many places’ just as easily as ‘into many pieces’, since all these could in principle describe the same situation. I will argue in section 3.5.2. of Chapter 3 that cases like these are indeed underspecified with respect to what licenses the plurality.
interpretation with homogeneous (mass) nouns. In such cases, pluractionals are more likely to be used if the (mass) individual can be split into spatially separated quantities. However, as illustrated in (58c), an interpretation in which different parts of a single quantity of stuff are affected, is also available for some speakers.48

In this section, it was shown that pluractional verbs can sometimes combine with morphologically singular arguments. In the case of mass nouns, this often means that the event involves spatially separate entities of matter, that is, essentially plural individuals. The other option, and the only one available for singular count nouns, is that the plural subevents are distributed over parts of objects. To conclude, pluractionals can also be used felicitously when their participants are singular if the situations can be conceptualized as involving a plurality of events.

2.3.6. High individuation: separateness and diversity

So far, pluractionals have been described as if they were used to talk about events that are simply plural. This does seem to be the case with a certain type of predicates. In particular, certain inherently distributive predicates seem to have the same meaning in the pluractional and non-pluractional form in cases in which the plurality is already signaled by the plurality of an argument, as in (59):

(59) a. Sun taashi
   3PL_PF stand.up
   ‘They stood up’

b. Sun tat-taashi
   3PL_PF RED-stand.up
   ‘They stood up’

In cases like this, the pluractional form does not seem to contribute any additional meaning as compared to the non-pluractional form. According to the first intuition of many speakers, sentences (59a) and (59b) mean exactly the same. Given that the non-pluractional forms of verbs can be used to refer to plural events, the effect of pluralization can become essentially invisible in cases like these. Nevertheless, in many cases, it is clear that the effect of using a pluractional verb is more than just evoking a plural event. Rather, the interpretation is that there is a number of (more or less) clearly individuated events of the same type. In the case of (59b), we can get a glimpse of that if the speaker translates the sentence as ‘they all stood up’, where all does not indicate exhaustiveness as much as it puts emphasis on the fact that each person stands up

48 In fact, one speaker was able to assign a ‘distribution to parts’ interpretation to the sentence in (58b) as well. The resulting interpretation was an odd one, however, due to a requirement that will be discussed in more detail later. This requirement forces an interpretation according to which the individual subevents are more or less independent of each other. As a result, the use of the pluractional form in sentence (58b) implies for that speaker that the different parts of rice were cooked to various degrees.
individually, i.e. that each person is involved in their own event of standing up. Clearer cases of emphasis on the individuation of the subevents, however, are those where the subevents are visibly separate from each other and/or differentiated from each other along some dimension. Such cases are discussed below.

The requirement that the individual subevents should be separated from each other was already observed in the previous section. Consider the following examples:

(60)  

a. Ruwaa yanàa zuz-zubówaa
    water 3SG.M.IMPF RED-pour.VN
    ‘Water was pouring down’
    N.B. from various places

b. Naa cic-ci tuwoo
    1SG.PF RED-eat tuwo
    ‘I ate several servings of tuwoo’
    N.B. possibly from other people’s plates

Sentence (60a) can be used only in a situation in which the water is coming from several different sources (e.g. dripping/pouring from various spots on the ceiling). This means that the plurational cannot be used if the water came down in a single stream from a single spot – only the non-plurational form is felicitous in such a context. Similarly, sentence (60b) cannot be used if tuwoo refers to a single serving but only when several different quantities of tuwoo are involved, e.g. portions served to different people on different plates.  

The examples given above to illustrate the separateness requirement involve mass arguments. This is because that is where the effect is most clearly visible. Nevertheless, it should be clear that the separateness requirement is present also with count arguments. With count nouns, however, the separateness requirement is usually fulfilled trivially: different people or books, for example, are necessarily separate entities.

The condition that the individual subevents should be separate is often accompanied and strengthened by a requirement that they should be diverse. This diversification is not strictly speaking a requirement, rather just a preference. It can be observed that, often, the most natural translations of sentences with pluractionals contain expressions like various, different kinds of etc. In many cases, then, it is clear that the plurational form is not used to refer to simply plural events but rather to ‘multiple and varied’ events. Consider the following examples:

49 Staple food made from guinea-corn, rice, or millet flour, which is cooked in boiling water and stirred until thick (Newman 2007).
50 The cases where the separateness requirement is not fulfilled trivially with count nouns are cases with collective arguments. In those cases, there has to be something ‘lumping’ the individual members of the collections together and separating them from others, e.g. a common purpose or shared location. More discussion of collective interpretations can be found in section 3.5.3. of Chapter 3.
(61) a. Yaa sâs-sâyî littàtûtâfài
   3SG.M.PF RED-buy books
   ‘He bought a lot of different books’

b. Yaa dad-dâfâ âbînci
   3SG.M.PF RED-cook food
   ‘He cooked different kinds of food’

c. %Sun gog-göodee
   3PL.PF RED-thank
   ‘They thanked individually’

N.B. for different things/ reasons

For most speakers, sentence (61a) means that many different (kinds of) books were bought, perhaps also at various places. Sentence (61b) describes an event of cooking different kinds of food. As for sentence (61c), the comment of a speaker with a very strong diversity requirement is that the sentence can be uttered in a situation in which different people, living in different places got different presents and they are all sending their thanks back, from different places and for different reasons.

One more dimension along which the (sub)events of a plural event can be differentiated is illustrated below:

(62) %Yâransù sun yî-yî kâmaa dâ bâábansù
    children.their 3PL.PF RED-do resemblance with father.their
    ‘Their children resemble their father to various degrees’

In this example, the subevents are differentiated by the fact that the degree to which the property can be attributed to each of the subjects is different. In other words, there are many subevents, each of them being an event of a child resembling his or her father, and the subevents differ from each other in the degree of resemblance.

It should be kept in mind that, as already mentioned, speakers’ intuitions vary quite considerably in how strong this preference is. For some, sentence (61a) can only be used if the agent buys different books in different places but for most speakers, the diversity requirement is less strong and it is satisfied even if the books are bought in a single shop, as long as they are different. All in all, it can be concluded that the subevents of a plural event should be more or less clearly individuated if the pluractional form is used.

2.3.7. Pluractional vs. continuous readings

The main generalization so far is that pluractional verbs in Hausa refer to plural events, whose subevents are more or less clearly individuated. However, it is also occasionally possible to find cases that seemingly contradict this generalization. In particular, these are cases where there are no gaps between the individual subevents, i.e. cases that seem to involve (singular) continuous events. Admittedly, it is very hard to get clear data here.
Moreover, even if true continuous cases can be found, they are extremely rare. The two examples that I give below are the only cases I have encountered that are more or less clearly continuous and, in fact, most speakers do not accept them on the continuous interpretation. Consider first the example in (63):

(63)  Ruwaay anàa  zuz-zubówaa
      water 3SG.M.IMPF RED-pour.VN
      ‘Water was pouring down’

N.B. most speakers: from different sources; a small number of speakers: possibly from one source, continuously

For most speakers, the sentence in (63) means that there was water coming from various places (cf. (60a)) or that that the stream was being interrupted. However, sentence (63) can also be interpreted by some speakers as involving a continuous, uninterrupted, stream of water.51 Still, it is not completely clear that even for those speakers sentence (63) refers to a truly continuous process. I believe that there is another way to analyze cases like these. This can be better illustrated with the following example, which some speakers also accept on what seems to be a continuous reading:

(64)  Naa tut-túurà moontàa
       1SG.PF RED-push car
       ‘I pushed the car’

N.B. most speakers: there must be pauses in the pushing; a small number of speakers: possibly continuously, without stops

Similarly to (63), for most speakers, this sentence can only be used if there are pauses in the pushing or if there is some other plurality present. Nevertheless, for some speakers it can be used both when the pushing is interrupted and when it is continuous and some speakers report that the sentence expresses that the pushing is continuous and requires a lot of effort.

Despite the fact that some speakers do seem to accept sentence (64) on a continuous reading, closer examination reveals that the interpretation might not be truly continuous. When asked in more detail about the exact conditions under which the sentence can refer to a continuous pushing, some of the speakers respond in a way that suggests that the seemingly continuous action rather involves repeated inputs of energy. A natural situation for the use of the sentence would be, for instance, when the car is very heavy and thus hard to push, as a consequence of which the attempts need to be repeated. This might also explain why the ‘continuous’ reading is possible for some speakers if it requires a lot of effort. As for the continuous reading of sentence (63), it is less clear that this type of explanation can be applied to it. Nevertheless, one could say in this case as well that the water is not flowing strictly continuously. It is possible that the situation is

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51 The same holds for its perfective counterpart. This means that the ‘continuous’ effect is not the result of using the imperfective TAM.
conceptualized as involving repeated gushes of water. The fact that the situation involves a plurality of gushes might be obscured by lack of moments when there is no water coming, which is however plausible if the gushes follow one another in quick succession. That is, the event of water pouring down can be repeated without any (perceptible) gaps between the repetitions. If that is the case, the idea is still defendable that this is a plural event. As such, example (63) would not be a real counterexample to the basic generalization that pluractional verbs can only be used to refer to plural events. However, it would still be a counterexample to the generalization that the individual subevents should be clearly individuated (note that this also applies to the explanation offered for (64)). The second option is that (63) is a genuine continuous case. In that case it would be a real counterexample to the main generalization about pluractionals. I suggest, however, that even then the problem would not be very serious as this would be essentially the only real counterexample I have come across. In Chapter 3, I will argue that the two potential continuous examples given here should be treated as subcases of two slightly different phenomena. The example in (63) might be best analyzed as a subcase of the participant-based type of interpretation, whereas example (64) will be analyzed as a subcase of the repetitive type of pluractionals, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.4. Iteration

In descriptions of pluractional verbs across languages one often encounters the generalization that pluractionals are used to refer to multiple events distributed over different participants, locations or times (cf. Lasersohn 1995). So far, examples of the first case (most of the examples given so far) and some potential examples of the second case (e.g. (50c)) have been presented. However, no well-formed examples of the third case have been presented yet. In this section, I will argue that even though simple iteration of an event is in most cases not a possible interpretation of Hausa pluractionals, a distinction has to be made between two types of cases. I will call the first type ‘repetitive events’ and the second type ‘repeated events’. It is perfectly acceptable to refer to repetitive events by pluractional verbs, while repeated events have to be described using other constructions. I will discuss these two types separately, in subsections 2.4.1. and 2.4.2., respectively. In subsection 2.4.3., I will discuss a related issue of tentative and conative readings.

2.4.1. Repetitive events

I use the term ‘repetitive events’ to refer to cases that involve typically quick repetition of short events. Such series of short events can be described by using a pluractional in Hausa. Below are some examples:
These pluralactional verbs are derived from verbs that refer to short events like hitting, scratching, kicking or slapping etc. In English, verbs like _jump_ or _kick_ can be used to refer to either a single jump or kick (the semelfactive use) or to a series of jumps or kicks (the repeated action/activity use). This is illustrated in (66):

(66)  

(66) a. He jumped onto the chair (one jump)  

b. He jumped on the spot for several minutes (repeated jumps)  

c. She kicked him hard to make him shut up (one kick)  

d. She kicked the leg of the table nervously (repeated kicks)  

In Hausa, non-pluralactional verbs of this type can also refer both to single and repeated events, even though it seems that the pluralactional form is strongly preferred if the intended meaning is repetition:

(67)  

(67) Yaa taafāa  

3SG.M.PF clap  

‘He clapped’  

N.B. once or more times  

Rothstein (2008) assumes that English verbs like _kick_ and _jump_ refer to ‘single occurrence’ events and are homonymous with activity predicates denoting events which involve iterations of the single event. I assume that Hausa verbs like _shiuraa_ ‘kick’ or

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52 The sentence contains the particle _ta_, which by itself signals repetition.

53 Some of the frozen pluralactionals of the language have a repetitive meaning as well:

(i) a. Naa kwankwāsā teebūr  

1SG.PF knock table  

‘I knocked on the table (repeatedly)’  

b. Taa mulmulā alkamā, zaà tä yi wāinaa  

3SG.F.PF knead wheat FUT 3SG.F do pancakes  

‘She’s kneaded the dough, she is going to make pancakes’
*taaʃaː* ‘clap’ are number-neutral, just like all other non-pluractional verbs. For lack of a better term, I will call this class of verbs ‘semelfactive verbs’, despite the fact that the semelfactive interpretation is not their only interpretation.

In relation to the previous subsection, it is important to point out that cases with the repetitive interpretation might resemble the potential continuous cases. The reason is that there are often no perceptible gaps between the individual repetitions. For instance, the most natural scenario associated with example (65d) is one involving an uninterrupted series of scratches, rather than a single scratch, followed by a pause, another scratch, and so on. What distinguishes the repetitive cases without perceptible gaps from cases like (64) is mainly that it is rather well defined what counts as one kick, hit or scratch. With pushing, this is much less obvious. In Chapter 3, I will offer an explanation for why reduplicated semelfactives constitute an exception to the general requirement for (visible) ‘gaps’ and how that relates them to cases such as (64). At this point, it is important to realize that the class of verbs just presented is a class with special properties. In the following subsection, it will be shown that repetition is not a possible interpretation with other types of pluractionals verbs.

### 2.4.2. Repeated events

Perhaps surprisingly, iteration of any other type than the one just described cannot be expressed using a pluractional in Hausa. Thus, it is not possible to utter (68) to describe a situation in which the same person poured tea for herself, drank it up, poured more tea etc.

(68) Naa zuz-zūbà shanji (*cikin koofin/ OK: cikin koofunàa)  
1SG.PF RED-pour tea  (*in cup.the/ OK: in cups)  
‘I poured tea (*in the cup/ OK: in the cups)’

Sentence (68) is not felicitous if the event of pouring tea into a cup is simply repeated. However, for some speakers, (68) is acceptable with *cikin koofin* (in cup.the.SG) in a situation in which the tea is in fact meant for different people but where the speaker has only one cup so she has to reuse it. If that is the case the individual subevents are not just repetitions of the same event: they are differentiated by means of the tea being poured for different people.⁵⁴

Below are some more examples that show that simple iteration is generally not an option. All the examples involve differentiation between the subevents:

(69) a. Naa nān-nèemee tà  
1SG.PF RED-look.for her  
‘I looked for her in various places’  
N.B. not just repeatedly in the same place

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⁵⁴ This example also shows how a well-chosen context can influence the acceptability of a sentence.
b. Naa bib-bi shi (wuràaree)\textsuperscript{55}  
\hspace{1em} 1SG.PF RED-follow him (places)  
\hspace{1em} ‘I followed him to various places’  
\hspace{1em} N.B. not repeatedly to the same place  
c. Yaa bub-bùudè jákaa  
\hspace{1em} 3SG.M.PF RED-open bag  
\hspace{1em} ‘He opened different compartments of the bag’  
\hspace{1em} N.B. not repeated opening  
d. Yaa bib-biyaa kudii  
\hspace{1em} 3SG.M.PF RED-pay money  
\hspace{1em} ‘He paid for different people’  
\hspace{1em} N.B. several different paying events  

In (69), the pluractional verbs are used with singular subjects and objects. However, the interpretation is never that of simple repetition. If a person is looked for many times, it has to be in different places (69a). If a single person is being followed and a pluractional is used to describe the situation it means that he was followed to different places (69b). If a bag is opened and the verb \textit{bùudèe} ‘open’ is used in its pluractional form, as in (69c), it is not just repeated opening but rather different compartments of the bag are being searched. Finally, in (69d) a situation is described in which there are multiple events of paying by the same person but the payments are for different people, for example. In cases in which an interpretation other than simple repetition is not easily available, the sentence is not acceptable.\textsuperscript{56}

(70)  
a. *Naa tsat-tsallàkè kujèeraa  
\hspace{1em} 1SG.PF RED-jump over chair  
\hspace{1em} intended: ‘I jumped over the chair repeatedly’  
b. *Taa bub-bùudè taagàr  
\hspace{1em} 3SG.F.PF RED-open window. the  
\hspace{1em} intended: ‘She opened the window repeatedly’  

It is hard to imagine a multiple event of jumping over a single chair as involving anything else than simple repetition, or at least not without a lot of creativity. Similarly for (70b): a single window cannot be opened in many different ways and thus the only way to interpret the sentence would have to involve simple repetition.

\textsuperscript{55} Some speakers require the presence of \textit{wuràaree} ‘places’ for the sentence to be acceptable.  
\textsuperscript{56} Notice that the pluractional in (70a) is acceptable if the object is plural:

(i) Naa tsat-tsallàkè kujèeruu  
\hspace{1em} 1SG.PF RED-jump over chairs  
\hspace{1em} ‘I jumped over (different) chairs’  

As for (70b), some speakers accept the sentence on the interpretation ‘she opened the different parts of the window’, which is then a case of distribution to parts, described in subsection 2.3.5.
This being said, it should also be acknowledged that the picture is a bit more complicated than suggested above. As already mentioned, there is a lot of variation in judgments among speakers. Perhaps not surprisingly then, there are a few speakers who occasionally, or quite systematically, accept iterative interpretations with pluractionals. This happens especially after they have been exposed to a number of sentences with pluractionals that are hard to interpret as not involving repetition. However, simple repetition is never the first interpretation a plurational will receive even for these speakers. I will come back to this issue in Chapter 3. Generally, it can be concluded that simple iteration is not a possible interpretation of plurational verbs in Hausa.

Iterative interpretations need to be distinguished from habitual interpretations. Habituality is expressed by using the habitual TAM marker (or the imperfective TAM marker in some dialects). In Hausa, habituality cannot be expressed by the use of the plurational form. This is not surprising as simple iteration of an event is not a possible interpretation of the plurational form either. However, habitual TAM (or imperfective TAM in the habitual use) can generally combine with pluractionals. The resulting interpretation is that on each occasion, there is a plural event of V-ing.

(71) Takàn tát-tàmbàyee ni
3SG.F.HAB RED-ask me
‘She always asks me a lot of (different) questions’

The individual asking events cannot be distributed over different occasions. In other words, the sentence above cannot be used to express that on each occasion the person was asked a single question.

2.4.3. Conative and tentative readings

There are two special types of cases that represent another way of interpreting pluractionals with singular arguments, which would otherwise be infelicitous since iteration is not a possible interpretation. These are the so-called conative and tentative readings (cf. section 1.4.4.). In the case of conative interpretations, the action does not produce the desired result (72a-b). Tentative interpretations are interpretations according to which the action was performed superficially or not with serious effort (72c):

(72) a. %Naa daɗ-dagà teebùr
1SG.PF RED-lift table
‘I tried to lift a table’
N.B. here and there, a bit on each side

This type of interpretation is not easily available for all speakers. Sentences like (72c) are systematically assigned a different type of interpretation by some speakers (cf. the discussion of exhaustive interpretations in section 2.8.1.). Note also that sentence (72b) can in principle get a regular plural reading as well. For instance, the sentence could mean that the things were pushed into many cars.
b. Naa tut-tūrä kaayān
   1SG.PF RED-push things.the
   ‘I tried to push in the things’
   N.B. e.g. in a car that is already too full

c.  Yaa shās-shāari daakī
   3SG.M.PF RED-sweep room
   ‘He swept the room superficially’

In (72a), the simple iterative interpretation, involving a repeated lifting of the table, is not possible. However, at least for some speakers it is possible to interpret the sentence as describing a situation in which the attempt to lift the table was repeated, rather than the full event. In addition, for some speakers, the attempts are not just repeated. Instead, the person trying to lift the table tries different corners and angles. In (72b), the use of the pluractional suggests that someone is trying to push something either into a container that is too small or full already or through an opening that is too small. Again, the attempts are repeated. In (72c), the use of the pluractional suggests that the person did not do the sweeping properly. Perhaps he swept a bit here and a bit there but the room was not really clean in the end.

Conative (72a-b) and tentative (72c) readings are rather common cross-linguistically. It is not surprising, then, that they can be found with Hausa pluractionals as well. In this chapter, I discuss conative and tentative readings together, as they are at least superficially very similar to each other. In Chapter 3, however, I offer two different explanations for the two types of meaning effects.

2.5. Large quantity and vagueness

The discussion of the Hausa pluractional data revolves around one central claim, namely, the claim that pluractional verbs refer to plural events. In this subsection I will make this claim a bit more specific again, describing another layer of the meaning of Hausa pluractionals. In particular, I will demonstrate below that plural events referred to by pluractionals are not just plural (or plural and individuated). Rather, the number of events should be relatively large and, moreover, it should be vague. This is true no matter whether the plurality of events is manifested as plurality of participants, locations, repetitions or anything else. In the following, the large number and vagueness requirement will be illustrated separately for temporal and non-temporal cases, starting with the non-temporal ones.

As just mentioned, for a pluractional verb to be used felicitously, the number of events referred to by it should be left unspecified. It can be seen from the fact that specifying the exact number of participants or locations leads to reduced acceptability. The number of subevents should rather not be specified. It is simply understood to be quite large.
This is not a strict requirement for all speakers but it is the preferred option even for those who (sometimes) accept cases with explicit reference to numbers. In (73), the general pattern is presented:

(73)  a. Mutânæne sun  fiř-fitoo
      people  3PL.PF RED-come.out
     ‘Many people came out’

      people ‘with many/ ?hundred/ ?five/ ?*two
      3PL.PF RED-come.out
     ‘Many/ ?hundred/ ?five/ ?*two people came out’

  c. Mutânæne ?da yawæa/ darii/ biyar/ biyu  sun  fitoo
      people ‘with many/ hundred/ five/ two
      3PL.PF come.out
     ‘Many/ hundred/ five/ two people came out’

  d. ?*John ?Peter  sun  fiř-fitoo
     John 3PL.PF RED-come.out

In (73a), the noun mutâanne ‘people’ is not modified by a numeral or a quantity expression. Nevertheless, the use of the pluractional implies that the number of people was rather large. In (73b), it is demonstrated that modifying the noun by a vague quantity expression leads only to slight degradedness, whereas the use of numerals yields a worse result. Moreover, the smaller the number is, the less acceptable the sentence gets. Example (73c) demonstrates that the non-pluractional form of the verb imposes no such restrictions. Finally, the ungrammaticality of (73d) shows that also noun phrases like John ?Peter ‘John and Peter’ do not combine well with pluractionals since the number of the participants should be larger than two for the pluractional form to be acceptable.

The same pattern can be found in the case of specifying the number of locations (if that is where the plurality is located):58

(74)  a. Mutânæne sun  fiř-fitoo  dâgâ  gidâajên/ ?’gidâajên  âshiřin
      people  3PL.PF RED-come.out  from  houses.the/ houses.the twenty
     ‘People came out of the houses/ ?’twenty houses’

  b. Katanga  taa  tsat-tsâagee  (?wâ wurii biyar)
      wall  3SG.F.PF RED-crack  (?at place five)
     ‘The wall cracked in many places (?in five places)’

Example (74a) shows that the preferred option is to not specify the number of houses the people came out of if the pluractional is used. Similarly, specifying the number of places in which the wall cracked is not acceptable for most speakers if the multiplicity of cracking events is expressed by the pluractional form, as in (74b).

58 In Chapter 3, I will argue that there is no fundamental difference between participants and locations as ‘licensors’ of pluractionality.
The question marks and stars show the relative acceptability of the modifiers across speakers, not absolute judgments for all speakers. As in many other aspects of the meaning of pluractionals, also here speakers’ judgments vary to a certain degree. Nevertheless, the basic generalization is that the use of the pluractional form implies that the number of the subevents was rather large. Furthermore, it is dispreferred to specify the cardinality of the subevents by another expression, especially if the quantity expression is not sufficiently vague.

The facts are slightly more complicated in the case of temporal interpretations. Testing the possibility of precise specification of the number of repetitions requires more caution, for reasons to be specified below. Once the complicating factors are taken care of, however, the picture is clear: the number of subevents should be vaguely large in these cases as well.

One reason why the situation is less transparent with the repetitive cases is that \textit{x-times} adverbials can appear in different syntactic positions. In cases in which an \textit{x-times} adverbial is felicitous with a pluractional, it usually precedes it and also semantically scopes over it. In (75), then, the interpretation is that there were ten occasions on which the plural event occurred. In other words, there were ten occasions involving many hits, not ten individual hits:

(75) Sáu goomà taa bub-bùgà teebûř
     times ten 3SG.F.PF RED-hit table
     ‘Ten times, she hit the table repeatedly’

To test whether \textit{x-times} adverbials can also specify the number of the actual subevents (the individual hits), the adverbial has to follow the pluractional, as in (76):

(76) %Taa bub-bùgà teebûř sàu goomà
     3SG.F.PF RED-hit table times ten
     ‘She hit the table (repeatedly) ten times’

Some speakers report the same interpretation for (76) as the one exemplified in (75). This means that for them the adverbial does not have to be preposed to scope semantically over the pluractional, which results in the sentence being acceptable, on a par with (75). For most speakers, however, (76) is degraded because in this position the adverbial necessarily specifies the number of the individual hits and that is not accepted if the pluractional is used. Consider also the following examples where the individual slaps are being counted:
The pattern is the same as in the case of non-repetitive readings: the number of slaps should not be specified if the pluractional is used, at least not very precisely. Thus, it can be concluded that the vagueness requirement applies in the temporal cases as well. Just like in the case of the participant-based readings, the use of the pluractional form itself implies that the number of the subevents is relatively large.

Finally, notice that if a pluractional is used with a repetitive interpretation, the number of participants can be specified since the contribution of the pluractional does not have to do with the number of participants in that case but with the number of repetitions. The well-formedness of (78a) can be contrasted with the degraded status of the participant-based case in (78b).

Notice that the opposite case is not so easy to construct. If the singular subject in (77b) is replaced by a plural one it does not rescue the sentence because of the low position of the adverbial. As indicated above, *x-times* adverbials generally cannot take scope over the pluractional in that position.

To prevent the adverbial from counting the number of the individual slaps it should be preposed, as in (80):
Sentence (80) expresses that there were five occasions on which a plural event of slapping took place.

To summarize, the use of a pluractional generally implies that the number of the subevents in the plural event is relatively large. Specifying the number precisely is dispreferred.

### 2.6. Degree readings

In the present section, I discuss interpretations that involve either intensification or detensification, that is, degree-like meaning effects. Subsection 2.6.1. deals with high degree cases, subsection 2.6.2. with cases that can be seen as involving low degree meanings.

#### 2.6.1. High degree

Cases of pluractionals with high degree interpretations do not constitute a large class but they are rather important for the overall analysis of pluractionality in Hausa. Therefore, they will be discussed in some detail. An example of a pluractional with a high degree interpretation is given below:

(81) Yàraa sun rur-rùdeé
children 3PL.PF RED-be.confused
‘The children were very confused’
N.B. beyond control, alarmed

Note that cases like the one above are different from cases where the intensity effect comes only as a side effect of plurality (cf. section 1.4.2.). Consider the following examples:

(82) a. Kwalabaa taa faf-fasheé
bottle 3SG.F.PF RED-break
‘The bottle shattered/ broke into many pieces’

b. Kwalabaa taa fashëe
bottle 3SG.F.PF break
‘The bottle broke (into two pieces)’

Sentence (82a) might sound like a description of an ‘intensified’ event because the expressions *shatter/ break into many pieces* in the translation make the event sound more serious in comparison to simple *break* in (82b). However, I suggest that any potential degree effects in cases like this should be understood as following from the large number of the breaking (sub)events.
The type of cases that will be discussed here are, unlike the verb in (82a), pluractionals derived from gradable verbs, i.e. verbs like ruuɗee/ gàji/ dàamu ‘be confused/tired/worried’. The interesting generalization about these verbs is that the gradable property associated with them is intensified, while the use of the pluractional form requires the participants to be plural at the same time. This can be seen in the following examples:

(83) a. Yàraa sun ruuɗee
   children 3PL.PF be.confused
   ‘The children were confused’

b. Yàraa sun rur-ruɗee
   children 3PL.PF RED-be.confused
   ‘The children were very confused’
   N.B. beyond control, alarmed

c. %Yaa rur-ruɗee59
   3SG.M.PF RED-be.confused
   intended: ‘He is very confused’

Sentence (83b) is interpreted as involving a higher degree of confusion than sentence (83a), where the verb is in its non-pluractional form. The sentence in (83c) shows, in addition, that the pluractional form of ruuɗee ‘be confused’ cannot be combined with a singular subject. The same pattern is found with other gradable verbs, e.g. gàji ‘be tired’:

(84) a. Mun gàji
   1PL.PF be.tired
   ‘We are tired’

b. %Mun gàg-gàji
   1PL.PF RED-be.tired
   ‘We are all very tired’

c. ??Naag gàg-gàji
   1SG.PF RED-be.tired
   intended: ‘I am very tired’

Example (84b) shows that the pluractional form of gàji ‘be tired’ expresses a higher degree of tiredness in comparison to the non-pluractional form in (84a). The unacceptability of the sentence in (84c) demonstrates that the pluractional form is incompatible with a singular subject.

In section 2.2.3., I briefly discussed the so-called grade system, a system of morphological classes of verbs. With respect to gradability, grade 7 is an interesting class since these verbs display the same pattern as the verbs discussed above. Grade 7

59The % sign indicates that for some speakers this sentence is well-formed. However, it seems that at least for some of those speakers for whom it is acceptable, the interpretation is rather that of internal plurality. For instance, it can mean that the person was confused for multiple reasons, kept getting confused etc.
verbs are all intransitive. In the perfective TAM these verbs have passive-like semantics and usually refer to action thoroughly or well done (cf. Newman 2000). This means that in the perfective TAM these verbs already involve high degree in the non-pluralional form. However, in the pluralional form, the degree of the property is even higher:

(85)  

(a) Naa/Mun dàamu  
1SG/PL.PF be.worried  
‘I am/ we are (very) worried’
(b) %Mun dàá-dàamù  
1PL.PF RED-be.worried  
‘We are (really) very worried’
(c) ??Naa dàá-dàamù  
1SG.PF RED-be.worried  
intended: ‘I am very worried’

To conclude, when the meaning of a pluralional derived from a gradable verb is compared to its non-pluralional counterpart, it is clear that the gradable property is intensified. At the same time, the plurality requirement is still present since sentences with singular participants are degraded. This means that intensification alone is not a possible interpretation of Hausa pluralionals, as sometimes suggested in the literature (e.g. Frązyngier 1965). In other words, in the cases of gradable verbs, the semantic contribution of the use of the pluralional form is both plurality and high degree.

2.6.2. Low degree

In this subsection, a different type of cases that involve a degree-like effect is presented. In these cases, the effect is detensification rather than intensification: the degree of whatever property is gradable in each particular case is lower than in the case of the non-pluralional form. Below are some examples (note that not all speakers find them acceptable or they do not interpret them as involving detensification):

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60 In the imperfective TAM grade 7 verbs (or, more precisely, verbal nouns) indicate potentiality of action:

(i) Wannán múo tā náa gyáaruwaa  
this car.the 3SG.F.IMPF repair.VN  
‘This car is repairable’

61 As in many other aspects of the use of pluralional verbs, there is quite some variation in judgments among native speakers also in the gradable cases. The variation concerns both the exact set of verbs that allow for pluralional formation, as well as the interpretation of the resulting, reduplicated, forms. Some speakers seem to get high degree interpretations quite easily, for others intensification is very rare as a meaning contribution of the pluralional form. Despite all the variation, however, the data presented above manifest a rather regular pattern in the sense that gradable verbs generally require intensification in the pluralional form while the plurality requirement is still preserved.
Pluractionality in Hausa

(86) a. %Yârân sun yiy-yi kàmaa dà juunaa
   children.the 3PL_PF RED-do resemblance with each.other
   ‘The children resemble each other a bit’

b. %Mun yiy-yi aikìi
   1PL_PF RED-do work
   ‘Occasionally we found some time for work’
   N.B. the work is not serious enough

c. %Sun kak-kařàntà littâtâffàn
   3PL_PF RED-read books.the
   ‘They read the books superficially’
   N.B. a bit here, a bit there

The sentence in (86a) implies that the degree of the resemblance among the children is rather low. Sentence (86b) can be uttered by people who did not work very hard. Finally, the use of the pluractional form in (86c) suggests that the reading was not thorough. For example, if the sentence describes the preparation of a group of students for an exam, the use of the pluractional indicates that they did not study seriously enough.

Notice that with the exception of the complex predicate yi kàmaa ‘resemble’ these verbs cannot be considered gradable. This makes these pluractionals rather different from the high degree cases discussed in the previous subsection. Notice also, that examples (86b-c) can be taken to represent the tentative reading, as exemplified in (72c) (section 2.4.3). In fact, in Chapter 3, I will treat cases like (86b-c) and (72c) as representing the same phenomenon. Also, it will be shown that the high degree and low degree effects have very different sources.

2.7. Interaction between large number, high degree and high individuation

In the previous sections, it was shown that pluractional verbs in Hausa do not simply refer to non-singular events but that the subevents have to be many and the number should remain vague. Moreover, the individual subevents are typically highly individuated and in some cases high or low degree interpretations arise in addition to plurality. Putting the gradable cases aside for a moment, it can be said that pluractionals typically refer to many and varied events. The following examples suggest that at least for some speakers either meaning contribution can license the pluractional form on its own. For such speakers, it is enough for the events to be sufficiently many (and not very varied), or only sufficiently varied (and not very many). Note that the comments provided for the examples given below represent intuitions of one or two speakers in each case. However, effects of this type can be found with a number of speakers. Consider first the example in (87):
Chapter 2

(87) Sun ji:jira shi
   3PL.PF RED-wait.for him
   ‘They waited for him’
N.B. %as few as two people is enough if they waited for different reasons

The example in (87) elicited a comment according to which the plurafunctional can be used even if there were only two people waiting provided that they waited (e.g. to meet with someone) for different reasons. If the reasons were not different, then the people waiting should be many. The following example gave rise to a similar comment:

(88) %Anàà gig-gìnà màkàràntun sakandàrêe gûdaa biyağ
   IMP.IMPF RED-build schools.of secondary unit five
   ‘Five secondary schools are being built’
N.B. %possible if the schools are being built in different towns

The number of schools can be specified (and low) if the individual events of building were differentiated by having the schools built in different towns.

Something very similar can be observed in cases of plurafunctionals with high degree interpretations. It seems that in high degree cases, some speakers allow for interpretations involving participants that are simply plural, rather than numerous, which is otherwise usually required with plurafunctionals. Thus, one speaker suggested that in (89) it is possible for the subject pronoun to refer to two people only, provided that the degree of being thankful is very high:

(89) %Mun gog-góodee
   1PL.PF RED-thank
   ‘We thank you so much!’
N.B. %it is possible that the subject refers to two people only

In fact, the general idea that the event is somehow very serious or important often seems to save sentences where the number of subevents is specified and/or low. The sentence in (88) above also received a comment that it sounds like something a politician would say, as if to stress how well they are taking care of the well-being of their people. This means that if the plurafunctional in (88) is interpreted as augmenting the importance of the plural event, it is possible to specify the number of the subevents. The same effect is illustrated in (90), which sounds inappropriate exactly for this reason:

(90) %?Kàajjìnàa biyu sun muŋ-munù
   chickens.my two 3PL.PF RED-die
   ‘My two chickens died’
N.B. %it sounds as if the event is given too much importance

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62 The example in (88) is based on an example from Pawlak (1975:146).
The reason why sentence (90) sounds odd to the speaker who provided the comment is that the use of the pluractional makes the event sound overly serious.

To summarize, from the data presented in this subsection it seems clearer than from the discussion of the individual aspects of the pluractional meaning that the use of the pluractional form often suggests that the plural event is somehow special or remarkable. What makes the event remarkable could be a higher degree of a property, it could be the fact that the subevents are very many or that they are highly diversified. In addition, it could be just a very general emphasis. Typically, several of these special effects cooccur. Nevertheless, the examples just discussed point to the conclusion that this is not necessary. It is enough if one of the special meaning effects ‘licenses’ the use of the pluractional form in Hausa. However subtle these effects can sometimes be, they reveal something important about the nature of Hausa pluractionals and as such they play an important role in the motivation of the proposal presented in Chapter 3.

The basic properties of Hausa pluractionals have now been described. The purpose of the following section is to present some additional properties of pluractionality in Hausa.

2.8. Further issues

This section discusses some further issues that are relevant for the analysis. Subsection 2.8.1. discusses the issue of exhaustive and non-exhaustive interpretations. The next subsection (2.8.2.) deals with cases of pluractionals whose arguments are not expressed overtly. In subsection 2.8.3. stative and verbal nouns derived from pluractional verbs are discussed. Finally, subsection 2.8.4. summarizes the facts about inter-speaker variation.

2.8.1. Exhaustivity

Hausa sentences with pluractionals are often translated by native speakers with the use of expressions like all or each (cf. (91a)). Also, when providing their own examples of sentences with pluractionals, speakers often use the Hausa equivalent of all: duk(à), which apparently makes the examples sound very natural (91b).63

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63 Notice that while the non-distributive universal quantifier duk ‘all’ is frequently used with pluractionals, the distributive universal quantifier is usually not compatible with the pluractional form:

(i) ?Koowaa yaa zaz-žunaa
    everyone 3SG.M.PF RED-sit.down
intended: ‘Everyone sat down’

Interestingly, while some speakers do not find sentences with koowaa ‘everyone’ (completely) ungrammatical, sentences with koowané N ‘every N’ are clearly worse in comparison:
This might be taken to mean that pluractionality in Hausa involves exhaustivity. However, if this were the case pluractionals would be expected to be incompatible with exceptive phrases. The following examples show that this is not the case. The sentences in (92) are not contradictory despite the presence of an exceptive phrase:

(92) a. Sunàa zâz-zàune
   3PL.IMPF RED-sit.ST
   ‘They were all seated’

   b. Duk sun tsait-tsàyaa
   all 3PL.PF RED-stop
   ‘They all stopped’

I conclude from this that pluractionals do not give rise to truly exhaustive interpretations. However, the tendency of speakers to use all or each in the translations and duk(â) in the original sentences with pluractionals clearly exists. It probably partly reflects the fact that pluractionals are used for emphasis, to make the event sound more ‘serious’. The following example illustrates this and shows that in such cases duk(â) does not mean literally ‘all’ or ‘completely’:

(93) Duk kaa zuz-zubař då ruwaa!
   all/completely 2SG.M.PF RED-pour with water
   ‘You spilled all the water!’
   N.B. possible even if only some of the water is spilled

According to the speaker who volunteered the example, the sentence can be used when the person being scolded in fact did not spill all the water, maybe not even a bigger part of it. Duk is used basically to make the clumsiness of the person spilling the water sound really terrible and of serious consequences.

(ii) ?*Koowâné dâalibii yaa zaz-zàumaa
   every student 3SG.M.PF RED-sit.down
   intended: ‘Every student sat down’

This correlates with the fact that in English, everybody combines more easily with e.g. together than every N:

(iii) Everybody/ *every man danced together

As together needs a plural subject, this example shows that everybody is more plural-like than every N.
It is important to realize that apart from the seemingly exhaustive interpretations, it is also possible to find the opposite case. Recall that Hausa pluractionals can in some cases be assigned the so-called tentative interpretation, where the implication is that the action is not performed thoroughly:

(94) %Yaa shās-shāari ṭaakii
    3SG.M.PF RED-sweep room
    ‘He swept the room superficially’

If the room is not swept properly, it probably means that not all parts of the room were swept. In other words, the superficiality effect can be understood as resulting from non-exhaustivity. In addition to the tentative cases, there are also other cases of pluractionals with non-exhaustive interpretations:

(95) Gidân yaa rur-rúshee
    house.the 3SG.M.PF RED-collapse
    i. ‘The house collapsed completely’
    ii. ‘The house collapsed in some parts’

Sentences like (95) are generally interpreted in two different ways. For some speakers the contribution of the pluractional is an exhaustive interpretation (i) while others interpret such cases non-exhaustively (ii). For some speakers, then, (95) expresses that the house was completely destroyed, while for other speakers the use of the pluractional indicates that only some parts of the house collapsed and thus the house might still be usable. In Chapter 3 (section 3.8.1.), I will offer an explanation for this paradox.

2.8.2. Unexpressed arguments

As already mentioned in section 2.2.2., the verb’s arguments can often be left unexpressed in Hausa. This is also true for sentences with pluractionals. Such unexpressed arguments can then also serve as licensors of pluractionality. Consider the following example:

(96) a. Naa tut-tūnnaa
    1SG.PF RED-remember
    b. Sun tut-tūnnaa
    3PL.PF RED-remember

Sentence (96a) is easily interpreted as ‘I remembered various things’, ‘various things’ being something the hearer has to fill in on their own. Sentence (96b) has a plural subject. However, this does not mean that the subject has to be interpreted as the licensor of the pluractional form. The pluractional can also be licensed by the unexpressed object.

\textsuperscript{64} Similarly, there are speakers who interpret sentence (94) as ‘He swept all parts of the room/ he swept the room thoroughly’.
Thus, sentence (96b) can be interpreted as ‘They (all) remembered (the same thing)’, or ‘They remembered various things’. In principle, then, unexpressed arguments are not different from expressed (plural) arguments in the ability to license a pluractional. In spite of that, expressing or not expressing an argument overtly can make a certain interpretation more prominent than another. This is illustrated in (97):

(97) a. Yaa zuz-zúbá shaayi
   3SG.M.PF RED-pour tea
   i. ‘He poured tea for them (different people)’
   ii. ‘He spilled tea’

b. Yaa zuz-zúbaa musú shaayi
   3SG.M.PF RED-pour to.them tea
   ‘He poured tea for them (different people)’

Many speakers assign the same interpretation to sentence (97a) as to sentence (97b): the tea was poured for different people. Nevertheless, the fact that the beneficiary of the event is not expressed overtly in (97a) makes the interpretation according to which the tea was spilled (here and there) much more prominent for some speakers. In addition, there are also speakers who actually seem to require overt expression of the licensor of the pluractional form. Such speakers find sentences like (96a) unacceptable and require the object to be expressed overtly in order for the pluractional to be felicitous:

(98) Naal tut-túnaa dá suu
   1SG.PF RED-remember with them
   ‘I remembered them (different things)’

In my view, this is not a reflection of a real grammatical restriction. Rather, some speakers seem to be better at providing possible interpretations in underspecified contexts than others. It is easier to locate the source of plurality if it is expressed in the sentence. Importantly, however, the majority of speakers seem to have little trouble reconstructing the missing material.

2.8.3. Pluractional statives and verbal nouns

Pluractionality is a verbal phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is not restricted to verbs in Hausa. Pluractionality can also be found with certain deverbal categories, namely statives and verbal nouns (cf. section 2.2.7.). Both pluractional statives and verbal nouns have been used in the examples in this chapter, since the pluractional semantics is preserved in the derivations. The present subsection discusses in what sense these forms are specific.

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65 I have nothing to say about adjectival participles derived from pluractionals.
Statives do not seem to exhibit any kind of morphological constraints with respect to the availability of pluractional forms. Consider the following pair of a verbal pluractional and its corresponding stative:

(99) a. An cic-cikà kwalàabân
IMP.PF RED-fill bottles.the
‘They filled the bottles’

b. Kwalàabân sunàa cic-cike
bottles.the 3PL.IMPF RED-fill.ST
‘The bottles are filled/ full’

What distinguishes pluractional statives from their corresponding verbs is that they seem to require the plurality to be situated in the subject. Thus, whereas (100a) is acceptable with the singular subject (the plurality is located in the unexpressed object argument), (100b) is not: the pluractional stative requires the subject to be plural (100c).

(100) a. Naa shis-shiryaa
1SG.PF RED-prepare
‘I got prepared’

N.B. preparing a lot of things

b. *Inàa shis-shirye
1SG.IMPF RED-prepare.ST
intended: ‘I am prepared/ ready’

c. Sunàa shis-shirye
3PL.IMPF RED-prepare.ST
‘They are (all) prepared/ ready’

This pattern is perhaps not unexpected, considering that the stative describes the state of the subject resulting from the event of preparing oneself and not the event itself.

As for verbal nouns, their meaning seems entirely parallel to that of their corresponding verbs. However, there are gaps in the paradigm: not all types of verbal nouns have corresponding pluractional forms. This means that many pluractionals cannot be used in the imperfective TAM. Consider the following contrast between the well-formed daddàfàwaa (the pluractional counterpart of dafàwaa ‘cooking’, a weak verbal noun; (101a)) and the degraded ?inà neemaa (the expected pluractional counterpart of neemaa ‘looking for’, a strong verbal noun; (102a)):

(101) a. Tanàa dad-dàfàwaa
3SG.F.IMPF RED-cook.VN
‘She is cooking different kinds of things’

b. Taa dad-dàfaa
3SG.F.PF RED-cook
‘She cooked different kinds of things’
The constraint at play seems to be of morphological nature. Apparently, if a given verb does not derive its corresponding verbal noun in a completely transparent and regular fashion, it is generally impossible to derive a verbal noun from its corresponding pluractional verb.\(^{66}\)

To conclude, pluractional statives and verbal nouns do have their specifics. Nevertheless, the pluractional semantics is inherited from the base verb. As a consequence, I will not propose a separate analysis of pluractional statives and verbal nouns.

### 2.8.4. Variation

At various points during the presentation of the data, variation in speakers’ judgments has been discussed. There is no variation with respect to the basic plurality requirement, that is, no speakers use pluractionals to refer to singular events.\(^{67}\) However, most other aspects of the use of pluractional verbs exhibit less uniformity. Some of the most important ones are summarized in the following paragraphs.

First, while all speakers allow for the pluractional form to be licensed by plural participants, not all speakers accept cases with singular count or mass arguments without problems (cf. section 2.3.5.). In other words, not all speakers find it easy to distribute the event plurality to parts of participants. Those speakers who cannot associate the plural subevents with different parts of a single participant very easily generally reject examples with singular participants unless an interpretation involving a different type of plurality is available.

Second, the high individuation requirement (cf. section 2.3.6.) is not equally strong for everyone. For some speakers, this seems to be a genuine requirement and thus the pluractional form is rejected if the individual subevents are not sufficiently differentiated. For others, however, high individuation is generally preferred but not strictly speaking required. For such speakers, pluractionals often refer to events that are simply plural.

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\(^{66}\) The impossibility of deriving verbal nouns from pluractional verbs whose non-pluractional counterparts are associated with irregular verbal nouns thus follows from the restrictions on the formation of verbal nouns, rather than from restrictions on the pluractional formation. Cf. also the discussion in section 2.2.4.

\(^{67}\) Note that the very limited number of continuous-like interpretations some speakers seem to accept are analyzed as plural events where the gaps between the individual subevents are less clearly visible. These cases will be dealt with in sections 3.5.4.1. and 3.6.1. of Chapter 3.
Another point of variation is the absoluteness of the ban on iterative interpretations (cf. section 2.4.2.). While most speakers reject all interpretations involving simple iteration with other than semelfactive verbs, some speakers do occasionally or even quite regularly accept them. However, iteration is never the first interpretation offered by any speaker. It is rather typical that if speakers accept iterative interpretations this is after they have been exposed to a sufficient amount of data that are hard to interpret otherwise. This suggests that some speakers can develop a certain degree of ‘tolerance’ to iterative interpretations despite the fact that they usually reject them at first.

As a fourth aspect in which there is quite a lot of variation, the availability of high degree interpretations can be mentioned (cf. section 2.6.1.). For most speakers, intensification interpretations are not very frequent but they do occur. However, there are speakers for which intensification is a meaning effect that is relatively commonly found with pluralactional verbs. On the other hand, there are also speakers who hardly ever interpret pluralactionals as involving high degree.

The points of variation discussed above are perhaps the most easily noticeable ones. Nevertheless, there are many other aspects in which speakers vary. For instance, some speakers can specify the number of subevents more easily than others. An interesting point of variation is also the preference for either exhaustive or non-exhaustive interpretations, discussed in section 2.8.1. In addition, for many but not all speakers, pluralactionals have certain special connotations associated with them. For example, they may be perceived as carrying some kind of negative evaluation or suggesting that there is an element of disorder and/or unpredictability in the event or that the event is striking in some other way.

In Chapter 3, I will offer an analysis that will, among other things, provide an explanation for why there is so much variation in the Hausa pluralactional data and also why some aspects of the use of pluralactionals give rise to more variation than others. Even though there will be cases that I have no principled explanation for, most of the variation can be explained and is in fact predicted by the analysis. In other words, the variation in the judgments is not as random as it might seem at first sight.

### 2.9. Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to introduce the data that will be analyzed in the next chapter, the main chapter of the dissertation. After providing an overview of the Hausa grammatical system, the individual aspects of the use of pluralactional verbs were discussed one by one and they were illustrated by a number of examples. The basic generalization is that pluralactional verbs can only refer to plural events. There are some additional conditions on the felicitous use of pluralactionals, however. In particular, the individual subevents are generally required to be many, rather than simply plural, and preferably differentiated from each other. In some cases, the use of the pluralactional form
also indicates that the event is somehow intensified. These additional conditions or meaning effects sometimes interact with each other in interesting ways. One of the most striking facts about Hausa pluractionals is that they cannot be used to express simple iteration, with the exception of semelfactive verbs. Apart from this restriction, however, there are very few restrictions as to how the event plurality is instantiated. All these properties will be given an explanation in the next chapter, where I propose an analysis of the semantics of pluractionality in Hausa.