

A Synopsis of Yongning Na (Mosuo)

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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).

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List of Abbreviations

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

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1. INTRODUCTION

About the language

The language of the Na (Mosuo)² 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 ungrouped 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.

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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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).³ 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 zɔ33 dt33 zuæ13 dt33 mi31
 fish big very one CLS
 鱼 大 很 一 量词
 a very big fish
 很大的一条鱼
 çinami24

- (2) su33 tɕ^hu31 t^hɪ33 k^huu33 la31 gu33
 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
 yongzhutser1

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, Lahaussais 2003). Table 1 presents an overview of the markers for nominalization, relativization, non-relative attributives, the associative, and possession in YN Na.

xĩ33	di33	bu33
NOM: ADJ + xĩ33 => N		
NOM: VP + xĩ33 => N	NOM: VP + di33 => N	
	REL	
	NON-RELATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE	NON-RELATIVE ATTRIBUTIVE
		ASSOC
		POSS

Table 1: Overview of nominalizer and relativizer markers

There are two nominalizers, xĩ33 and di33. xĩ33 NOM has been grammaticalized from xĩ33 ‘person’ (see p. 30). In example (3), one can see that ADJ + xĩ33 => N. In examples (4), (5), and (6), VP + xĩ33 => N. xĩ33 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 ɕi31 -xĩ33
 beautiful -NOM
 漂亮
 beautiful things
 漂亮的
 Tsodeluyizo12

(4) ty33 di33 -xĩ33
 wings EXIST -NOM
 翅膀 有
 things with wings,
 有翅膀的
 Tsodeluyizo12

(5) lə33 ʂu33 du33 -xĩ33
 ADV MAN think -NOM
 想
 thoughts
 想的
 Fangzi63

- (6) l533 yi33 -xĩ33
 labor -NOM_{Agt}
 劳动
 laborer(s)
 Tsodeluyizo4

The second nominalizer, di33 NOM⁴, has been grammaticalized from di33 ‘earth, land, place’ (see p. 31). 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 di33.

V + di33 => N

- (7) na13 -di33
 Na -NOM_{Loc}
 摩梭
 Na areas
 摩梭地区
 gemu10

- (8) dzi33 -di33
 eat -NOM_{Purp}
 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, xĩ33, marking relativization.

- (9) tɕæ33 ‘æ31 ku31 -di33 tsɔ33 mi33
 pickled vegetables⁵ make -NOM wooden barrel
 酸菜 做 木桶
 wooden barrel for making pickled vegetables
 做酸菜的桶
 Tsodeluyizo123

⁴ One could argue instead that di33 NOM is a borrowing from Mandarin *de* (的) via Yunnanese -- however, it is not clear why the voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop initial (IPA /t/, but represented in *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 aspirated alveolar stop /t^h/, 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., *dianshiji* (电视机) [tiẽ ʂt 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 ɛ133 bi33 ‘on the skin’ to form ɛ133 bi33 di33 tʰa33 ‘ə31 ‘the scripture on the skin.’ Note that this is then embedded within the larger non-relative attributive wə33 ta33 bu33 ɛ133 bi33 di33 tʰa33 ‘ə31 ‘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) wə33 ta33 bu33 ɛ133 bi33 -di33 tʰa33 ‘ə31
 before POSS skin POSTP -NOM book
 以前 的 皮子 上 书
 the scripture written on the skin before
 以前的写在皮子上的经文
 muphadaba23

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) ɔa33 ɬa33 tʰɿ33 wu33 bu33 æ33 mi33
 god this CLS POSS mother
 神 这 量词 的 母亲
 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) tʰɿ33 ɔa31 ɔa13 bu33 shiqing (loan)
 this help, cooperation POSS matter
 这 帮忙, 合作 的 事情
 this cooperative effort
 这个合作的事情
 saozī8

In example (13), the non-relative attributive contains the locative expression tɕi33 tʰæ33 kuə33 ‘on the ground.’

- (13) tɕi33 tʰæ33-kuə33 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 ɕi13 kuɔ33, bu33, and the noun phrase wə33 tɔ31 that is embedded within the larger non-relative clause of the adverb zɔ31 nɔ33 + bu33.

(14)	zɔ31 nɔ33	bu33	ɕi13	-kuɔ33	bu33	wə33 tɔ31
	now	POSS	lake	-LOC	POSS	island
	现在	的	湖		的	海岛
	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).

(15) 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.

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
lɿ33	generic / multi-use	æ̃13 qy33 dɿ33 lɿ33 ‘a cave’ (ɕinami21) bɔ13 gu33 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ‘this pig trough’ (ɕinami52) wɔ33 tɔ31 dɿ33 lɿ33 ‘a mountain top’ (gemu23) qʰuu33 bi13 dɿ33 lɿ33 ‘a hoofprint’ (gemu38) kʰu31 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ‘this nest’ (tso38) ɛ33 kʰɿ31 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ‘these turnips’ (tso261) xuɔ31 li33 sɔ33 lɿ33 ‘three cats’ (tso266) mɿ31 zɔ13 dɿ33 lɿ33 ‘a girl’ (fangzi30)

(16) Shape

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
gu13	round sticks	yu33 dɿ33 gu13 ‘one cigarette’ pencils
kuu33	strand	sɿ33 ɤ33 dɿ33 kuu33 ‘a strand of pearls’ (gemu43)
kʰɿ31	long, narrow things	qʰæ33 lɔ33 dɿ33 kʰɿ31 ‘one river’ (河) dʒi33 mi33 dɿ33 kʰɿ31 ‘one river’ (江) dʒi31 ki33 dɿ33 kʰɿ31 ‘one belt’ (gemu14) snakes (snakes can also take mi33)
kʰuu33	section, strip, piece	ɬa13 pə31 dɿ33 kʰuu33 ‘a bit of excess’ (ɕinami9) lu33 ʂu31 tʰɿ33 kʰuu33 ‘this strip of Luoshi’ (ɕinami59) ɬi33 di33 kɿ31 mu33 kʰɿ33 tʰɿ33 kʰuu33 ‘this section of the foot of Yongning’s Gemu (mountain)’ (gemu1) mu33 tʰɿ33 kʰuu33 ‘this name’ (mupha33) xuæ33 pʰæ13 dɿ33 kʰuu33 ‘a piece of cloth’
lu33	kernel	xɿ33 tɕʰi33 xɿ33 tʂu33 dɿ33 lu33 ‘a trace of humanity’ (tso46)
ɬu31	ball	xu33 ɬu31 dɿ33 ɬu31 ‘a ball of rice’ (tso114)

na33	long, flat and stick-shaped things	quæ33 dɪ33 na33 ‘one bed’ (fangzi14) k ^h i33 dɪ33 na33 ‘one door’ Blades: si31 t ^h i13 dɪ33 na33 ‘one knife,’ si31 t ^h i13 zɔ33 dɪ33 na33 ‘one small knife’ pi31 t ^h a13 gu33 na33 ‘nine axes,’ (tso186)
p ^h æ13	slice	Meat, tiles: ŋuu33 p ^h æ13 dɪ33 p ^h æ13 ‘one roof tile’ gu33 p ^h æ13 dɪ33 p ^h æ13 ‘one wooden tile’ k ^h ɔ33 p ^h ɣ33 dɪ33 p ^h æ13 ‘a field of grass’ (ɕinami2) ni33 zɔ33 ʃe33 dɪ33 p ^h æ13 ‘a slice of fish’ (ɕinami26)
quu13	bowl	la33 ɲɔ13 dɪ33 quu13 ‘a bowl of tiger milk’ (tso172)
tɕ ^h io13	ladle	dzi33 dɪ33 tɕ ^h io13 ‘a ladle of water’ (fangzi30)
wuu33	stack	ʃu33 t ^h ɪ33 gu33 wuu33 ‘these nine stacks of branches’ (tso190)
wæ33	pile	mu33 t ^h ɪ33 wæ33 ‘this fire’ (fangzi34) sɔ33 dɪ33 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	sɪ33 dzi33 dɪ33 dzi33 ‘one tree’ (fangzi6) very tall flowers
mi31	flying things and some other animals	læ31 ɣæ33 t ^h ɪ33 mi31 ‘this crow’ (tso28) ni33 zɔ33 dɪ33 mi31 ‘a fish’ (ɕinami37) birds; chickens, cats, snakes
pɔ33	small things that grow from the ground	small trees (saplings), most flowers, vegetables
p ^h ɔ13	some common four-legged animals	zɤ33 wɔ33 t ^h ɪ33 ni33 p ^h ɔ13 ‘these two oxen’ (tso20) dogs, horses, cows, pigs, yaks
yuu13	dogs	k ^h u33 mi33 ni33 yuu13 ‘two dogs’ (tso126)

(18) Selection for number

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
dzi33	a pair	tɔ31 mi13 dɪ33 dzi33 ‘a pair of pillars’ (fangzi6) chopsticks, things that come in pairs
ku13	more than one person	ɑ33 mu33 gu33 mi33 ts ^h e33 ku13 ‘ten siblings’ (intro6) ni33 ku13 ‘the two (people)’ (gemu22) ɑ33 da33 æ33 mi33 ni33 ku13 ‘the two parents’ (tso145)
wu33	one person ⁶	p ^h æ31 tɕ ^h i33 t ^h ɪ33 wu33 ‘this man’ (ɕinami8) la33 mu33 la33 dɪ33 vu33 ‘a lama, etc.’ (fangzi39)
wɔ33	team of oxen	zə33 wɔ33 gu33 wɔ33 ‘nine teams of oxen’ (ɕinami44)

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

Auto-classifiers are those for which $N = CLS$. A few of these classifiers can also be used with semantically-related nouns, such as the classifier $tsɔ13$, which can be used with $zɪ33 wɔ31$ ‘bedroom’ as well as $tsɔ13$ ‘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 $ts^hɪ13$ ‘sheep’ for $ts^hɪ13 ɓ113$ ‘sheepskin’ and the classifier $tɕi31$ for $tɕi31 ɕi33$ ‘whistle.’

Additionally, in the $N_1 + CLS \Rightarrow N_2$ morphological process (see p. 15), N_2 often takes the classifier that is compounded to N_1 . For example: $sɪ33$ ‘wood’ + $dzi33$ (CLS) \Rightarrow $sɪ33 dzi33$ ‘tree.’ The N_2 $sɪ33 dzi33$ takes the classifier $dzi33$: $sɪ33 dzi33 dɪ33 dzi33$. Also: $ni33$ ‘fish’ + $qɥ33$ (CLS) \Rightarrow $ni33 qɥ33$ ‘fish nest.’ The N_2 $ni33 qɥ33$ takes the classifier $qɥ33$: $ni33 qɥ33 t^hɪ33 dɪ33 qɥ33$.

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
tsɔ13	room	tsɔ13 dɪ33 tsɔ13 ‘one room’ (fangzi21) zɪ31 wɔ33 dɪ33 tsɔ13 ‘one bedroom’
ts ^h ɪ13	sheepskin throw	ts ^h ɪ13 ɓ113 dɪ33 ts ^h ɪ13 ‘one sheepskin’ (literally, “one sheep of sheepskin”)
tɕi31	whistle	tɕi31 ɕi33 gu33 tɕi31 k ^h ɪ13 ‘whistle nine times’ (tso195)
wu33	village	na13 wu33 dɪ33 wu33 ‘a Na village’ (yzt2)

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 \mathcal{C} inami text.

(20) Measure

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
ɦɪ31	unit of cloth	ts ^h e33 q ^h a33 ɦɪ31 ‘ten-odd measures (of cloth)’ (gemu3)
q ^h uu13	various liquids and foods	la33 ɲɔ13 dɪ33 q ^h uu13 ‘a bowl of tiger’s milk’ (tso172) xa33 dɪ33 q ^h uu13 ‘a bowl of rice’
tɕ ^h ɔ13	water	dʒi33 dɪ33 tɕ ^h ɔ13 ‘a ladle of water’ (fangzi30)

(21) 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.

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
dʒɪ31 k ^h u31		dɪ33 dʒɪ31 k ^h u31 ‘a while’ (gemu6)
dʒæ33		t ^h ɪ33 dʒæ33 ‘this period of time’ (ɕinami49)
k ^h u13		t ^h ɪ33 ts ^h e33 k ^h u13 ‘these ten years’ (change1)
ɲi33		dɪ33 ɲi33 ‘one day’ (tso179)
ʂə33		t ^h ɪ33 ʂə33 ‘this time’ (tso129)
tɕ ^h æ13		dɪ33 tɕ ^h æ13 ‘a generation’ (gemu49)
xa33		sɔ33 xa33 ‘three nights’ (tso47)
zɪ33		dɪ33 zɪ33 ‘a lifetime’ (gemu49)

(22) Quantification

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

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
<i>di33 ta13</i>		<i>dze33 di33 ta13</i> (literally ‘all money’); ‘good money’ (change8)
<i>di33 pi13</i>		<i>tʰi33 ni13 di33 pi13</i> ‘some of these’ (tso13)
<i>di33 wə33</i>		<i>wu31 dze33 di33 wə33</i> ‘a type of bird’ (tso81)
<i>di33 xə33</i>		<i>dzi33 di33 di33 xə33</i> ‘a little bit to eat’ (cinami17)
<i>tʂu13</i>		<i>xĩ33 tʰi33 tʂu13</i> ‘(these) many people’ (yzt4)

(23) Round number

CLS	Nouns that employ this classifier	Examples
<i>tu33</i>		<i>qʰa33 tu33</i> ‘several thousand’ (fangzi55)
<i>tsʰe33</i>		<i>tʰi33 tsʰe33 kʰu13</i> ‘these ten years’ (change1)
<i>ɕi33</i>		<i>gu33 ɕi33</i> ‘nine hundred’ (tso186)

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)	<i>si33</i>	<i>dzi33</i>	<i>tʰi33</i>	<i>zuə13</i>	<i>ʂuə33</i>	<i>tʰi33</i>	<i>sə33</i>	<i>dzi33</i>	<i>tʰi33</i>	<i>di33</i> .
	tree	this	very	tall	this	three	CLS	ADV	MAN	EXIST
	树	这	很	高	这	三	量词			有
	这个树木有三棵很高的。									
	There were three very tall trees.									
	Tsodeluyizo218									

tɕɔ31 kɪ33 tʰu31	di33	dzi33	ku31 na33 zɔ33	la33	bæ33 na31 zɔ33	xa13	ni31.
first	one	CLS	Kunazo	and	Baenazo	live	COP
首先的	一	量词	Kunazo	和	Baenazo	住	是

首先一棵树是住 Kunazo 和 Baenazo。

In the first one, Kunazo and Baenazo live.

Tsodeluyizo219

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 wu33 acting as a classifier in example (25) and as a verb in example (26), where the reduplicated form of the verb, wu33 wu33, gives the reading ‘stack together.’

(25)	ʃu33	tʰɪ33	gu33	wu33
	branch	this	nine	CLS
	树枝	这	九	堆

these nine stacks of branches

(tso196)

(26)	ʃu33	qæ13	tʰɪ33	lə33	tsʰɪ13	tʰɪ33	lə33
	branch	burn	3SG PRO	ADV MAN	cut	this	ADV MAN
	树枝	烧	他	副词	砍	这	副词

他烧树枝，把他砍掉的树枝

He burned branches, burned the branches he had cut down,

Tsodeluyizo189

wu33	wu33	zɔ33	ʃɪ3 sɔ33	ku31	æ31 yi33	ʃe33	ya33 qa33	lə33	tʰæ13
stack	stack	PERF	1INC PRO		long, long ago		buckwheat	and	such
堆	堆	了	咱们		很久以前		荞麦	和	那些

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

lə33	qæ13	zɔ33	ku13.
ADV MAN	burn	CRS	can
副词	烧	了	会

buckwheat and such.

会烧掉的。

2.5 N + CLS compounds

Yang (Yang, to appear) notes the availability of the construction $N_1 + \text{CLS} \Rightarrow N_2$ for compounding in YN Na. In the following data extracted from texts that I have collected, one can see differences in the way that $N_1 + \text{CLS} \Rightarrow N_2$ compounding works in YN Na and in Mandarin. In Mandarin $N_1 + \text{CLS} \Rightarrow N_2$ 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 $N_1 + \text{CLS} \Rightarrow N_2$ 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.

dzi33 CLS ('tree')

$N_1 + \text{CLS}$	\Rightarrow	N_2
st33 'wood' + dzi33		st33 dzi33 'tree' (tso43)
t ^h ɔ33 'pine' + dzi33 + zɔ33 'small'		t ^h ɔ33 dzi33 zɔ33 'pine tree sapling'

k^huu33 CLS ('section, strip, piece')

$N_1 + \text{CLS}$	\Rightarrow	N_2
mi33 'scar' + k ^h uu33		mi33 k ^h uu33 'scar'
wɔ33 'head' + k ^h uu33		wɔ33 k ^h uu33 'head'

lu33 CLS ('kernel')

$N_1 + \text{CLS}$	\Rightarrow	N_2
nu31 'soy' + lu33		nu31 lu33 'soybean'
ɲa13 'eye' + lu33		ɲa13 lu33 'eye' (tso285)
pi13 'bran' + lu33		pi13 lu33 'wine lees' (tso269)
tse33 'barley' + lu33		tse33 lu33 'barley'
tɕ ^h i33 'mulberry' + lu33		tɕ ^h i33 lu33 'mulberry'
wɔ33 'head' + lu33 ⁷		wɔ33 lu33 'head' (tso277)

ɬu31 CLS ('ball')

$N_1 + \text{CLS}$	\Rightarrow	N_2
xɑ33 'rice, food' + ɬu31		xɑ33 ɬu31 'ball of rice, ball of food' (tso114)

⁷ Note that this noun can compound with either k^huu33 or lu33.

p^hæ13 CLS ('slice')

N₁ + CLS	=>	N₂
æ31 'cliff' + p ^h æ13		æ31 p ^h æ13 'cliff, hill' (gemu47)
dzi33 'water' + p ^h æ13		dzi33 p ^h æ13 'ice'

q^hɣ33 CLS ('hole')

N₁ + CLS	=>	N₂
æ13 'cliff' + q ^h ɣ33		æ13 q ^h ɣ33 'cave' (çinami21)
ni33 'fish' + q ^h ɣ33		ni33 q ^h ɣ33 'fish nest' (tso153)

wu33 CLS ('stack')

N₁ + CLS	=>	N₂
dze33 'money' + wu33		dze33 wu33 'wealth' (çinami6)

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: dzo33, di33, ku33, and zɿ33; of these existential verbs, dzo33 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 *dzi33* and the existential verb must be *di33*.

- a. *dzo33* 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) *na33 sa33 ku31 æ33 mu33 gu33 mi33 ma31 na33 dzo33.*
 IPL PRO older sibling younger sister v. many EXIST
 我们 姐姐, 哥哥 妹妹 很多 有
 We have a lot of siblings.
 Intro7

(28) *gi33 na33 mi33 la33 tʰæ13 dzo33 tsʰi33 -kuo33 tɕi33 na33 mi33 tsʰi33*
 black bear and such EXIST forest -LOC very dense forest
 黑熊 和 那些 有 树林 很密 树林
 A black bear and such entered into a very dense
 黑熊那些是钻进去很密
 Tsodeluyizo73

-kuo33 tɕʰi33 lə33 xo33.
 -LOC enter ADV MAN go
 钻 去
 forest.
 的树林。

(29) *wu31 dze33 di33 wə33 dzo33 tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə pi33.*
 bird one type EXIST tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə QUOT
 鸟 一种 有 tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə
 There was a type of bird that says, “cheeper cheeper cheeper cheeper.”
 有一种鸟说, “tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə”。
 Tsodeluyizo81

(30) *zo31 no33 dian (loan) la33 dzo33 ze33 dianshiji (loan) la33*
 now electricity ADV MAN EXIST CSM t.v. ADV MAN
 现在 电 有 了 电视机
 Today, we all have electricity, we all have televisions,
 Change5

dzɔ33	ze33	cheng (loan)	-kuɔ33	tʰi33 tɕʰi33	ɑ33 tsɔ33	dzɔ33	lə33
EXIST	CSM	city	-LOC	3PL PRO FAM	whatever	EXIST	ADV MAN
有	了	成		他们	什么	有	

whatever they have in the city,

dzɔ33	ze33.
EXIST	CSM
有	了

we have it all.

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

(31) ɕi13 tʰæ33-kuɔ33 dzɔ33 kʰɔ33 pʰy33 di33 pʰæ13 di33 ta13 dzɔ33
lake under-LOC EXIST grassland one CLS all EXIST
海 下面里 有 草坪，荒地 一 片 全部 有

Underneath where the lake now is it is said that everything was a field
现在海地下的地方，听说全部是
ɕinami2

my33	di33	ni31	tsɿ13.
land	COP	REP	
土地	是		

of grass, earth.
一片草坪，土地。

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) st33 dzt33 tʰi33 zuæ13 ʂuæ33 tʰi33 sɔ33 dzt33 tʰi33 di33.
tree this very tall this three CLS ADV MAN EXIST
树 这 很 高 这 三 量词 有

There were three very tall trees.
这个树木有三棵很高的。
Tsodeluyizo218

(33) xæ̃13 zɯ31 la33 dɯ33 sɔ33 tʰɿ33 muɯ33- di33.
 cut trace etcetera same EXIST NEG- EXIST
 割 痕迹 等等 一样 有 有

There was no trace at all of a cut.

割掉的痕迹一点没有。

ɕinami31

(34) wu31 dze33 tʰɿ33 xɔ̃33 tʰɿ33 di33 zɔ33 kʰu31 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ma33- ku31.
 bird 3SG PRO fur ADV MAN EXIST CRS nest this CLS NEG- make
 鸟 他 毛 有 了 窝 这 个 不 做

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

(35) xɿ33 wu33 la33 dzæ33 pi13 tʰɿ33 di33.
 village etc. lots ADV MAN EXIST
 村镇 等等 很多 有

There were many villages.

有很多村镇。

ɕinami4

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 dzɔ33, as in examples (38) and (39).

(36) gu33 kʰu13 ku33 muɯ33- ni31 lə33 ba33 tʰa33- xɔ̃33 pi33.
 nine year EXIST NEG- COP ADV MAN open NEG- go.IMP QUOT
 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

(37) tʰi13 tʰɿ33 ni13 qʰa33 tʂuæ13 ku33.
 so this way a long time EXIST
 所以 这样 很长时间 有

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

所以是这样的很长时间以后。

gemu30

- (38) tʰi13 tʰi33 dzæ33 -kuɔ33 dzɔ33 my33 kʰu13 ʂe33 ʂe33 dzɔ33 wu33 -kuɔ33
 so this CLS -LOC EXIST afternoon a little bit EXIST village -LOC
 所以 这 量词 有 下午 一点点 有 村

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,
 ɕinami49

ʼæ31 dzɔ33 di33 ta13 bɔ13 xa33 ki33 dzɔ33.
 CMKN all pig rice, food give PROG
 全部 猪 饭 给 正在

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

- (39) di33 ni33 dzɔ33 tʰi33 ʼə13 ɕa33 ʎa33 tʰi33 wu33 bu33 æ33 mi33
 one day EXIST 3SG PRO family god this CLS POSS mother
 一 天 有 他 家 神 这 量词 的 母亲

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

lɔ33 ny33
 ADV MAN find out.
 知道

found out.
 知道了。

d. zɪ33 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.

- (40) tʰi13 tʰi33 kʰuu33 wæ33 kuu31 la31 wɔ33 ta33 bu33 ɕi13 bi33
 so this CLS call complete INTERJ before POSS skin POSTP
 所以 这 叫 完 语气词 以前 的 皮子 上

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

-di33 tʰa33 ʼə31 tʰi33 nu31 mi13 -kuɔ33 tʰi33 zɪ33 ni31 ze33.
 -NOM book this heart -LOC ADV MAN EXIST COP CSM
 书 这 心 有 是 了

all were (again) in his his heart.
 经文全部回到心里面来了。

- (41) qæ33 -kuɔ33 xɑ33 tʰɿ33 muɿ33- zɿ33.
 dung -LOC rice ADV MAN NEG- EXIST
 粪便 饭 副词 没 有
 粪便 里没有饭。
 There wasn't any rice in their dung.
 Tsodeluyizo223

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/zɔ33 (phonological variants)
 1. Quantified event
 2. Definite/specific event
 3. Inherently bounded
 4. First event in sequence
- b. Change of State Marker (CSM): ze33/zɔ33
- c. Currently Relevant State (CRS): ze33/zɔ33
- d. Experienced: tɕi31
- e. Progressive: dzɔ33
- f. Delimitative: dɿ33 + V
- g. Iterative: dɿ33 + V₁V₁
- h. Future: bi33, xə33, xɔ33, 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/zɔ33 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.

(42) æ̃13 qy33 -kuɔ33 ni33 zɔ33 dt33 mi31 tʰɿ33 æ̃31 dzɔ33
cave -LOC fish one CLS ADV MAN stick EXIST
山洞 鱼 一 量词 卡住 有

There was a fish caught in the cave;

有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;

cinami37

zɔ33 x̃533 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ʃe33 x̃æ̃13 zɔ33 tʰɿ33 bu33 dzɔ33.
little boy this CLS meat cut PERF ADV MAN roast PROG
小男孩子 这 个 肉 割 了 烧 正在

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.

(43) 95 nian (loan) zɔ31 nɔ33 tʰu33 tʰɿ33 tsʰe33 kʰu13 ze33 quæ31 gi33
95 year now until this ten years PERF between
 现在 到 这 十 年 了 中间

Since 1995, it's been roughly ten years;

Change1

lu33 ʃu31 wɔ33 ta33 la33 dzu13 kʰuu33 dɿ33 bæ33 mu33- tsə33.
Luoshui before and very much same NEG- okay, right
落水 以前 和 很多 一样 不 行, 对

Luoshui now and before, it's really different, not the same.

2. YN Na has the definite/specific event perfective as shown in example (44). When the definite direct objects x̃a33 ‘Han’ and bu33 ‘Pumi’ are employed, the perfective appears.

- (44) xa33 gi13 mu33- tɕʰɔ31 bu33 gi13 mu33- tɕʰɔ31 zɔ33...
 Han behind NEG- follow Pumi behind NEG- follow PERF
 汉 后面 跟随 普米 后面 跟随 了
 (We) don't follow the Han, (we) don't follow the Pumi...
 我们没有跟随汉人的习惯，也没有跟随普米人的习惯。。。
 yongzhutser2

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) æ31 qy33 -kuɔ33 ni33 zɔ33 di33 mi31 tʰɪ33 æ31 dʒɔ33 zɔ33 xɔ33
 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

tʰɪ33 lə33 ʃe33 xæ13 zɔ33 tʰɪ33 bu33 dʒɔ33.
 this CLS meat cut PERF ADV MAN roast PROG
 这 个 肉 割 了 烧 正在
 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) lə33 la33 la33 zɔ33 ɕi13 kʰi33 lu33 ʃu31 lə33 tsʰɪ33.
 ADV MAN rock back and forth PERF lake side Luoshui ADV MAN come
 摇来摇去 了 湖边 落水 来
 They escaped to the shores of Luoshui.
 漂到水边的落水来了。
 ɕinami56

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.

(47) zɔ31 nɔ13 dian (loan) lə33 dzɔ33 ze33 dianshiji (loan) lə33
 now electricity ADV MAN EXIST CSM t.v. ADV MAN
 现在 电 有 了 电视机
 Today, we all have electricity, we all have televisions,
 Change5

dzɔ33 ze33 cheng (loan) -kuɔ33 tʰi33 tɕʰi33 ɑ33 tsɔ33 dzɔ33
 EXIST CSM city -LOC 3PL PRO FAM whatever EXIST
 有 了 成 他们 什么 有
 whatever they have in the city,

lə33 dzɔ33 ze33.
 ADV MAN EXIST CSM
 有 了
 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.

(48) tʰi33 wɔ33 ta33 dɪ33 ni33 nɔ33 lə33 xǎ13 -kuɔ33 ʂe33 wə13
 3SG PRO before one day just ADV MAN cut -LOC meat again
 他 以前 一 天 才 割 肉 又
 The part of the fish that he had sliced off the day before
 他再割掉的地方
 çinami29

lə33 wɔ13 lə33 guu13 ze33.
 ADV MAN anew ADV MAN grow CSM
 重新 长 了
 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...”

(49) wu31 dze33 tʰɿ33 xɿ33 tʰɿ33 di33 zɔ33 kʰu31 tʰɿ33 lɿ33 ma33- ku31.
 bird 3SG PRO fur ADV MAN EXIST CRS nest this CLS NEG- make
 鸟 他 毛 有 了 窝 这 个 做

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

(50) lɔ31 kʰuu33 lə33 dʒu13 zɔ33 lɿ33 ma33- yĩ33 pi33 dʒɔ33
 hand, technique ADV MAN good CRS labor NEG- make if
 手, 技术 好 了 劳 做 的话

With good technique, if one doesn't work,

技术好了，如果不劳动的话，

Tsodeluyizo40

xa33 lə33 pi33 -di33 dʒɔ33 ma33- ku13.
 food ADV MAN full -NOM EXIST NEG- FUT
 饭 饱 有

one won't eat to the point of being full.

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

(51) nɔ33 tʰa33 ə31 tʰɿ33 pə33 li33 tɕi31 ə31?
 2SG PRO book this CLS read EXPER QM
 你 书 这 本 看 过 吗

Have you read this book?

你看过这本书吗?

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.

(52) tʰi13 tʰi33 kʰuu33 -kuɔ33 dʒɔ33 s̄533 dʒi33 ts̄533 ti31 ti31 tʰi33 wu33 dʒɔ33
 so this CLS -LOC EXIST Sondzhitsontiti this CLS EXIST
 所以 这 Sondzhitsontiti 这 个
 So, Sondzhitsontiti's neck hurt,
 因为吃掉书以后, 所以 Sondzhitsontiti 他脖子疼了,
 muphadaba16

ɤa33 lu31 gɔ33 zɔ33 tʰa33 ʔ31 læ33 dʒi33 tɕi31 dʒɔ33
 neck hurt CSM book ADV MAN eat EXPER EXIST
 脖子 疼 了 书 吃 过
 having eaten the book, and his neck
 这个地方

læ33 bæ33
 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 dʒɔ33 has been grammaticalized (see pp. 33–34) to indicate progressive action.

(53) ni33 zɔ33 la33 qʰa33 yu13 tʰæ31 tʰæ13 pɔ13 tsʰi33 tʰi33 dʒi33 dʒɔ33.
 fish and lots biting take come 3SG PRO eat PROG
 鱼 和 很多 咬 拿 来 它 吃 正在
 They ate a lot of fish; they brought it out and were eating it.
 咬了很多的鱼, 拿出来正在吃。
 ɕinami22

(54) æ13 qy33 -kuɔ33 ni33 zɔ33 di33 mi31 tʰi33 æ31 dʒɔ33 zɔ33 x̄533
 cave -LOC fish one CLS ADV MAN stick EXIST little boy
 山洞 鱼 一 量词 卡住 有 小男孩
 There was a fish caught in the cave;
 有一条鱼卡在山洞里头;
 ɕinami37

tʰɿ33	lə33	ʃe33	xæ13	zɔ33	tʰɿ33	bu33	dʒɔ33.
this	CLS	meat	cut	PERF	ADV MAN	roast	PROG
这	个	肉	割	了		烧	正在

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 dɿ33 ‘one’ + V in YN Na.

(55) tʰi13 dɿ33 mɔ13 tɔ33 dʒɔ33.
so one ask PROG
所以 一 问 正在

So, he was asking about it a bit.
然后问了一下。
ɕinami38

(56) tʰɿ33 gi13 dɿ33 di13 lə33 xə33 dɿ33 tse13 lə33 tsʰɿ33.
3SG PRO after one follow ADV MAN go one go ADV MAN come
他 后面 一 赶 去 一 赶 来

所以一路追去一次赶过来。
So she followed his path and then came back.
gemu37

g. Iterative

Iterative aspect has the structure dɿ33 ‘one’ + reduplicated V in YN Na. A reduplicated verb without dɿ33 indicates mutual action (Yang, to appear)—for example, tʰæ13 means ‘bite’ while tʰæ31 tʰæ13 means ‘bite each other.’ The structure dɿ33 ‘one’ + reduplicated verb gives an iterative reading, an action that occurs again and again over a period of time.

(57) tʰi13 ni33 ku13 wu33 tɔ31 tɔ31 dɿ33 ŋu33 ŋu33 la33 dɿ33 guw13 guw13.
so two CLS mountaintop POSTP one cry and one sing
所以 两 个 山头上 上面 一 哭 和 一 唱

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。
gemu33

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 xɔ33 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 xɔ33, 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) lə33 su13 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

- (59) tʰi33 kʰuu33 lu33 pi33 dzɔ33 my33 la33 di33 lə33 tɔ31 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.

如果这块儿地耕种的话，天和地会翻转。

Tsodeluyizo26

- (60) dzi33 qy33 tʰi33 di33 lə33 tʰi33 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

- (61) tʰi13 nɔ33 ni33 dzɯ13 di33 wɔ33 zɯ31 gɔ33 tsʰi33 læ33 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

di33	t ^h a33-	xə33	pi33.
arrive	NEG-	FUT	QUOT
得到		会	

won't come.”
不要让他得到。

i. Adverbials

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

(62)

wə33	ta33	di33	ni33	di33	sə33	mu33-	dʒə33	dʒe33	mu33-	dʒə33	duə13.
before	one	day	same	NEG-	EXIST	money	NEG-	EXIST	fear		
以前	一	天	一样			有	钱		有	怕	

Before, we were afraid of having nothing, of having no money.
Change11

(63)

t ^h i33	my33	di33	-kuə31	æ31	yi33	ʃe33	na13	dʒæ33	pi13	t ^h i33	dzi31	dʒə33.
this	land		-LOC	long ago	Na	lots		ADV MAN	sit	EXIST		
这	土地			很久以前	摩梭	很多			坐	有		

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。
cinami3

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

- xī33 ‘person’ => xī33 NOM_{Agt} => xī33 NOM
- di33 ‘place’ => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}
- ki33: ki33 ‘give’ => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT
- dʒə33 EXIST/LOC => dʒə33 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)

a. xī33 ‘person’ => xī33 NOM_{Agt} => xī33 NOM

xī33 means “person/people” in YN Na. Example (64) illustrates this usage.

(64)

xī33	t ^h ɿ33	t ^h ɿ33 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

xī33 has grammaticalized from simply being a lexical item into an agentive nominalizer. Examples of xī33 as an agentive nominal marker are given in example (65) and (66). In example (65) xī33 appears following the verb lɔ33 yi33 ‘labor’ to form the agentive nominal lɔ33 yi33 xī33 ‘laborer(s).’ In example (66), xī33 appears following the verb phrases bu33 dzɛ33 ‘ride a yak’, la33 dzɛ33 ‘ride a tiger’, and zuɛ33 dzɛ33 ‘ride a horse’ to form the agentive nominals bu33 dzɛ33 xī33 ‘yak rider’, la33 dzɛ33 xī33 ‘tiger rider’, and zuɛ33 dzɛ33 xī33 ‘horse rider.’

(65)

lɔ33 yi33	-xī33
labor	-NOM _{Agt}
劳动	
laborer(s)	

Tsodeluyizo4

(66)

pɿ33	dzɛ33	-xī33,	la33	dzɛ33	-xī33,	zuɛ33	dzɛ33	-xī33,
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

xī33 has then been grammaticalized even further—xī33 NOM_{Agt} has been semantically extended beyond being an agentive nominalizer, where xī33 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.

(67) lə33 zɯu33 -xĩ33
 ADV MAN say -NOM
 说
 words
 说的
 Fangzi63

b. di33 ‘place’ => di33 NOM_{Loc} => di33 NOM_{Purp}

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

(68) nɔ13 zɔ33 lə33 zɿ33 zɔ33 di33-kuɔ33 bu33 mu33 zɔ33 gɑ33
 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 has grammaticalized from the noun ‘land, earth, place’ into a locative nominalizer, as shown in example (69).

(69) zɯ33- di33 tu33 mu33- ni31 nɔ33 wu33-di33 tu33 tʰɑ33- xɔ33 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, 高山的山地方, 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) dzi33 -di33
 eat -NOM_{Purp}
 吃
 things to eat
 吃的
 muphadaba12

c. ki33 ‘give’ => ki33 BEN => ki33 DAT

(71)	tʰɿ33	ni33	pinguo (loan)	ŋɑ33	ki33	ki33.
	3PS PRO	AGT ⁹	apple	1PS PRO		
	他		苹果	我		
	3ps gives me apples.					
	他给我苹果。					

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).

(72)	ŋɑ33	tʰɿ33	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。				

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).

(73)	dt33	ni33	sɔ33	tʂʰɔ33	dʒɔ33	æ33	pʰy33	ə33	zɿ33	-æ31	ki33	tʂʰu33	du31...
	one	day	three	meal	EXIST	ancestors				-PL	BEN	“chudu”	
	一	天	三	顿		祖先				们		“chudu”	

At each of the three meals each day, one must do a “chudu” blessing for one’s ancestors...

一天三顿饭都要给祖先和神灵作 chudu...

Fangzi24

⁹ In YN Na, usually the indirect object precedes the direct object in constructions with the verb ki33. However, when the agentive marker ni33 is employed, the word order changes so that the direct object precedes the indirect object (examples (71) and (72)).

- (74) t^hi13 t^hi33 ki33 yæ33 muu33 zɿ33 juu33 mu33 la33 di33 pi13 tɕ^hi13.
 so 3PS PRO BEN as one pleases shape and some throw
 所以 他 随便 形状 和 一些 扔掉
 So, (using flour) he made a few idols (to be used in a healing rite) as he pleased for him.
 所以用面做一些形状对他简单的做了一些法事。
 muphadaba24

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

- (75) a33 pa33 tɔ31 ki33 t^hu33.
 Apato DAT arrive
 Apato 到
 He went to Apato's place.
 到了 Apato 那里。
 Tsodeluyizo60

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. dzɔ33 EXIST/LOC => dzɔ33 PROG

dzɔ33 is the generic existential verb. When the referent is animate or high in prominence, dzɔ33 has the existential reading. When the theme is a location or lower in prominence, dzɔ33 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 Thompson 1981:360).

dzɔ33 EXIST/LOC has grammaticalized to indicate progressive aspect as in example (76):

(76) ǎ13 qy33 -kuɔ33 ni33 zɔ33 dt33 mi31 tʰ133 ǎ31 dzɔ33 zɔ33 xɔ33
 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

tʰ133	l133	ʂe33	xǎ13	zɔ33	tʰ133	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。

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) tʰǎ33 tʰ133 ni13 mɿ31 tɕɔ33 bi33 mu33- tʂʰuu33.
 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

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) pʰǎ31 tɕʰi33 mu33 zɔ33 -‘ǎ31 ɔ13 bu33 lɔ33 yi33 bi33 mu33- zɔ33.
 man young woman -PL REFL labor go NEG- use
 男 姑娘 -们 自己 劳动 去 用
 Men and women don’t need to go labor (in the fields).
 Change9

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.

(79) tʰi13 nɔ33 bu33 tʰa33 ʔ31 dʒɔ33 bɔ13 ɛ113 pɔ33 lə33 ku33 ni31
 so 2PS PRO POSS book EXIST pig skin use ADV MAN make COP
 所以 你 的 书 猪皮 用 做 是
 So he said, “Your book is made from pig skin,
 所以说, “你的书是猪皮做的,
 muphadaba14

ʃi3 -zɪ31 lə33 dʒɪ33 æ31 bi33 pi33.
 REFL -DL ADV MAN eat QM go QUOT
 自己 吃 吗 去
 why don’t we eat it up?”
 我们两个要不要把它吃掉了? ”

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

(80) lə33 sɪ13 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

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

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 ʂuæ33 st33 ʂuæ33 -xī33 da13.
 wife find want (type of tree)¹¹ 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 ʂuæ st 树。
 Tsodeluyizo49

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
 女儿 是 给 是
 They would give their daughter to him.
 女儿是会给他的。
 Tsodeluyizo146

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 nɔ33 tʰi13 zu33 mi33 ci33 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

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.

¹¹ In an interview with another daba, the daba reported that ʂuæ33 st31 in the modern language refers to a type of rhododendron or azalea. However, he was not certain whether this was what ʂuæ33 st31 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 ʂuæ33 st31 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.

- (84) t^hɿ33 k^huu33 lu33 pi33 dzɔ33 my33 lɔ33 di33 lə33 tɔ31 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.
 如果这块儿地耕种的话，天和地会翻转。
 Tsodeluyizo26

g. ku13 AUX (ability) => 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) t^hɿ33 ni13 zɔ33 ɛɿ33 gu33 ʃi3 sə33 ku31 ɛ31 ki31 zɔ33 pa33
 this way PERF shuttle for weaving hemp cloth 1PL PRO isn't that right shuttle
 这样 了 织麻布的槽 咱们 是不是 槽
 This way, don't we have a kind of shuttle for weaving hemp cloth,
 我们有一个织麻布的槽, 是不是,
 Tsodeluyizo238

- dt33 lɿ33 dzɔ33 ku13 t^hɿ33 ni13 dt31 st33 ki33 t^hɿ33 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,
 t^hæ33 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.

- (86) dzi33 qy33 tʰ133 di33 li33 tʰ133 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

h. xə33 AUX (movement to a location) => xə33 FUT (remote)

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

- (87) tʰ133 ɲi33 ni31 bə13 lu13 la33 tʰ133 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。
 ɕinami14

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.

- (88) tʰi13 nə33 ni33 dʒu13 di33 wə33 zɿ31 gə33 tsʰ133 læ33 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

- di33 tʰa33- xə33 pi33.
 arrive NEG- FUT QUOT
 得到 会
 won’t come.”
 不要让他得到。

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 ts_{13} . 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.’ ts_{13} 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 ts_{13} 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) ci_{13} $t^h\ae_{33}\text{-ku}_{\circ 33}$ $dz_{\circ 33}$ $k^h\circ_{33}$ $p^h\gamma_{33}$ dt_{33} $p^h\ae_{13}$ dt_{33} tu_{13} $dz_{\circ 33}$
lake under -LOC EXIST grassland one CLS all EXIST
海 下面里 有 草坪, 荒地 一 片 全部 有
It is said that underneath where the lake now is it that everything was
现在海地下的地方, 听说全部是
 $cinami_2$

my33	di33	ni31	tsɿ13.
land		COP	REP
土地		是	

a field of grass, earth.
一片草坪，土地。

- (90) xī33 wu33 -kuo33 na13 wu33 -kuo33 xī33 yæ33 zuæ13
village -LOC Na village -LOC wealthy person very
村镇 摩梭 村镇 富裕人 很

It is said that in a village, a Na village,
听说村镇里，摩梭村里，
ɕinami5

dt33	zɿ33	dzo33	tsɿ13.
one	family	EXIST	REP
一	家	有	

there was a very well-to-do family.
有一家很富裕的人。

- (91) dzi33 qy33 tʰɿ33 dt33 lt33 tʰi33 di33 ku13 tsɿ13.
spring this one CLS ADV MAN EXIST can REP
泉水洞 这 一 量词 有 会

It is said that there would be a spring there.
听说会有一个泉水站在（那里）。
Tsodeluyizo107

An interaction between the evidential tsɿ13 and the interjection mæ33 is noted: when tsɿ13 is followed by the interjection mæ33, one gets a strong reading of certitude. This can be seen in example (92).

- (92) gu33 ni33 gu33 xa33 pi33 gi33 dzo33 la33 tʰɿ33 dzo33
nine day nine night snow fall PROG tiger 3SG PRO EXIST
九 天 九 夜 雪 下 正在 老虎 它

When it is snowing for nine days and nine nights,
雪下了九天九夜的时候，
Tsodeluyizo168

la33	qy33	-kuo33	tʰɿ33	kt31	ku13	tsɿ13	mæ33.
tiger den		-LOC	ADV MAN	hide	FUT	REP	INTERJ
老虎洞			副词	藏			语气词

it is said that the tiger will hide in its den.
听说老虎会藏在老虎的洞里边。

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 sɪ33 pi33 dɪ33 wɔ33 dzɔ33 ku13 kuæ31.
 (type of tree) call one type EXIST FUT INTERJ
 (树的种类) 叫 一 种 有 语气词
 会有一种叫 mɔ sɪ 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 dɪ33 wɔ33 dzɔ33 tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə pi33.
 bird one type EXIST tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə QUOT
 鸟 一种 有 tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə
 There was a type of bird that says, “cheeper cheeper cheeper cheeper.”
 有一种鸟说, “tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə tɕʰi pʰuə”。
 Tsodeluyizo81

- (95) gu33 kʰu13 ku33 mu33- ni31 lə33 ba33 tʰa33- xɿ33 pi33.
 nine year EXIST NEG- COP ADV MAN open NEG- go.IMP QUOT
 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) nɔ13 zɔ33 lə33 zɪ33 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- yɿ33 pi33.
 court okay NEG- can QUOT
 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) t^hɿ33 k^huu33 dzɔ33 lu33 ma33- xī33 pi33 tsɿ13.
 this CLS EXIST till NEG- okay QUOT REP
 这 量词 耕 行
- It is said they said this strip of land was untillable.
 听说这块儿土是不能耕种的。
 Tsodeluyizo17

5.4 Inference

The evidential to indicate inference in YN Na is p^hæ33 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) t^huæ33 t^huæ33 dzɔ33 dzæ13 t^hɿ33 yī33 mu33- ku13 p^hæ33 di33.
 fast fast EXIST often this make NEG- can INFR
 快 快 有 经常 这 做 会
- 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.¹² 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.

(99) na13 bu33... na13 bu33 zɿ33 tu33 -kuə33 dt31 ta13 tɔ31 tsa33
 Na POSS Na POSS family -LOC all COMP important, busy
 Na 的 Na 的 家庭 都 比较 重要, 忙

In Na families, more important than anything
 在纳的家庭里比全部最重要的是

Fangzi1

'a31 dʒə33	zɿ33 mi33	tʰɿ33	lt33	ni31.
CMKN	hearth room	this	CLS	COP
	祖屋	这	个	是

is the hearth room.

这个祖屋。

(100) yi ban (loan) gu33 zɿ33 mi33 tʰɿ33 lt33 tsʰɿ13 'æ31 dʒə33
 usually this hearth room this CLS build CMKN
 一般 这 祖屋 这 个 修

Usually, when building the hearth room,
 一般修这个祖屋的时候, 祖屋的木头圈,

Fangzi6

dt33	kuu33	zɿ33 mi33	bu33	sɿ33	kuu33	baixing (loan)	tsʰe33	gu33
one	CLS	hearth room	POSS	wood	CLS	the people	ten	nine
一		祖屋	的	木头	圈	老百姓	十	九

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

老百姓是十九圈,

kuu33	sɿ33	pʰi33	-æ31	ni33	tsʰe33	dt33	kuu33	kuə33	lɔ33	tɔ31 mi13
CLS	king	-PL	two	ten	one	CLS	inside			pillar
圈	国王	们	二	十	一	圈	里边			柱头

while the king and nobles use twenty-one logs;

国王和贵族是二十一圈;

dt33	dzi33	tɔ31 mi13	tʰɿ33	dzi33	dʒə33	sɿ33	dzi33	dt33	dzi33	da13
one	CLS	pillar	this	CLS	EXIST	tree	one	CLS		cut down
一	对	柱头	这	对		树	一	棵		

inside the hearth room, a pair of pillars are made from the wood of one tree that has been cut down
 祖屋里边的柱头是树木一棵

le33	po31	yo33	ni33	tæ13	le33	pu33 pu33	to31 mi13
ADV MAN	take	come	two	section	ADV MAN	divide	pillar
	拿	来	两	段		分成	柱头

and taken and divided into two sections,
拿回来的，把它分成两段

dt33	dzu33	yī33.
one	CLS	make
一	对	做

to make a pair of pillars.
做两个木柱的。

(101)	tʰi13	tʂʰa33	si33	pa13	pa13	æ13	la33	gi31	gə31	te33	‘æ31 dzo33	so33
	so	every	morning		very	early		get	up		CMKN	incense
	所以	每一	天早上		很	早		起	床			香

Very early every morning when one gets up,
所以每一天早上很早的时候起床的时候
Fangzi60

qæ13	so33	tʰa33	-kuo33	so33	tʰa33	-kuo33	so33	si31	læ33	qæ13.
burn	chorten		-LOC	chorten		-LOC	incense	first	ADV MAN	burn
烧	香炉			香炉			香	首先		烧

one first burns incense in the chorten.
首先在香炉里烧香。

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 sandhi—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.

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