A Synopsis of Yongning Na (Mosuo)

The 39th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics
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Liberty A. Lidz (李力)
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The language of the Na (Mosuo) is estimated at 40,000 speakers (Yang Zhenhong, to appear), split between three dialects: Yongning, Beiquba, and Guabie (He and Jiang 1985:4). Na itself is categorized as an eastern variety of Naxi, which linguists variously characterize as an unsubgrouped Tibeto-Burman language (Thurgood 2003:19–20); on the periphery of Loloish (Matisoff 1986:47); close to but not part of Lolo-Burmese (Bradley 1975:93); and both classified as Yiish (Lolo-Burmese) by Beijing linguists and typologically extremely similar to Loloish languages, yet perhaps not actually Loloish (Ramsey 1987:265–266). This work focuses on Yongning Na (hereafter, YN Na), as spoken in the area around Lugu Hu in Yunnan Province. Yunnan Province is located in southwestern China, and is north of Laos and Vietnam, east of Myanmar (Burma), southeast of Tibet, and west of Sichuan Province.

This presentation provides an overview of the key features of Yongning Na, including the structure of noun phrases, the sortal classifier system, verb phrases, existential verbs, grammaticalization, the aspectual system, and evidentials; additionally, a short description of the computing environment is given. Data presented are taken from audio- and video-recordings of oral narratives such as folklore and mythology which I recorded with the aim of documenting the culture of the Na linguistic community, their natural speech patterns, as well as important aspects of Na belief systems and the Daba religion. This methodology, the discourse-centered approach to language documentation (Urban and Sherzer 1988, Sherzer 1987, Sherzer and Woodbury 1987), also captures casual speech not obtained through formal elicitation and grammaticality judgments, thus yielding a more well-rounded data set.

The computing environment consists of a commercially available Unicode-compliant relational database and operating system (Microsoft Access XP and Windows XP) and Unicode-compliant fonts to customize a database that allows the user to: 1. enter data in multiple writing systems (here, English, IPA, and Chinese characters); 2. sort data by stipulated grammatical categories; 3. interlinearize a narrative text with multiple language glosses from a lexicon file; and 4. export the data in XML, a non-proprietary format. The use of Unicode-compliant software and fonts allows the database to operate in multiple languages without misinterpretation of the language encoding of the data. The fact that the data may be exported from the database in XML, a non-proprietary format, means that researchers running other database software or operating systems can use the data. Additionally, the XML format is convenient for distributing data over the Internet. This system is in line with the E-MELD recommendations for digital language documentation (E-MELD 2004).


List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG PRO</td>
<td>1st person singular pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL PRO</td>
<td>1st person plural pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1INC PRO</td>
<td>1st person plural inclusive pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1EXC PRO</td>
<td>1st person plural exclusive pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG PRO</td>
<td>2nd person singular pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL PRO</td>
<td>2nd person plural pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG PRO</td>
<td>3rd person singular pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL PRO</td>
<td>3rd person plural pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>Dual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV MAN</td>
<td>Adverbial (manner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV PRTCL</td>
<td>Adverbial particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGT</td>
<td>Agentive marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASP</td>
<td>Aspect marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLS</td>
<td>Classifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMKN</td>
<td>Common knowledge/assumed evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
<td>Complementizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>Copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Change of state marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Currently relevant state marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>Dative</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXIST</td>
<td>Existential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPER</td>
<td>Experiential aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF</td>
<td>Inference evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERJ</td>
<td>Interjection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>Locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>Nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM\text{Agt}</td>
<td>Agentive nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM\text{Loc}</td>
<td>Locative nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM\text{purp}</td>
<td>Purposive nominalizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERF</td>
<td>Perfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Plural</td>
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<td>POSS</td>
<td>Possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTP</td>
<td>Postposition</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROG</td>
<td>Progressive aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTCL</td>
<td>Particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFL</td>
<td>Reflexive pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>Relativizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REP</td>
<td>Reported/hearsay evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QM</td>
<td>Question marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUOT</td>
<td>Quotative evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QW</td>
<td>Question word</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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1. INTRODUCTION

About the language

The language of the Na (Mosuo) is estimated at 40,000 speakers (Yang Zhenhong, to appear), split between three dialects: Yongning, Beiquba, and Guabie (He and Jiang 1985:4). Na itself is categorized as an eastern variety of Naxi, which linguists variously characterize as an un subgrouped Tibeto-Burman language (Thurgoon 2003:19–20); on the periphery of Loloish (Matisoff 1986:47); close to but not part of Lolo-Burmese (Bradley 1975:93); and both classified as Yiish (Lolo-Burmese) by Beijing linguists and typologically extremely similar to Loloish languages, yet perhaps not actually Loloish (Ramsey 1987:265–266). This work focuses on Yongning Na (hereafter, YN Na), as spoken in the area around Lugu Hu in Yunnan Province. Yunnan Province is located in southwestern China, and is north of Laos and Vietnam, east of Myanmar (Burma), southeast of Tibet, and west of Sichuan Province.

Language typology

Typologically, YN Na is towards the analytical end of the spectrum. Grammatical relations are shown mainly by word order, lexical choice, and pragmatics. Subject-object-verb word order is most common in unmarked, non-idiomatic, pragmatically neutral constructions. Agreement is not marked by inflection, although person (but not number) often can be extrapolated from the verb phrase because of the conjunct/disjunct system as in Tibetan (Agha 1993:158–159), (Bickel 2000:6), and (DeLancey 2001:372). Phonological processes active in the language include

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1 This material is based upon fieldwork supported by the National Science Foundation under Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant No. 0345862 (PI Tony Woodbury), as well as grants from the NSF OISE and the University of Texas at Austin ASSSA and IEFs. Thanks for extremely helpful comments on previous versions of this research and lively discussion go to: Tony Woodbury, Nora England, Randy LaPolla, Tami Blumenfield, Roberto Zavala, and Christina Willis. Of course, remaining misanalyzes, inaccuracies, and mistakes are mine alone. Constructive comments are always warmly welcomed and should be directed to: libertylidz@mail.utexas.edu.

2 Although the term “Mosuo” is useful for information technology reasons (it is the term standard in the Chinese system of designating ethnic groups and is in common usage), it has several distinct disadvantages: 1. Na people state a preference for the use of the autonym Na rather than the exonym Mosuo, which they associate with opportunistic portrayals of the Na in the pop anthropology books and VCDs created by Han outsiders for the tourist market; 2. non-specificity: “Mosuo” was used to refer to the Naxi until the official designation of the ethnicities by the Chinese government in the mid-1950s; and 3. the Guabie Na are officially designated as “Mongolian” due to socio-historical circumstances.
vowel harmony and tone sandhi, the latter of which seems to be at least partly morphologically motivated.

**Methodology**

Data presented are taken from audio- and video-recordings of oral narratives such as folklore and mythology which I recorded with the aim of documenting the culture of the Na linguistic community, their natural speech patterns, as well as important aspects of Na belief systems and the Daba religion. This methodology, the discourse-centered approach to language documentation (Sherzer 1987, Sherzer and Woodbury 1987, Urban and Sherzer 1988), also captures casual speech not obtained through formal elicitation and grammaticality judgments, thus yielding a more well-rounded data set.

2. **NOUN PHRASES**

2.1 **Structure of noun phrases**

A noun in YN Na is a word that can act as an agent of a transitive clause, a subject of an intransitive clause, an object of a transitive clause, or as an oblique. Nouns types found in YN Na are proper nouns, lexical nouns, pronouns, genitive noun phrases, determiner noun phrases, quantifier noun phrases, interrogative noun phrases, adjectival phrases, and compound noun phrases.

The word order for noun phrases is: N + ADJ + ADV + NUM + CLS as shown in example (1).

Adjectives in the noun phrase are surprisingly rare; it is more common to have a noun phrase consisting of N + DEM/NUM + CLS and the adjectival meaning appearing as an attributive adjectival verb as in example (2).

(1) ni33 zς33 di33 ʐuæ13 di33 mi31
    fish big very one CLS
    鱼 大 很 一 量词
    a very big fish
    很大的一条鱼
    cinami24

(2) suu33 tʂʰu31 th33 kʰuu33 la31 guu33
    landscape this CLS remote
    山水 这 块 偏僻
    this section of landscape is remote
    这块地方的山水很偏僻
    yongzhu1ter1

---

3 Please note that examples taken from narrative texts can be identified by the example identification string that appears below the first word in the sentence translation; elicited examples can be identified by the lack of such an identification string.
2.2 Nominalizations

The relationship between nominalization, relativization, and possession in Tibeto-Burman languages has been much discussed (i.e., Matisoff 1972, DeLancey 1986, Noonan 1997, Bickel 1999, Lahaussois 2003). Table 1 presents an overview of the markers for nominalization, relativization, non-relative attributives, the associative, and possession in YN Na.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>xi33</th>
<th>di33</th>
<th>bu33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM: ADJ + xi33 =&gt; N</td>
<td>NOM: VP + di33 =&gt; N</td>
<td>NON-RELATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM: VP + xi33 =&gt; N</td>
<td>REL</td>
<td>ASSOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-RELATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE</td>
<td>ASSOC</td>
<td>POSS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of nominalizer and relativizer markers

There are two nominalizers, xi33 and di33. xi33 NOM has been grammaticalized from xi33 ‘person’ (see p. 30). In example (3), one can see that ADJ + xi33 => N. In examples (4), (5), and (6), VP + xi33 => N. xi33 can be used to form two types of nominalizations: the general nominal (examples (3), (4), (5)) and the agentive nominal, as found in example (6).

(3) nu55 xi31 -xi33 -xi33 NOM
beautiful
漂亮
beautiful things
漂亮的
Tsodeluyizo12

(4) ty33 di33 -xi33 -xi33 NOM
wings EXIST
翅膀 有
things with wings,
有翅膀的
Tsodeluyizo12

(5) la33 su33 du33 -xi33 -xi33 NOM
ADV MAN think 想
thoughts 想的
Fangzi63
The second nominalizer, \( \text{di33 NOM}^4 \), has been grammaticalized from \( \text{di33} \) ‘earth, land, place’ (see p. 31). \( \text{di33} \) can be used to form locative (as in example (7)) and purposive (as in example (8)) nominalizations; agentive and temporal nominalizations are not attested with \( \text{di33} \).

\[ V + \text{di33} \rightarrow N \]

(7) \( \text{na13} \) -\( \text{di33} \) Na

摩梭

Na areas

(8) \( \text{dzɔ33} \) -\( \text{di33} \) eat

吃

things to eat

吃的

muphadaba12

di33 NOM can also mark relativization as can be seen in example (9). By contrast, there are no examples in the narrative texts of the first nominalizer, \( \text{xi33} \), marking relativization.

(9) \( \text{tɕæ33} \) ‘æ31 pickled vegetables\(^5\)

make \( \text{tsɔ33 mi33} \) wooden barrel

酸菜

做

木桶

做酸菜的桶

\( \text{di33 NOM} \) can also mark relativization as can be seen in example (9). By contrast, there are no examples in the narrative texts of the first nominalizer, \( \text{xi33} \), marking relativization.

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\(^4\) One could argue instead that \( \text{di33 NOM} \) is a borrowing from Mandarin \( \text{de} \) (的) via Yunnanese -- however, it is not clear why the voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop initial (IPA /t/, but represented in \text{pinyin} with the grapheme \( d \)) of Mandarin and Yunnanese would become the voiced alveolar stop initial in YN Na /d/, as YN Na has a three-way contrast between the voiceless aspired alveolar stop /tʰ/, the voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop /t/, and the voiced alveolar stop /d/. (Other loanwords with an initial voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop initial in Chinese retain the voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop in YN Na, i.e., \text{dianshiji} (电视机) [tɕʰ ʂ tɕi] ‘t.v.’)

\(^5\) Please note that the symbol ‘ is used throughout to represent liaison not a glottal stop.
di33 NOM can also be used with a non-relative attributive (term as per Noonan 1997:4) as in example (10). Here, di33 is used with the postpositional phrase ʁɩ bi33 ‘on the skin’ to form ʁɩ bi33 di33 ʰɑ ‘the scripture on the skin.’ Note that this is then embedded within the larger non-relative attributive wɔ 33 bu33 ʁɩ bi33 di33 ʰɑ ‘the scripture written on the skin before.’ This larger non-relative attributive is formed from ADV + bu33, a possessive marker which will be discussed shortly.

(10) wɔ 33 tɑ33 bu33 ʁɩ 33 bi33 -di33 tʰɑ33 ‘ɔ31
    before Poss skin POSTP -NOM book
   以前的皮子上
the scripture written on the skin before
以前的写在皮子上的经文
muphada23

bu33 is the possessive marker, as depicted in example (11), but bu33 is also used for the associative (term as per Li and Thompson 1981:113–114) as shown in example (12) and for non-relative attributives as demonstrated in examples (13) and (14). Nominalizer usage for bu33 is not attested.

(11) ɡɑ33 la33 tʰ33 wu33 bu33 æ33 mi33
    god this CLS Poss mother
   神这量词的
this god’s mother
这个神的母亲
gemu25

The associative is similar to the possessive in that two noun phrases are connected, but the notion of possession is pretty semantically bleached.

(12) tʰ33 ɡɑ31 ø33 bu33 shiqing (loan)
    this help, cooperation Poss matter
   这帮忙，合作的
this cooperative effort
这个合作的事情
saozi8

In example (13), the non-relative attributive contains the locative expression tɕi33 tʰæ33 ku33 ‘on the ground.’

(13) tɕi33 tʰæ33-ku33 bu33 bæ31 bæ13 la33 pʰi33 li31 la33 wu31 dze33 la33.
    dirt under-LOC Poss flower and butterfly and bird etc
   泥土下面里的花和蝴蝶和鸟等等
Flowers, butterflies, and birds on the ground, and more.
地下的花和蝴蝶和鸟，等等。
gemu7
In example (14), there is the non-relative clause with the locative expression ɕ13 kuɔ33, bu33, and the noun phrase wa33 tɔ31 that is embedded within the larger non-relative clause of the adverb za31 na33 + bu33.

(14) za31 na33 bu33ɕ13-kuɔ33 bu33 wa33 tɔ31
now Poss lake -Loc Poss island

the island in present-day Lugu Hu.
现在的泸沽湖的海岛
gemu45

2.3 The classifier system

In YN Na, as in Mandarin, whenever an amount is specified, a classifier must be used. Each classifier, with the exception of the generic classifier, is used with a group of nouns that share semantic properties:

- The generic classifier
- Shape
- Living things
- Selection for number
- Auto-classifiers
- Measure
- Time
- Quantification
- Number

There is a generic classifier that is used in YN Na, which is shown in example (15). Examples of shapes that act as the basis for class in YN Na are long, flat, stick-like shape; slice; ball; and strip; these are shown in example (16). Examples of kinds of living things that form sortal classes are large things growing from the ground; small things growing from the ground; flying things; and some common four-legged animals; these are shown in example (17). Examples of selection for number acting as a basis for sortal class in YN Na are one person; more than one person; a group; and a pair; these are shown in example (18). There also are auto-classifiers as in example (19), classifiers for measure as in example (20), classifiers for time as in example (21), classifiers for quantification as in example (22), and classifiers for round number as in example (23).
The generic classifier

This classifier can be used with typologically diverse nouns that have not been assigned a specific classifier. It can also sometimes be used in place of other classifiers, although the listener may judge this as less articulate than using the specific classifier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l33</td>
<td>generic / multi-use</td>
<td>â13 qv33 di33 l33 ‘a cave’ (cinami21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bɔ13 gu33 tʰi33 l33 ‘this pig trough’ (cinami52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wɔ33 tɔ31 di33 l33 ‘a mountain top’ (gemu23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>qʰuu33 bi13 di33 l33 ‘a hoofprint’ (gemu38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kʰu31 tʰi33 l33 ‘this nest’ (tso38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e33 kʰi31 tʰi33 l33 ‘these turnips’ (tso261)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xua31 li33 sɔ33 l33 ‘three cats’ (tso266)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>my31 zɔ31 di33 l33 ‘a girl’ (fangzi30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gu13</td>
<td>round sticks</td>
<td>yu33 di33 gu13 ‘one cigarette’ pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuu33</td>
<td>strand</td>
<td>st33 sɔ33 di33 kuu33 ‘a strand of pearls’ (gemu43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kʰi31</td>
<td>long, narrow things</td>
<td>qʰæ33 lɔ33 di33 kʰi31 ‘one river’ (河)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dzi33 mi33 di33 kʰi31 ‘one river’ (江)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dzi31 ki33 di33 kʰi31 ‘one belt’ (gemu14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>snakes (snakes can also take mi33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kʰuu33</td>
<td>section, strip, piece</td>
<td>òa13 pɔ31 di33 kʰuu33 ‘a bit of excess’ (cinami9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lu33 ʂu31 tʰi33 kʰuu33 ‘this strip of Luoshí’ (cinami59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ti33 di33 kʰi31 mu33 kʰi33 tʰi33 kʰuu33 ‘this section of the foot of Yongning’s Gemu (mountain)’ (gemu1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mu33 tʰi33 kʰuu33 ‘this name’ (mupha33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xua33 pʰæ13 di33 kʰuu33 ‘a piece of cloth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu33</td>
<td>kernel</td>
<td>xì33 tʰi33 xi33 tʃu33 di33 lu33 ‘a trace of humanity’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(tso46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɿu31</td>
<td>ball</td>
<td>xa33 ɿu31 di33 ɿu31 ‘a ball of rice’ (tso114)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
na33  long, flat and stick-shaped things  quæ33 dï33 na33 ‘one bed’ (fangzi14)
kʰi33 dï33 na33 ‘one door’
Blades:  si31 tʰi13 dï33 na33 ‘one knife,’  si31 tʰi13 ʒə33
dï33 na33 ‘one small knife’
pi31 tʰu13 gu33 na33 ‘nine axes,’ (tso186)

pʰæ13  slice  Meat, tiles:  ɲuu33 pʰæ13 dï33 pʰæ13 ‘one roof tile’
gu33 pʰæ13 dï33 pʰæ13 ‘one wooden tile’
kʰə33 pʰy33 dï33 pʰæ13 ‘a field of grass’ (cinami2)
i33 ʒə33 ʃə33 dï33 pʰæ13 ‘a slice of fish’ (cinami26)

quu13  bowl  la33 nə13 dï33 quu13 ‘a bowl of tiger milk’ (tso172)

teʰiɔ13  ladle  dzi33 dï33 teʰiɔ13 ‘a ladle of water’ (fangzi30)

wu33  stack  ʂu33 tʰi33 gu33 wu33 ‘these nine stacks of branches’
(tso190)

wæ33  pile  mu33 tʰi33 wæ33 ‘this fire’ (fangzi34)
sɔ33 dï33 wæ33 ‘a pile of pine incense’ (mupha34)

(17)  Living things

CLS  Nouns that employ this classifier  Examples

dzi33  large things that grow from the ground  si33 dzi33 dï33 dzi33 ‘one tree’ (fangzi6)
very tall flowers

mi31  flying things and some other animals  læ31 ɣə33 tʰi33 mi31 ‘this crow’ (tso28)
i33 ʒə33 dï33 mi31 ‘a fish’ (cinami37)
birds; chickens, cats, snakes

pɔ33  small things that grow from the ground  small trees (saplings), most flowers, vegetables

pʰɔ13  some common four-legged animals  zp33 wɔ33 tʰi33 ni33 pʰɔ13 ‘these two oxen’ (tso20)
dogs, horses, cows, pigs, yaks

yu13  dogs  kʰu33 mi33 ni33 yu13 ‘two dogs’ (tso126)
(18) Selection for number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dz33</td>
<td>a pair</td>
<td>ts31 mi13 dt33 dz33 ‘a pair of pillars’ (fangzi6) chopsticks, things that come in pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ku13</td>
<td>more than one person</td>
<td>a33 mu33 gu33 mi33 tsʰe33 ku13 ‘ten siblings’ (intro6) ni33 ku13 ‘the two (people)’ (gemu22) a33 da33 æ33 mi33 ni33 ku13 ‘the two parents’ (ts0145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wu33</td>
<td>one person⁶</td>
<td>pʰæ31 teʰi33 tʰt33 wu33 ‘this man’ (cinami8) la33 muu33 la33 dt33 tuu33 ‘a lama, etc.’ (fangzi39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wɔ33</td>
<td>team of oxen</td>
<td>zʔ33 wɔ33 gu33 wɔ33 ‘nine teams of oxen’ (cinami44)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(19) Auto-classifiers (term as per Matisoff 2003)

Auto-classifiers are those for which \(N = \text{CLS}\). A few of these classifiers can also be used with semantically-related nouns, such as the classifier ts013, which can be used with wɔ33 wu31 ‘bedroom’ as well as ts013 ‘room.’ Several of these classifiers are only approximately auto-classifiers as the classifier is a part of the noun rather than the full noun – for example, the classifier tsʰɿ13 ‘sheep’ for tsʰɿ13 ʁı13 ‘sheepskin’ and the classifier tɕi31 for tɕi31 ɕi33 ‘whistle.’

Additionally, in the \(N_1 + \text{CLS} \Rightarrow N_2\) morphological process (see p. 15), \(N_2\) often takes the classifier that is compounded to \(N_1\). For example: ɕ33 ‘wood’ + dz33 (CLS) \(\Rightarrow\) ɕ33 dz33 ‘tree.’ The \(N_2\) ɕ33 dz33 takes the classifier dz33: ɕ33 dz33 dt33 dz33. Also: ni33 ‘fish’ + qv33 (CLS) \(\Rightarrow\) ni33 qv33 ‘fish nest.’ The \(N_2\) ni33 qv33 takes the classifier qv33: ni33 qv33 tʰt33 dt33 qv33.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ts013</td>
<td>room</td>
<td>ts013 dt33 ts013 ‘one room’ (fangzi21) zʔ31 wɔ33 dt33 ts013 ‘one bedroom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsʰɿ13</td>
<td>sheepskin throw</td>
<td>tsʰɿ13 ʁi13 dt33 tsʰɿ13 ‘one sheepskin’ (literally, “one sheep of sheepskin”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tɕi31</td>
<td>whistle</td>
<td>tɕi31 ɕi33 gu33 tɕi31 kʰt13 ‘whistle nine times’ (ts0195)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wu33</td>
<td>village</td>
<td>na13 wu33 dt33 wu33 ‘a Na village’ (yzt2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ However, note that children are usually referred to (whether singular or plural) with the generic classifier rather than with ku33 or wu33. For copious examples, refer to the cinami text.
Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʰɬi31</td>
<td>unit of cloth</td>
<td>ʰtsʰe33 ʰqa33 ʰɬi31 ‘ten-odd measures (of cloth)’ (gemu3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰqʰu33</td>
<td>various liquids and foods</td>
<td>ʰla33 ʰɲo33 ʰd33 ʰqʰu33 ‘a bowl of tiger’s milk’ (tso172) ʰxa33 ʰd33 ʰqʰu33 ‘a bowl of rice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰtʰə31</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>ʰdzi33 ʰd33 ʰtʰə31 ‘a ladle of water’ (fangzi30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time

As in Yao (Caron 1987:158) and Lahu (Matisoff 2003:215), some classifiers can appear without a head noun. While Caron finds only two such classifiers in Yao, Matisoff finds numerous time and round number classifiers which can occur without a head noun (Matisoff 2003:215). YN Na patterns like Lahu in that many time and round number classifiers do not require a head noun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʰdzi31 ʰkʰu31</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰdzi33 ʰdzi31 ʰkʰu31 ‘a while’ (gemu6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰdzʰə33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰtʰtʰə33 ʰdzʰə33 ‘this period of time’ (ɕinami49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰkʰu33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰtʰtʰə33 ʰkʰu31 ‘these ten years’ (change1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰɲi33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰdzi33 ʰɲi33 ‘one day’ (tso179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰʂə33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰtʰtʰə33 ʰʂə33 ‘this time’ (tso129)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰtʰə33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰdzi33 ʰtʰə33 ‘a generation’ (gemu49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰxa33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰsə33 ʰxa33 ‘three nights’ (tso47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʰzi33</td>
<td></td>
<td>ʰdzi33 ʰzi33 ‘a lifetime’ (gemu49)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantification

Note that many of the quantification classifiers have the structure di33 ‘one’ + CLS as in Lahu (Matisoff 2003:215).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>di33 ta13</td>
<td></td>
<td>dze33 di33 ta13 (literally ‘all money’); ‘good money’ (change8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di33 pi13</td>
<td></td>
<td>tʰt33 ni13 di33 pi13 ‘some of these’ (tso13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di33 wo33</td>
<td></td>
<td>wu31 dze33 di33 wo33 ‘a type of bird’ (tso81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di33 xa33</td>
<td></td>
<td>dzt33 di33 di33 xa33 ‘a little bit to eat’ (cinami17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tʂu13</td>
<td></td>
<td>xi33 tʰt33 tʂu13 ‘(these) many people’ (yzt4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Round number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLS</th>
<th>Nouns that employ this classifier</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu33</td>
<td></td>
<td>qʰɑ33 tu33 ‘several thousand’ (fangzi55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsʰe33</td>
<td></td>
<td>tʰt33 tsʰe33 kʰu13 ‘these ten years’ (change1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɕi33</td>
<td></td>
<td>gu33 ɕi33 ‘nine hundred’ (tso186)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in Vietnamese (Goral 1978:12–13) and Yao (Caron 1987:156), classifiers in YN Na can be used anaphorically, as can be seen in example (24).

(24) st33 dzt33 tʰt33 suae13 suae33 tʰt33 so33 dzt33 tʰi33 di33.

This tree is very tall. This three CLS ADV MAN EXIST

There were three very tall trees.

Tsodeluyizo218
first

2.4 Other uses of classifiers

Although a common path of development for classifiers is N => CLS, in the following two examples one can see wɯ33 acting as a classifier in example (25) and as a verb in example (26), where the reduplicated form of the verb, wɯ33 wɯ33, gives the reading ‘stack together.’

(25) su33 thɩ33 gu33 wɯ33
branch this nine

these nine stacks of branches
(tso196)

(26) su33 qæ13 thɩ33 lɑ33 thn13 thɩ33 lɑ33
branch burn 3SG PRO ADV MAN cut this ADV MAN

He burned branches, burned the branches he had cut down,
(Tsodeluyizo189)

wɯ33 wɯ33 za33 sa33 ku31 æ31 yi33 se33 ya33 qa33 la33 thn13
stack stack PERF 1INC PRO long, long ago buckwheat and such

stacked them together and burned them; long, long ago we would burn
堆起来烧掉, 我们以前荞麦和那些

la33 qæ13 za33 ku13.
ADV MAN burn CRS can

buckwheat and such.
会烧掉的。
2.5 N + CLS compounds

Yang (Yang, to appear) notes the availability of the construction $N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$ for compounding in YN Na. In the following data extracted from texts that I have collected, one can see differences in the way that $N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$ compounding works in YN Na and in Mandarin. In Mandarin $N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$ compounds, the resulting $N_2$ compounds always give a collective or plural reading (Li and Thompson 1981:82), but this is not the case at all in YN Na. Furthermore, in Mandarin $N_1 + CLS =\Rightarrow N_2$ compounds, $N_1$ can appear by itself, but in YN Na, one gets judgments of questionable grammaticality for many of the words if the classifier is removed.

### dz33 CLS (‘tree’)

$N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$N_1$</th>
<th>$N_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>s33 ‘wood’ + dz33</code></td>
<td><code>s33 dz33 ‘tree’ (tso43)</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>tʰa33 ‘pine’ + dz33 + za33 ‘small’</code></td>
<td><code>tʰa33 dz33 za33 ‘pine tree sapling’</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### kʰuu33 CLS (‘section, strip, piece’)

$N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$N_1$</th>
<th>$N_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>mi33 ‘scar’ + kʰuu33</code></td>
<td><code>mi33 kʰuu33 ‘scar’</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>wɔ33 ‘head’ + kʰuu33</code></td>
<td><code>wɔ33 kʰuu33 ‘head’</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### lu33 CLS (‘kernel’)

$N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$N_1$</th>
<th>$N_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>nu31 ‘soy’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>nu31 lu33 ‘soybean’</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>ŋa13 ‘eye’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>ŋa13 lu33 ‘eye’ (tso285)</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>pi13 ‘bran’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>pi13 lu33 ‘wine lees’ (tso269)</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>tse33 ‘barley’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>tse33 lu33 ‘barley’</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>teʰi33 ‘mulberry’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>teʰi33 lu33 ‘mulberry’</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>wɔ33 ‘head’ + lu33</code></td>
<td><code>wɔ33 lu33 ‘head’ (tso277)</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### lu31 CLS (‘ball’)

$N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$N_1$</th>
<th>$N_2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>xa33 ‘rice, food’ + lu31</code></td>
<td><code>xa33 lu31 ‘ball of rice, ball of food’ (tso114)</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

7 Note that this noun can compound with either kʰuu33 or lu33.
3 VERB PHRASES

3.1 Structure of verb phrases

YN Na is verb-final; however, aspect markers, interjections, and evidentials can appear following the verb. Adverbs appear preceding the verb. There are multiple existential verbs, an aspectual system, a conjunct/disjunct system, and evidentiality.

3.2 Existential verbs

YN Na has four existential verbs: ɗzɔ33, ɗi33, ku33, and ɬj33; of these existential verbs, ɗzɔ33 appears the most frequently by far. The presence of multiple existential verbs is prevalent in Tibeto-Burman languages; LaPolla indicates that choice of existential verb in Tibeto-Burman languages commonly is based on hierarchies such as animate/inanimate, location within a container versus location on a plane, abstract/concrete, and others (LaPolla 2003a:32–33).

YN Na does not distinguish between animate and inanimate, nor does YN Na distinguish between location within a container versus location on a plane. YN Na does, however, distinguish between things that protude or are perpendicular to a plane and those that do not; between bag-shaped things and those with any other shape; and between the past existence of time and the non-past existence of time. This last distinction is not an abstract versus concrete distinction because the non-time-based referents, whether abstract or concrete, use the same existential verb.
This system of existential verbs where choice of existential verb is based on properties of the referent is somewhat analogous to the noun classifier system. In both systems, properties of the noun such as shape and position dictate the selection of another element in the clause (classifier or existential verb). For example, when the noun is a large thing that grows from the ground, the classifier must be dz33 and the existential verb must be di33.

a. dz33 is the generic existential verb. Its referent can be animate – human as in example (27), animate – animal as in examples (28) and (29), or inanimate, including abstract as in example (30).

(27) pa33 sa33 ku31 æ33 mu33 gu33 mi33 ma31 na33 dz33.  
1PL PRO older sibling younger sister v. many EXIST

We have a lot of siblings.

(28) gi33 na33 mi33 la33 tʰæ13 dz33 tsʰ33 -ku33 tei33 na33 mi33 tsʰ33  
black bear and such EXIST forest -LOC very dense forest

A black bear and such entered into a very dense

(29) wu31 dze33 di33 wo33 dz33 tsʰ33 teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə pʰ33.  
bird one type EXIST teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə QUOT
tceʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə teʰi pʰuə tceʰi pʰuə

There was a type of bird that says, “cheeper cheeper cheeper cheeper.”

(30) za31 na33 dian (loan) la33 dz33 ze33 dianshi (loan) la33  
own electricity ADV MAN EXIST CSM t.v. ADV MAN

Today, we all have electricity, we all have televisions,
YN Na has an animacy/prominency hierarchy: when the referent is animate or high in prominence, as in examples (27 – 30) given above, dzɔ33 has an existential reading. When the theme is a location or is lower in prominence, dzɔ33 has a locative reading, as in example (31).

(31) ɕi13 tʰæ33-kuɔ33 dzɔ33 kʰɔ33 pʰɔ33 di33 pʰæ13 di33 ta13 dzɔ33
lake under-LOC EXIST grassland one CLS all EXIST

Underneath where the lake now is it is said that everything was a field.

There were three very tall trees.

b. di33: This existential is used with things that stand, protude, or are perpendicular to a plane, i.e.: trees as in example (32), acne, scars as in example (33), feathers as in example (34), and villages as in example (35). As in Qiang (LaPolla 2003b:133–134) and Nosu Yi (Walters and Ndaxit 2005:10), at least part of the indication for the usage of this existential seems to be a part-to-whole relationship—each of the above-listed referents are found in clusters.

(32) stɔ33 dzɔ13 tʰ133 zɯæ13 sɯæ33 tʰ133 so33 dzɔ33 tʰi33 di33.
tree this very tall this three CLS ADV MAN EXIST

There were three very tall trees.
There was no trace at all of a cut.

割掉的痕迹一点没有。

cinami31

The bird, because it has feathers, does not make a good nest.

鸟，因为它有毛，所以它的窝不好好的做。

Tsodeluyizo38

c. ku33: This existential verb only is used to refer to the past existence of time, as in examples (36) and (37). The non-past existence of time is indicated with dzæ33, as in examples (38) and (39).

He said, “If nine years haven’t passed, you shouldn’t open it.”

说没有九年，你不要去把开。

Tsodeluyizo53

So, it was like this for a long time afterwards.

所以是这样的很长时间以后。

gemu30
So at this time, when it was just getting dark, 
所以在这个时间里头，下午一点点的时候，

in the village, everyone was feeding the pigs.
全部村里的人正在喂猪。

One day, this god’s mother
有一天，这个神，他家的母亲
gemu25

found out.
知道了。

z\textsuperscript{33} is the existential verb used with things that are bag-shaped, such as a heart as in example (40) or bird dung as in example (41). Its referents are non-abstract.

After calling this out, the scripture written on the skin before,
叫了这一句以后，以前的写在皮子上的

muphadaba23

all were (again) in his his heart.
经文全部回到心里面来了。
3.3 Time and the tense/aspect system

Time in Yongning Na is depicted through the tense/aspect system, adverbials, and pragmatics. Aspect commonly is an important part of the representation of time in Tibeto-Burman languages. Aspect is the portrayal of an event with respect to itself rather than to an external, absolute moment in time; tense, in contrast, associates one moment in time with respect to another (Comrie 1976:1–3).

Overview

a. Perfective: ze33/zə33 (phonological variants)
   1. Quantified event
   2. Definite/specific event
   3. Inherently bounded
   4. First event in sequence
b. Change of State Marker (CSM): ze33/zə33
c. Currently Relevant State (CRS): ze33/zə33
d. Experienced: təi31
e. Progressive: dzə33
f. Deliminative: dzə33 + V
g. Iterative: dzə33 + V₁V₁
h. Future: bi33, xa33, xə33, ku13
i. Adverbials

a. Perfective

Perfective aspect is used when the event under discussion is seen as a whole (Li and Thompson 1981:185). The marker ze33/zə33 is used to indicate a perfective. ze33 is classified as a marker rather than as a verb as it only appears in conjunction with a verb – i.e., does not appear by itself.

In example (42), the first clause contains an existential statement, the second clause a complete action that can be seen in its entirety, and the third clause has an ongoing action.
There was a fish caught in the cave;
有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;

The boy sliced its meat and was roasting the fish.
这个小孩儿正在烧鱼肉吃。

Li and Thompson give quantified event, definite/specific event, inherently bounded, and first event in sequence as sub-categories of the perfective in Mandarin (Li and Thompson 1981:185–186). This sub-categorization also works well for YN Na; each of these four sub-categories of the perfective is attested in YN Na.

1. YN Na has the quantified event perfective as shown in example (43).

In example (43), the perfective nature of the event is indicated when the speaker states that a period of ten years has passed, thus quantifying the time of the event. This quantification is one way of giving boundaries to an event, and thus rendering it perfective.

2. YN Na has the definite/specific event perfective as shown in example (44). When the definite direct objects xo33 ‘Han’ and bu33 ‘Pumi’ are employed, the perfective appears.
(44) xa33 gi13 mu33- təʰ31 bu33 gi13 mu33- təʰ31 zə33…
    Han behind NEG- follow Pumi behind NEG- follow PERF
(We) don’t follow the Han, (we) don’t follow the Pumi…

3. YN Na has the inherently bounded perfective, as shown in example (45), where verb semantics are such that the verb only can be read as bounded.

(45) æ̃31 qv̩33 -ku̩33 ni33 zə33 di33 mi31 tʰi33 æ̃31 dzə33 zə33 xə33
cave -LOC fish one CLS ADV MAN stick EXIST little boy
There was a fish caught in the cave;
有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;
cinami37

    tʰ33 la33 šə33 xə13 zə33 |
    this CLS meat cut PERF ADV MAN roast PROG
the boy sliced its meat and was roasting the fish.
这个小孩儿正在烧鱼肉吃。

4. YN Na has the first event in sequence perfective as shown in example (46). In example (46), one would not normally think of “rocking back and forth” as a typically perfective event, but here one gets the perfective reading because it is the first event in a sequence and thus is bounded.

(46) la33 la33 la33 ze33 e113 kʰi33 lu33 šu31 la33 tsʰ33.
    ADV MAN rock back and forth PERF lake side Luoshui ADV MAN come
They escaped to the shores of Luoshui.
漂到水边的落水来了。
cinami56

b. Change of State Marker (CSM)

CSM is used to indicate that the condition or situation under discussion marks a change (Li and Thompson 1981:244).

Example (47) is from a text recorded in summer 2002 discussing the economic impact of tourism on Na life in Luoshui. The speaker has just finished describing the lack of food and clothing in Luoshui prior to 1995. Thus, the examples in (47) illustrate a clear contrast between the previous situation and the situation at the time of recording; the change of state reading for ze33 is explicit.
Today, we all have electricity, we all have televisions,
whatever they have in the city,
we have it all.

Example (48) is from a creation story text. In this example, the starved and maltreated orphan finds that the fish he had found the day before has the magical property of regeneration. The part of the fish that he had sliced off and eaten the day before has grown back, thus providing a steady source of nutrition. The CSM reading for ze33 is transparent here.

The part of the fish that he had sliced off the day before
he再割掉的地方
cinami29

had grown back.
又重新长起来了。

c. Currently Relevant State (CRS)

The CRS marker identifies information within an utterance that is of particular noteworthiness or relevance to the matter at hand (Li and Thompson 1981:240).

In YN Na, the CRS marker seems to add emphasis, such that one could read example (49) as, “The bird, in fact because it has feathers…” and example (50) as, “Even with good technique…”
The bird, because it has feathers, does not make a good nest.

鸟，因为它有毛，所以它的窝不好好的做。

With good technique, if one doesn’t work,

技术好了，如果不劳动的话，

With good technique, one won’t eat to the point of being full.

技术好了，饭吃饱的时候不会有。

d. Experiential

Experiential aspect is used to denote that an event has been tried, experienced, or undergone (Li and Thompson 1981:226). Experiential aspect in YN Na probably is easiest to see in the elicited example (51), but is also found in textual examples, such as example (52), where the experience of eating the daba scripture results in Sondzhitsotiti’s neck hurting and festering.8

8 The narrative text from which this example was extracted tells the story of a daba and a Buddhist monk travelling together. The daba’s scripture is written on pigskin, while the monk’s scripture is written on paper. The monk is said to trick the daba thus: he waits until the two run out of food, and then asks whether they can eat the daba’s scripture as it is written on animal skin and will have some nutritional value as opposed to his own scripture that is written on paper, as he wants his Buddhism to overcome Dabaism. The two eat the daba’s scripture, but then the monk’s neck becomes infected from eating the scripture and he realizes that he needs the daba to perform a healing rite. The daba does not know what to do without his scripture, but then a dog’s bark prompts him to remember how the scripture begins, and he is able to perform the rite. The monk heals. The monk’s attempt to destroy Dabaism is foiled, and he realizes that oral tradition is indestructible because it is stored in the heart.

The Na lack a writing system, and yet are surrounded by the Han and Tibetans, both with very strong written traditions, as well as the Naxi and their celebrated pictographic script. This intriguing text seems to reveal some of the linguistic, religious, and ethnic tensions in the area.
So, Sondzhitsontiti’s neck hurt.

因为吃掉书以后,所以 Sondzhitsontiti 他脖子疼了,

muphadaba16

having eaten the book, and his neck

这个地方

ADV MAN pus

脓

festered with pus.

流脓了。

e. Progressive

Progressive aspect is a sub-category of imperfect aspect; the progressive is used to express ongoing action. In YN Na, the existential/locative verb dzɔ33 has been grammaticalized (see pp. 33–34) to indicate progressive action.

They ate a lot of fish; they brought it out and were eating it.

咬了很多的鱼肉, 拿出来正在吃。

cinami22

There was a fish caught in the cave;

有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;

cinami37
the boy sliced its meat and was roasting the fish.

这个小孩儿正在烧鱼肉吃。

f. Delimitative

Delimitative aspect indicates a short-lived or brief action, and has the structure dt33 ‘one’ + V in YN Na.

(55)  \( ^{t}h_i13 \) dt33 mə13 tə33 dzə33.

So, he was asking about it a bit.

(56)  \( ^{t}h_i33 \) gi13 dt33 di13 la33 xa33 dt33 tse13 la33 tsʰt33.

So she followed his path and then came back.

g. Iterative

Iterative aspect has the structure dt33 ‘one’ + reduplicated V in YN Na. A reduplicated verb without dt33 indicates mutual action (Yang, to appear)—for example, \( ^tæe13 \) means ‘bite’ while \( ^tae13 \) means ‘bite each other.’ The structure dt33 ‘one’ + reduplicated verb gives an iterative reading, an action that occurs again and again over a period of time.

(57)  \( ^{t}i13 \) ni33 ku13 wu33 tə31 tə31 dt33 nəu33 nəu33 la33 dt33 guu13 guu13.

So, on the mountain the two alternatively cried and sang for a long time.

所以两个人山头上哭一次,唱一次, 又哭一次, 又唱一次。
h. Future

There are four future markers in YN Na: bi33 as in example (58), xɔ33 as in example (59), ku13 as in example (60), and xə33 as in example (61). Please see pp. 34–38 for an explanation of the origins of these markers. bi33 is used to indicate an immediate future, in contrast to xə33, which is used to indicate a remote future. xɔ33 and ku13 are both used to indicate prediction; no clear differences in usage have been found for xɔ33 and ku13. However, Bybee et al. point out that if two future markers have the same usage but the non-future usages from the earlier stages of grammaticalization remain in the language (as is the case for both xɔ33 and ku13), this is enough to motivate retention of both of the future markers in the language (Bybee et al. 1994:243).

(58) la33 st13 bi33 ze33 pi33 ni31.

Adv Man kill FUT CRS QUOT COP
副词 杀 去 了 是

He said he was going to kill him.

Tsodeluyizo138

(59) tʰi33 kʰuu33 lu33 pi33 dzɔ33 my33 la33 di33 la33 ta31 pi13 xɔ33.

this CLS till if heaven and earth ADV MAN turn over FUT
这 量词 耕 的话 天 和 地 翻转

If this piece of land is tilled, heaven and earth will switch places.

If这片儿地耕种的话，天和地会翻转。

Tsodeluyizo26

(60) dzi33 qy33 tʰi33 di33 la33 tʰi33 di33 ku13 tsy13.

spring this one CLS ADV MAN EXIST FUT REP
泉水洞 这 一 量词 有

It is said that there would be a spring there.

听说过有一个泉水站在(那里)。

Tsodeluyizo107

(61) tʰi13 nɔ33 m33 dzu13 di33 wɔ33 zu31 go33 tʰi33 la33 tʰæ13.

so 2PS PRO AGT good one bless illness and such
所以 你 好 一 保佑 病痛和 那些

To ask, “Please carefully protect the child so that illness and such

说请你好好的保佑一下病痛和那些

muphadaba36
i. Adverbials

Adverbials, though outside the tense/aspect system, are another important way of indicating time in YN Na utterances.

(62)  

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{di33} & \text{tʰa33-} & \text{xɔ33} & \text{pi33.} \\
\text{NEG-} & \text{arrive} & \text{FUT} & \text{QUOT}
\end{array}
\]

不要让他得到。

得到

won’t come.”

Before, we were afraid of having nothing, of having no money.

Change11

(63)  

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{ta33} & \text{di33} & \text{pi33} & \text{before} & \text{one} & \text{day} \\
\text{same} & \text{NEG-} & \text{EXIST} & \text{money} & \text{NEG-} & \text{EXIST} & \text{fear}
\end{array}
\]

Before, we were afraid of having nothing, of having no money.

Change11

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
\text{æ31 yi33 şe33} & \text{na13} & \text{dzɡe33 pi13} & \text{tʰi33} & \text{dz31} & \text{dz33} \\
\text{long ago} & \text{Na} & \text{lots} & \text{ADV MAN} & \text{sit} & \text{EXIST}
\end{array}
\]

Long ago on this land many Na lived.

很久以前在这块土地里住了很多的摩梭。

4 GRAMMATICALIZATION

Grammaticalization is a diachronic process by which a lexical item is adopted to perform a grammatical duty. Grammaticalization is prolific in YN Na.

One of the most striking aspects of these data is that judging by cross-linguistic studies of available paths of grammaticalization, in several cases, all or many of the stages along the grammaticalization path in YN Na are co-present. Lexical items change into grammatical markers, and yet each usage remains in the language and each retains its phonological shape. For example, processes e. and f. each have four stages, and yet all of these stages can still be attested for YN Na. This is fortunate, because as YN Na is not a written language, and there are no written records of previous incarnations of the language.

Overview of processes of grammaticalization in YN Na

a. xi33 ‘person’ = > xi33 NOM$_{Agt}$ = > xi33 NOM
b. di33 ‘place’ = > di33 NOM$_{Loc}$ = > di33 NOM$_{prop}$
c. ki33: ki33 ‘give’ = > ki33 BEN = > ki33 DAT
d. dz33 EXIST/LOC = > dz33 PROG
e. bi33 lexical verb => bi33 AUX (movement to a location) => bi33 AUX (no movement to a location) => bi33 FUT
f. xɔ33 (desire) => xɔ33 (willingness) => xɔ33 (intention) => xɔ33 (prediction)
g. ku13 AUX (ability) => ku13 FUT (prediction)
h. xɔ33 AUX (movement to a location) => xɔ33 FUT (remote)
a. xi33 ‘person’ => xi33 NOM_Agt => xi33 NOM

xi33 means “person/people” in YN Na. Example (64) illustrates this usage.

(64)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>xi33</th>
<th>th33</th>
<th>tʰt33</th>
<th>ni13</th>
<th>ku13</th>
<th>ɔ33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>this way</td>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>CRS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This type of person will be like this.
这样人会这样的。
Tsodeluyizo103

xi33 has grammaticalized from simply being a lexical item into an agentive nominalizer. Examples of xi33 as an agentive nominal marker are given in example (65) and (66). In example (65) xi33 appears following the verb lɔ33 yi33 ‘labor’ to form the agentive nominal lɔ33 yi33 xi33 ‘laborer(s).’ In example (66), xi33 appears following the verb phrases pu33 dzæ33 ‘ride a yak’, la33 dzæ33 ‘ride a tiger’, and zuae33 dzæ33 ‘ride a horse’ to form the agentive nominals pu33 dzæ33 xi33 ‘yak rider’, la33 dzæ33 xi33 ‘tiger rider’, and zuae33 dzæ33 xi33 ‘horse rider.’

(65)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lɔ33</th>
<th>yi33</th>
<th>xi33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labor</td>
<td>-NOM_Agt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(66)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pu33</th>
<th>dzæ33</th>
<th>xi33</th>
<th>la33</th>
<th>dzæ33</th>
<th>xi33</th>
<th>zuae33</th>
<th>dzæ33</th>
<th>xi33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yak ride</td>
<td>-NOM_Agt</td>
<td>tiger ride</td>
<td>-NOM_Agt</td>
<td>horse ride</td>
<td>-NOM_Agt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the yak rider, the tiger rider, the horse rider,
骑牦牛的人，骑老虎的人，骑马的人
yongzhutser12

xi33 has then been grammaticalized even further—xi33 Nom_Agt has been semantically extended beyond being an agentive nominalizer, where xi33 still has the reading ‘person who does X,’ to usage as a general nominalizer. This general nominalizer usage is illustrated in example (67), where any concept of ‘person’ is lost.
b. di33 ‘place’ = $\Rightarrow$ di33 NOM$_{loc}$ = $\Rightarrow$ di33 NOM$_{purp}$

di33 means ‘land, earth, place’ in YN Na as seen in example (68).

(68) nɔ13 Ɂz33 la33 zɆ33 Ɂz33 di33-ku33 bu33 mu33 Ɇz33 ga33
    Refl  son ADV MAN take CSM earth-Loc Poss young woman with
self 儿子 拿 了 地里 的 姑娘 跟
She said, “It is not possible for my son to court
她说他们家的儿子不可能和
gemu26

    se33 se33 tsə31 mu33- yї33 pi33.
court okay NEG- can QUOT
恋爱 行 会
a regular girl.”
民间的女孩子恋爱。

di33 has grammaticalized from the noun ‘land, earth, place’ into a locative nominalizer, as shown in example (69).

(69) Ɂz33- di33 tu33 mu33- ni31 no33 wu33-di33 tu33 tʰa33- x333 pi33.
    warm- NOM$_{loc}$ plant NEG- COP 2SG PRO mountain- NOM$_{loc}$ plant NEG- go QUOT
热的地 播种 是 你 山地 播种 不 去
The heavens said, “If it’s not a warm place you can’t plant them, in the mountains, you can’t plant them.”
说, “除了热的地方以外,高山的地方,你不可以种。”
Tsodeluyizo254

The semantics of di33 is then further extended, so that it can be used as a purposive nominalizer, where there is no longer any notion of ‘place.’ This usage can be seen in example (70).

(70) də33 -di33
    eat -NOM$_{purp}$
    things to eat 吃的
    muphadaba12
c. ki33 ‘give’ = > ki33 BEN = > ki33 DAT

At first glance, one might translate ki33 ki33 in example (71) above as ‘give.’ However, when one sees example (72), one realizes that such an analysis would be incorrect. ki33 is both the verb ‘give’ and the benefactive marker: the verb ‘give’ has been grammaticalized into a benefactive marker, and both uses still appear in YN Na. This grammaticalization conforms to cross-linguistically observed patterns of grammaticalization, as in Lord et al. (Lord et al. 2002:218–219) following Newman 1996. Furthermore, LaPolla notes that the grammaticalization of ‘give’ to benefactive is quite common specifically in Tibeto-Burman languages, and has occurred independently in Jinghpaw, Tamang, Tsangla, Camling, Belhare, and Lahu (LaPolla 2003a:33).

In examples (73) and (74), the benefactive reading is explicit. In example (73), the blessing is done expressly for the benefit of the ancestors. In example (74), a healing rite is done to aid the Buddhist monk (to whom the third person singular pronoun refers).

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9 In YN Na, usually the indirect object precedes the direct object in constructions with the verb ki33. However, when the agentive marker m33 is employed, the word order changes so that the direct object precedes the indirect object (examples (71) and (72)).
So, (using flour) he made a few idols (to be used in a healing rite) as he pleased for him.

The benefactive ki33 further grammaticalizes to become a dative. Dative ki33 can be seen in example (75).

Data given in Lord et al. show instances in other languages where the grammaticalization of the verb meaning ‘give’ continues further than it does so in YN Na, into perspective/stance, purpose, or reason markers (Lord et al. 2002:231).

A distinction between the use of YN Na ki33 and Mandarin gei is that while YN Na dative ki33 does occur in the same phrase as the verbal ki33 as in examples (71) and (72), in Mandarin, the coverb10 gei cannot be used with the verb gei (Li and Thompson 1981:377–378). The verb gei furthermore belongs to a class of verbs that require the indirect object to come before the direct object. The class of verbs where the coverb gei is optional and the class of verbs where the coverb gei is required can have either direct object-indirect object word order or indirect object-direct object word order.

d. dʒɔ33 EXIST/LOC = > dʒɔ33 PROG

dʒɔ33 is the generic existential verb. When the referent is animate or high in prominence, dʒɔ33 has the existential reading. When the theme is a location or lower in prominence, dʒɔ33 has a locative reading (refer to pp. 17–18).

10 Li and Thompson classify Mandarin gei as both a coverb and a verb, depending on its usage. They justify their categorization of gei as a coverb by stating,

“Coverbs function as prepositions: a coverb and its noun form a phrase that modifies the verb of the sentence. A coverb phrase, therefore, must always occur in a sentence with a verb. If the Mandarin coverbs are essentially prepositions, why, then, are they called coverbs rather than prepositions? The answer is simply that the class of coverbs contains words that are partly like verbs and partly like prepositions; the traditional term coverb was coined to avoid labeling them either verbs or prepositions” (Li and Thompson1981:360).
has grammaticalized to indicate progressive aspect as in example (76):

(76) æ̃13 qv33 -kwɔ33 ni33 zo33 di33 mi31 tʰi33 æ̃13 dɔz33 zo33 x33

cave -LOC fish one CLS ADV MAN stick EXIST little boy

There was a fish caught in the cave; 有一条鱼卡在山洞里头；

The grammaticalization from locative to progressive is cross-linguistically very common—Bybee et al. go as far as to say, “… aside from movement sources, reduplications, and constructions with verbs meaning ‘to keep on’, all progressives derive from locative constructions.” (Bybee et al. 1994:131).

e. bi33 lexical verb = > bi33 AUX (movement to a location) = > bi33 AUX (no movement to a location) = > bi33 FUT

This path of grammaticalization also adheres very closely to the patterns of grammaticalization found by Bybee et al., here, for verbs of movement (Bybee et al. 1994:267–270).

bi33 is a verb meaning ‘go,’ as seen in example (77).

(77) tʰæ33 tʰi33 ni13 my31 tɔ33 bi33 mu33- tʃʰuu33.

often this way below go NEG- allow

Often in this way he was not allowed to go down to earth.

In example (78), bi33 acts as an auxiliary accompanying the lexical verb lɔ33 yi33 ‘labor.’ Here, bi33 certainly still conveys the notion of movement to a location.

(78) pʰæ31 tʰi33 mu33 zo33 -'æ31 ɔi33 bi33 mu33- zo33.

man young woman -PL REF. labor go NEG- use

Men and women don’t need to go labor (in the fields).
In example (79), bi33 is an auxiliary; in this utterance, movement to a location is not conveyed—the speaker is discussing eating a text already in the listener’s possession.

In example (80) one can see that bi33 has grammaticalized into a future marker.

Bybee et al. (Bybee et al. 1994:256) find a path of grammaticalization in which a lexical verb that indicates desire grammaticalizes into one indicating willingness and from there into one indicating intention, and finally becoming a future marker denoting prediction. This path of grammaticalization matches exactly the grammaticalization of xɔ33 in YN Na. The four stages in the path all are still present and clearly attested, as seen in the following examples.
The verb xɔ33 literally means ‘want,’ as in example (81).

(81) zu33 mi33 ci33 xɔ33 śua33 sa33 śua33 -xí33 da13.
    wife find want (type of tree) tall -Nom cut down

If he wanted to find a wife, he should cut down the tallest shuae si tree.

Example (82) is extracted from a section of text which discuss how the parents are at first unwilling to give their daughter’s hand in marriage to the protagonist, but after putting the protagonist through numerous trials, eventually they are persuaded to allow the marriage. Thus, example (82) shows xɔ33 indicating willingness.

(82) my33 dzɔ33 ki33 xɔ33 ni31.
    girl EXIST give FUT COP

They would give their daughter to him.

In example (83), xɔ33 indicates intention—after the world has been levelled by a great flood, the protagonist makes new plans.

(83) a33 pa33 tɔ31 ki33 tʰu33 na33 tʰi13 zu33 mi33 ci33 xɔ33 ni31.
    Apato DAT arrive then so wife find FUT COP

When he arrived at Apato’s place, then he would go find a wife.

Example (84) is a clear example of prediction. To the Na listener, the crow is a character that can foretell the future, and yet is thoroughly unreliable in character. Here, when the protagonist and a friend accomplish the Herculean task of tilling some untillable land, the crow predicts that heaven and earth will switch places and a great flood will occur.

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11 In an interview with another daba, the daba reported that śua33 sa31 in the modern language refers to a type of rhododendron or azalea. However, he was not certain whether this was what śua33 sa31 meant in the older form of the language preserved in the daba canon. Indeed, the semantics would be a bit strange, given the thinness of the trunks of rhododendrons/azaleas: in this text, Apato instructs the protagonist to cut down a śua33 sa31 tree, bury it in the sand for nine years, and it would take on the appearance of a person. The protagonist could then take this magically-created woman as his wife.
If this piece of land is tilled, heaven and earth will switch places.

如果这块儿地耕种的话，天和地会翻转。

Tsodeluyizo26

g. ku13 AUX (ability) \(\Rightarrow\) ku13 FUT (prediction)

The grammaticalization of ku13 from an auxiliary indicating ability to a future marker does not fit very easily with the paths of grammaticalization described in Bybee et al. (Bybee et al. 1994:243–280). The closest example given in Bybee et al. is that of Cantonese, where a marker of ability grammaticalizes into a future possibility marker (Bybee et al. 1994:265), as opposed to the predictive future marker that is the result of the grammaticalization in YN Na.

In YN Na, ku13 is an auxiliary verb that means ‘can,’ as shown in example (85).

(85) tʰt33 ni13 zə33 gu33 5i31 sa33 ku31 e31 ki31 zu33 pa33
     this way PERF shuttle for weaving hemp cloth IPL PRO isn’t that right shuttle
     这样了 纺麻布的槽 咱们是不是槽
     This way, don’t we have a kind of shuttle for weaving hemp cloth,
     我们有一个纺麻布的槽，是不是，
     Tsodeluyizo238

di33 li33 dzə33 ku13 tʰt33 ni13 di31 st33 ki33 tʰt33 st33 ki33
     one CLS EXIST can this way there pass DAT here pass DAT
     一量词有会这样那边贯串这边贯串
     that can be passed back and forth
     拿这个槽在麻布上贯串过来，
     tʰæ33 ni31.
     often COP
     经常是
     [through the weft].
     贯串过去。

In example (86), one can see that ku13 has grammaticalized into a future marker denoting prediction. If there were any intermediary stages in the process of grammaticalization, they are no longer attested.
It is said that there would be a spring there.

泉会有一个泉水站在（那里）。

Tsodeluyizo107

xə33 is an auxiliary meaning ‘go,’ as can be seen in example (87).

Everyday he went to feed the pigs and such.

xə33 grammaticalizes to indicate a remote future as in example (88). If there were intermediary stages in the grammaticalization from auxiliary indicating movement to a location to remote future marker, these are no longer attested in the language.

To ask, “Please carefully protect the child so that illness and such

5 EVIDENTIALS - Preliminary

YN Na has a five-fold system of evidentiality. It does not correspond to the D1 system of evidentiality as given in Aikhenvald 2004 (Aikhenvald 2004:60), as there is no non-visual sensory evidential. Rather, it is closest to the C3 system (direct/visual evidence, an inference marker, a reported marker, a quotative marker) with the addition of an assumed/common knowledge marker. No evidentials to mark non-visual sensory were found.
YN Na also has a conjunct/disjunct system. It seems likely that the conjunct/disjunct system interacts in interesting ways with the evidential system, as in some respects both systems are about certainty of the information being conveyed. However, I am currently still analyzing the data on the conjunct/disjunct system and cannot yet give a cohesive account.

5.1 Direct/visual evidence

Direct/visual evidence is unmarked. LaPolla notes that the direct/visual evidential in Qiang appears quite rarely (LaPolla 2003c:65), and that unmarked utterances are understood to have direct/visual evidence, so it is possible that the situation in YN Na is similar and that there may be a seldom-used direct/visual evidence marker still to be found. However, it is clear that unmarked utterances in YN Na are understood to have a direct/visual evidential basis.

5.2 Reported

The reported evidential is ɿ13. Although this evidential can be translated colloquially as ‘(I’ve) heard it said’ (听说), it literally means ‘it is said.’ This evidential has grammaticalized from a lexical verb meaning ‘say.’ ɿ13 is used when speaking about events that one could not personally have observed, and thus occurs very frequently in narratives that pass on Na traditional knowledge. The evidential generally appears sentence-finally, and its use is somewhat optional—the sentence is grammatical without it.

In narrative text, the reported evidential does not appear in each sentence, but rather once every several sentences; it is used once and is then pragmatically available for some time. From the perspective of discourse analysis, this is similar to the way a lexical noun appears once and then pronouns are used in place of that lexical noun for several subsequent utterances.

In 1997, the Na of Luoshui began to have access to television. Information obtained from television follows the same pattern of evidential use as information obtained by more traditional methods. If one sees something on television, this is considered to be a case of direct/visual evidence, and when passing this information on to others, one does not use an evidential because direct/visual evidence is unmarked. If one hears the information on television, this is considered to be a case of reported speech, and so one uses the reported evidential ɿ13 when passing this information on to others.

Examples (89) and (90) are from the very beginning of a creation narrative, and the reported evidential establishes to the audience the provenance of the narrative.

(89) ɕi13 th33-kua33 dz33 kʰ33 pʰ33 dt33 pʰ13 dt33 tə13 dz33

lake under -LOC exist grassland one CLS all exist

It is said that underneath where the lake now is it that everything was

inami2
It is said that in a village, a Na village, there was a very well-to-do family.  

one family

there was a very well-to-do family.

An interaction between the evidential \textit{tsɪɿ} and the interjection \textit{mæ} is noted: when \textit{tsɪɿ} is followed by the interjection \textit{mæ}, one gets a strong reading of certitude. This can be seen in example (92).  

When it is snowing for nine days and nine nights, it is said that the tiger will hide in its den.
5.3 Quotative

The evidential that indicates quoted speech in YN Na is pi33.

pi33 is derived from a verb that means ‘is called,’ as can be seen in example (93).

(93) mɔ33 st33 pi33 di33 wo33 dzɔ33 ku13 kua31.
(type of tree) call one type EXIST FUT INTERJ

会有一种叫 mo si 啊。
There will be a type of tree called mo si, ah!
Tsodeluyizo62

The quotative appears in examples (94), (95), and (96).

(94) wu31 dze33 di33 wo33 dzɔ33 teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ bird one type EXIST teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥

鸟 一种 有 teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥
There was a type of bird that says, “cheeper cheeper cheeper cheeper.”
有一种鸟说，“teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥ teʰi pʰuə̥”.
Tsodeluyizo81

(95) gu33 kʰu13 ku33 mu33- ni31 la33 ba33 tʰa33- x333
nine year EXIST NEG- COP ADV MAN open NEG- go.IMP

九 年 有 是 扒开
He said, “If nine years haven’t passed, you shouldn’t open it.”
说没有九年，你不要去把开。
Tsodeluyizo53

(96) no13 zo33 la33 zj33 zɔ33 di33-kuɔ33 bu33 mu33 za33 ga33
REFL son ADV MAN take CSM earth-LOC POSS young woman with
自己 儿子 拿 了 地里 的 姑娘 跟
She said, “It is not possible for my son to court
她说他们家的儿子不可能和
gemu26

se33 se33 tsɔ31 mu33- yi33 pi33. court okay NEG- can
恋爱 行 会 a regular girl.”
民间的女孩子恋爱。
In example (97), the quotative and reported evidentials appear together—the narrator is indicating that what was reported to him through oral tradition was said to be a direct quote from the contemporaries of the protagonist in the narrative.

(97) ʈʰ33  kʰuu33  dz33  lu33  ma33-  xi33  pi33  tʂ13.  
this CLS  EXIST  till  NEG-  okay  QUOT  REP

It is said they said this strip of land was untillable.  
听说这块儿地是不能耕种的。  
Tsodeluyizo17

5.4  Inference

The evidential to indicate inference in YN Na is pʰæ33 di33. The inference marker is used to designate knowledge that one cannot quite be sure of, as one did not directly experience the situation, nor does one have hearsay evidence, and yet one feels fairly sure that it must be this way, based on some observation or on knowledge of appropriate behavior. Native speaker intuitions indicate that the statement would not be grammatical without the evidential.

(98)  tʂʰua33  tʂʰua33  dzɔ33  dzæ13  tʰ33  yɪ33  muu33-  ku13  pʰæ33  di33.  
fast  fast  EXIST  often  this  make  NEG-  can  INFR

It seems that they wouldn’t do this type of thing casually.  
好像不会很快的去做这样的事。  
Tsodeluyizo117

5.5  Assumed: Common knowledge

In YN Na, the assumed evidential more specifically represents common knowledge. The derivation of this evidential is not clear. The forms ‘a31 and dzɔ33 are identical to the forms of the question marker ‘a31 and the existential/locative verb and progressive marker dzɔ33. However, for a language with as much homophony as YN Na, I would consider this to be merely suggestive. This common knowledge evidential usually appears in the first clause of multi-clause sentences, rather than sentence-finally like the reported evidential.

The following examples are extracted from a process text describing the building of a new house. The building of a new house is very common in present-day Luoshui due to the tourist economy and new policies from the central government that allow bank loans to individuals. Thus, as the characteristics of a Na home are well-known to the Na, the common knowledge evidential appears frequently in this process text.

12 A conservative estimate would be that more than forty new homes and guesthouses have been built in the last five years in Luoshui, a village with five hundred residents.
In Na families, more important than anything
在纳的家庭里比全部最重要的是

Fangzi1

'ta31 dz33
CmKN
hearth room
祖屋

is the hearth room.
这个祖屋。

(100) yi ban (loan) gu33 z33 mi33 tʰi33 h33 tsʰi13
usually this hearth room this CLS build
一般修这个祖屋的时候，祖屋的木头圈，

Fangzi6

dt33 kuu33 z33 mi33 bu33 sa33 kuu33 baixing (loan) tsʰe33 gu33
one CLS hearth room POSS wood CLS the people ten nine
一般修这个祖屋的时候，祖屋的木头圈，老百姓是十九圈，

ordinary peoples’ hearth rooms are nineteen logs (in height),

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

kuu33 st33 pʰi33 -æ31 ni33 tsʰe33 dt33 kuu33 kuo33 l33 t31 mi13
CLS king -PL two ten one CLS inside pillar

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;
and taken and divided into two sections,

one CLS make

so every morning very early get up CMKN incense

Very early every morning when one gets up,

Fangzi60

one first burns incense in the chorten.

6 SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPUTING ENVIRONMENT

The computing environment consists of a commercially available Unicode-compliant relational database and operating system (Microsoft Access 2003 and Windows XP) and Unicode-compliant fonts to customize a database that allows the user to: 1. enter data in multiple writing systems (here, English, IPA, and Chinese characters); 2. sort data by stipulated grammatical categories; 3. interlinearize a narrative text with multiple languages without misinterpretation of the language encoding of the data. The fact that the data may be exported from the database in XML, a non-proprietary format, means that researchers running other database software or operating systems can use the data. Additionally, the XML format is convenient for distributing data over the Internet. This system is in line with the E-MELD recommendations for digital language documentation (E-MELD 2004).

The data fields in the relational database are: isolation form of the Na word, tone sandhi form(s) of the word, Chinese gloss, English gloss, an example sentence from the narrative texts using the word, notes, and semantic field. The first four items are fairly self-explanatory. The inclusion of a field for an example sentence is useful for grammatical analysis, and has the added advantage
that one can include an example sentence when exporting to create the lexicon. Information stored in the notes data field include: phonological variants, more precise translation or further explanation of usage, identification number if the lexical item is from a STEDT questionnaire, and morphological breakdown if the word is a compound (note that YN Na does not have inflectional morphology). The semantic fields in the semantic field data field are those from the STEDT lexical questionnaires (kinship, body parts, natural objects, plants, and animals). I have added one semantic field, religion, as many religious terms in YN Na are borrowed from Tibetan due to the influence of Tibetan (Vajrayana) Buddhism.

Data can be entered directly into the datasheet, or one can create a data input form. In either case, there are font issues—one needs to cut and paste the IPA from a text file, as the character map is not available in the relational database.

It is possible to interlinearize text by selecting the fields from the database that one wants to appear (i.e., YN Na form, English gloss, Chinese gloss) and merging it with a file of the narrative text. No morphological parser is needed, as there is not inflectional morphology; one just needs to have an extensive lexicon (i.e., an LFG approach works better here than a GB approach). However, there are some major difficulties: 1. tone sandi—words in situ in the narrative texts often appear with different tones than in dictionary/isolation form; tone sandhi rules are still under analysis; tone sandhi may have domain (cf. Chen on Chinese languages) and it is not clear how domain could be worked into the database system; and 2. there are a significant number of homophones so that one will get a fair number of mis-glossings to edit out.

MS Access is available fairly cheaply for educational use (under $15), and there is a wide selection of commercially-available and well-indexed pedagogical user manuals for this software.

The phonetic analysis software used is Praat, available by free download from: http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/. Versions are available for Windows, Linux, Macintosh, Solaris, SGI, and other operating systems.

The video editing software is Nova Video Explosion Deluxe 1.5, which is Unicode-compliant so that one can subtitle video in both English and Chinese, and is available for a fairly low price for such a robust video-editing program (under $95).

The audio recorder used is a Sony MiniDisc recorder with external microphones (one headset microphone, one omnidirectional microphone). Although it is less than ideal that the MiniDisc recorder records to a compressed file format, the sound quality nevertheless is quite clear to the human ear. However, I likely would choose a different recorder next time, due to the difficulty of digital transfer and the inconvenient user interface. Although the MiniDisc recorder uses a digital file format, one needs added equipment to digitally transfer the files from the MiniDisc recorder to a computer, as Sony has blocked direct digital transfer to computer due to concerns for the copyright protection of commercial music. The user interface is sub-optimal because it appears only in English and one needs to make numerous selections to reach certain menus. This makes the equipment inaccessible to those with whom one is working in the field who are not literate in English; a stop-play-pause-record-rewind-fast forward button interface would be much more useful.
REFERENCES CITED


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