



A Synopsis of Yongning Na (Mosuo)

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Yongning Na (Mosuo)

- * The language of the Na (Mosuo): categorized as an eastern variety of Naxi, which in turn has been characterized as:
 - An ungrouped Tibeto-Burman language (Thurgood 2003)
 - On the periphery of Loloish (Matisoff 1986)
 - Close to but not part of Lolo-Burmese (Bradley 1975)
 - Typologically very similar to Loloish languages, yet perhaps not actually Loloish (Ramsey 1987)

Yongning Na (Mosuo)

- * Eastern Na (Mosuo) has three dialects:
 - o Yongning
 - o Beiquba
 - o Guabie
- * Also different lexical items preserved in Daba (religious practitioner) oral tradition

Southwestern China



Redrawn from map in Lonely Planet Guide to South-West China (1998: map insert between pp. 16-17)

Language typology

- * Tends toward analyticity
- * Grammatical relations mainly indicated by:
 - o Word order
 - o Lexical choice
 - o Pragmatics
- * Word order: SOV
- * Agreement is not marked by inflection, although person often can be extrapolated because of the conjunct/disjunct system

NP

- * Many typical TB features for NP:
 - N + ADJ + ADV + NUM + CLS word order
 - Relation between nominalization, relativization, and possession
 - Classifier system

VP

- * Many typical TB features for VP:
 - Verb-final, although aspect markers, interjections, and evidentials can follow the verb
 - Multiple existential verbs: {4}
 - Aspectual system
 - Conjunct/disjunct system

Also of interest

- * Rampant grammaticalization: (8) processes that I've found so far
- * Evidentiality



Link to Gemu7.mpg!

Grammaticalization

Overview

- a. xǐ33 'person' => xǐ33 NOM_{Agnt} => xǐ33 NOM
- b. di33 'place' => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}
- c. ki33 'give' => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT
- d. dzɔ33 EXIST/LOC => dzɔ33 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. xə33 AUX (movement to a location) => xə33 FUT (remote)

xǐ33 'person' => xǐ33 NOM_{Agt} => xǐ33 NOM

xǐ33 means 'person/people':

[1] xǐ33 t^hɿ33 t^hɿ33 ni13 ku13 zɔ33.
person this this way FUT CRS
人 这 这样 会 了

This type of person will be like this.

这样的人会这样的。

Tsodeluyizo103

$\tilde{x}\dot{i}33$ 'person' $\Rightarrow \tilde{x}\dot{i}33$ NOM_{Agt} $\Rightarrow \tilde{x}\dot{i}33$ NOM

(2) $l\ddot{o}33$ $yi33$ $-x\dot{i}33$
labor $-NOM_{Agt}$
劳动
laborer(s)
Tsodeluyizo4

(3) $p\dot{i}33$ $dz\ddot{a}33$ $-x\dot{i}33,$ $l\dot{a}33$ $dz\ddot{a}33$ $-x\dot{i}33,$ $z\ddot{u}\ddot{a}33$ $dz\ddot{a}33$ $-x\dot{i}33$
yak ride $-NOM_{Agt}$ tiger ride $-NOM_{Agt}$ horse ride $-NOM_{Agt}$
牦牛 骑 老虎 骑 马 骑
the yak rider, the tiger rider, the horse rider,
骑牦牛的人, 骑老虎的人, 骑马的人
yongzhutser12

xǐ33 'person' => xǐ33 NOM_{Agt} => xǐ33 NOM

(4) lə33 zuw33 -xǐ33
ADV MAN say -NOM
说

words

说的

Fangzi63

di33 'place' => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}

di33 means 'land, earth, place':

(5) nɔ13 zɔ33 lə33 zɿ33 zɔ33 di33-kuɔ33 bu33 mu33 zɔ33 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 tsə31 mu33- yĩ33 pi33.
court okay NEG- can QUOT
恋爱 行 会
a regular girl."

民间的女孩子恋爱。

di33 'place' => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}

(6) zu33- di33 tu33 mu33- ni31 no33
warm- NOM_{Loc} plant NEG- COP 2SG PRO
热的地 播种 是 你

The heavens said, "If it's not a warm place you can't plant them,
说, "除了热的地方以外, 高山的地区, 你不可以种。"

Tsodeluyizo254

wu33-di33 tu33 t^ha33- x̃33 pi33.
mountain- NOM_{Loc} plant NEG- go QUOT
山地 播种 不 去

in the mountains, you can't plant them."

说, 除了热的地方以外, 高山的地区, 你不可以种。"

di33 'place' => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}

(7) dzɿ33 -di33
eat -NOM_{Purp}
吃
things to eat
吃的
muphadaba12

ki33 'give' => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT

(8) tʰ33 nɪ33 pinguo (loan) ɲɑ33 ki33 ki33.
 3PS PRO AGT apple 1PS PRO
 他 苹果 我
 3ps gives me apples.
 他给我苹果。

versus

(9) ɲɑ³³ tʰ³³ ki³³ pinguo (loan) ki33.
 1PS PRO 3PS PRO DAT apple give
 我 他 苹果 给
 I give 3ps apples.
 我给他苹果。

ki33 'give' => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT

(10) dt33 ni33 sɔ33 tʂʰɔ33 dzɔ33 æ33 pʰɤ33 ə33 zɿ33 -æ31
one day three meal EXIST ancestors -PL
一天三顿饭 祖先 们

At each of the three meals each day,

一天三顿饭都要

Fangzi24

ki33 tʂʰu33 du31...

BEN "chudu"

"chudu"

one must do a "chudu" blessing for one's ancestors...

给祖先和神灵作 chudu...

ki33 'give' => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT

[11] a33 pa33 tɔ31 ki33 t^hu33.
Apato DAT arrive
Apato 到
He went to Apato's place.
到了 Apato 那里。
Tsodeluyizo60

$d\zeta\alpha 33$ EXIST/LOC \Rightarrow $d\zeta\alpha 33$ PROG

- [12] $wu31$ $dze33$ $d\iota 33$ $w\alpha 33$ $d\zeta\alpha 33$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $pi33$.
bird one type EXIST $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ QUOT
鸟 一种 有 $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$
There was a type of bird that says, “cheeper cheeper cheeper cheeper.”
有一种鸟说, “ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ $t\zeta^hi p^hu\alpha$ ”。

Tsodeluyizo81

dzɔ33 EXIST/LOC => dzɔ33 PROG

[13] ǎ13 qy33 -kuɔ33 ni33 zɔ33 dt33 mi31 tʰɿ33 ǎ31 dzɔ33 zɔ33 xɔ̃33
cave -LOC fish one CLS ADV MAN stick EXIST little boy
山洞 鱼 一 量词 卡住 有 小男孩子
There was a fish caught in the cave;
有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;
ɕinami37

tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ʃe33 xǎ13 zɔ33 tʰɿ33 bu33 dzɔ33.
this CLS meat cut PERF ADV MAN roast PROG
这 个 肉 割 了 烧 正在
the boy was roasting the fish to eat.
这个小孩儿正在烧鱼肉吃。

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

bi33 lexical verb meaning 'go':

[14] t^hæ33 t^hɿ33 ni13 mɿ31 tɕɔ33 bi33 mu33- tʂ^huɿ33.

often this way below go NEG- allow

经常 这 样 下边 去 准

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

经常这样不准他去下面。

gemu28

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

(15) p^hæ31 tɕ^hi33 mu33 zɔ33 -'æ31 ʃi33 bu33 lɔ33 yi33
man young woman -PL REFL labor
男 姑娘 -们 自己 劳动
Men and women don't need
Change9

bi33 mu33- zɔ33.
go NEG- use
去 用
to go labor (in the fields).

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

(16) tʰi13 nɔ33 bu33 tʰa33 ʔ31 dzɔ33 bɔ13 ɛ13 pɔ33 lə33
 so 2PS PRO POSS book EXIST pig skin use ADV MAN
 所以 你 的 书 猪皮 用

So he said, "Your book is made from pig skin,
 所以说, "你的书是猪皮做的,

muphadaba14

ku33 ni31 ʃ13 -zɪ31 lə33 dzɪ33 æ31 bi33 pi33.
 make COP REFL -DL ADV MAN eat QM go QUOT
 做 是 自己 吃 吗 去

why don't we eat it up?"

我们两个要不要把它吃掉了?"

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

(17) lə33 sɯ13 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.
说是去杀掉他。
Tsodeluyizo138

xɔ33 (desire) => xɔ33 (willingness) =>
xɔ33 (intention) => xɔ33 (prediction)

xɔ33 literally means 'want':

[18] zu33 mi33 ɕi33 xɔ33 suæ33 si33 suæ33 -xĩ33 da13.
wife find want [type of tree] tall -NOM cut down
老婆 找 要 (树的一个种类) 高 砍
If he wanted to find a wife, he should cut down the tallest shuae si tree.
要找老婆的话，要砍最高的 suæ si 树。

Tsodeluyizo49

xɔ33 (desire) => xɔ33 (willingness) =>

xɔ33 (intention) => xɔ33 (prediction)

- (19) mɿ33 dzɔ33 ki33 xɔ33 ni31.
girl EXIST give FUT COP
女儿 是 给 是
They would give their daughter to him.
女儿是会给他的。
Tsodeluyizo146

xɔ33 (desire) => xɔ33 (willingness) =>
xɔ33 (intention) => xɔ33 (prediction)

- (20) a33 pa33 tɔ31 ki33 t^hu33 nɔ33 t^hi13 zu33 mi33 ɸi33 xɔ33 ni31.
Apato DAT arrive then so wife find FUT COP
Apato 到 才 所以 老婆 找 是
When he arrived at Apato's place, then he would go find a wife.
到了 Apato 那里，才去找老婆。
Tsodeluyizo48

xɔ33 (desire) => xɔ33 (willingness) =>
xɔ33 (intention) => xɔ33 (prediction)

[21] t^hɿ33 k^huɿ33 lu33 pi33 dzɔ33 mɿ33 la33 di33
this CLS till if heaven and earth
这 量词 耕 的话 天 和 地
If this piece of land is tilled, heaven and earth
如果这块儿地耕种的话，天和地

Tsodeluyizo26

lə33 tɔ31 pi13 xɔ33.
ADV MAN turn over FUT
翻转
will switch places.
会翻转。

ku13 AUX (ability) => ku13 FUT (prediction)

[22] t^hɿ33 ni13 zɔ33 Ɂɿ33 gu33 ̃ɿ13 sə33 ku31 ɛ31 ki31
this way PERF shuttle for weaving 1PL PRO isn't that right
hemp cloth
这样 了 织麻布的槽 咱们 是不是
This way, don't we have a kind of shuttle for weaving hemp cloth,
我们有一个织麻布的槽, 是不是,
Tsodeluyizo238

zɔ33 pa33 dɿ33 lɿ33 dzɔ33 ku13 t^hɿ33 ni13 dɿ31 sɿ33 ki33
shuttle one CLS EXIST can this way there pass DAT
槽 一 量词 有 会 这样 那边 贯串
that can be passed back and forth
拿这个槽在麻布上贯串过来,

t^hɿ33 sɿ33 ki33 t^hǣ33 ni31.
here pass DAT often COP
这边 贯串 经常 是
[through the weft].
贯串过去。

ku13 AUX [ability] => ku13 FUT (prediction)

[23] dzi33 qy33 t^hɿ33 dɿ33 lɿ33 t^hɿ33 di33 ku13 tsɿ13.
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.

听说会有一个泉水站在（那里）。

Tsodeluyizo107

xə33 AUX (movement to a location)

=> xə33 FUT (remote)

[24] t^hɿ33 ni33 ni31 bɔ13 lu13 la33 t^hɿ33 ni13 xə33.
everyday pig feed and this way go
每一天 猪 放 和 这样 去
Everyday he went to feed the pigs and such.
每一天去放猪阿这些。

çinami14

xə33 AUX (movement to a location)

=> xə33 FUT (remote)

[24] tʰi13 nɔ33 ni33 dʒu13 di33 wɔ33 zu31 gɔ33 tsʰi33

so 2PS PRO AGT good one bless illness
所以 你 好 一 保佑 病痛

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

læ33 tʰæ13 di33 tʰa33- xə33 pi33.
and such arrive NEG- FUT QUOT
和 那些 得到 会

won't come."

不要让他得到。