

Schuh, Russell G. *A Grammar of Miya*. (University of California Publications in Linguistics, 130.) 1998. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press. Pp. xxiii, 414. Pbk. \$45.00

This volume by Russell Schuh, a widely esteemed Chadicist, is a grammar of Miya, a small (West) Chadic language (approximately 5,000 speakers) spoken in northern Nigeria. The grammar is characterized by extensiveness in scope and fullness of exemplification. The grammar is presented in an atheoretical format and thus should be fully accessible to all African linguists whatever their background and training.

A brief introduction is followed by a chapter setting out the segmental phonology. Particularly interesting is the reduction of the many surface vowels to three phonemic vowels, namely **ə**, **a**, and **aa**. Chapter 3 describes the tonal phonology, with careful attention to morphotonological rules and lexical restrictions. (Miya has a terraced level tone system with high and low plus downstep.) Chapter 4 presents verb classes and related verbal nouns, including gerunds and derived nominals. Chapters 5 and 6 present the tense, aspect, mood (TAM) system, detailing the form, as manifested *inter alia* in the shape of the verb, and the function in discourse structure. As is common in African languages, the TAM correspondences between the affirmative and negative are far from straightforward and thus are given careful attention. Chapter 7 includes a description of verbal extensions (which, curiously, Schuh says that Miya does not have!) and other derivations, such as “pluractional” (i.e. plural action) verbs. Chadicists will be particularly interested in the description of Intransitive Copy Pronouns (ICP’s) and in the cognate accusative/complement construction. Chapter 8 introduces nominals and adjectives, with detailed treatment of gender and plurality. Chapter 9 includes information on reference, definiteness, universals, and reflexives. Word order within the noun phrase (Chapter 10) is typical of Chadic, namely Noun + adjective (or relative clause), Noun plus numeral, Noun plus definite article (but indefinite demonstrative + Noun), and two types of Noun of Noun constructions, a “direct” genitive construction (often “inalienable”) and a “linked” genitive (often “alienable”). Miya has two alternative word orders: SVX (where X = [240] objects and locatives) and VXS. The essence of Chapter 11 (the syntax of simplex clauses) is a presentation of the morphosyntactic and discourse factors accounting for the different word orders. Chapter 12 treats questions, focus, and topicalization. Here the detailed similarities

between Q-word questions and focus, so common in Chadic languages, are spelled out. After a chapter on clausal complements, the grammar concludes with Chapter 14 on adverbial clauses and phrases, including simple and counterfactual conditionals. The book does not have an index, but it does have a detailed table of contents with sections and subsections of each chapter carefully labeled.

This is a superb work: it qualifies as one of the truly outstanding grammars of a Chadic language ever published.

[Paul Newman, Indiana University]