

Temporal Categories in Yaminawa (Pano, Peru)

Kelsey Neely

University of California, Berkeley

kelsey.neely@berkeley.edu

Amazonicas VII – Baños, Ecuador – 29 May 2018

1 Overview¹

- Yaminawa has an elaborate set of morphological resources for expressing temporal categories including aspect, temporal remoteness, time of day, and relative temporal sequence.
- Panoan languages are typologically noteworthy for the high number of temporal remoteness distinctions that they make.
- This talk provides a broad overview of these morphemes, and a closer look at how they are employed in discourse.
- The question that draws this talk together: does Yaminawa have tense?

2 About Yaminawa

- Yaminawa (ISO 639-3: yaa) is a Panoan language spoken in southeastern Peru and surrounding areas of Brazil and Bolivia.
- Yaminawa appears to form part of a large dialect complex that also includes Yawanawá, Sharanahua, and Nahua (Yora).
- The data in this talk comes from original fieldwork on the southernmost varieties: Yaminawa of río Sepahua and Nahua.
- Speakers under age 50 (35 for the Nahua) are often unfamiliar with the less-frequent temporal morphemes due to language shift.

2.1 Realization of temporal categories

- All morphological temporal categories in Yaminawa are expressed as verbal affixes or enclitics.
- These categories occupy at least five distinct slots in the verbal template, as in table 1

Table 1. The Yaminawa verb template

-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
REDUP	part prefix	root	VBLZ	lex. class deriv.	affect	NMLZ	dir. / assoc. motion	circadian	DIM & INTENS
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
NEG. NFIN	modal	FUT. IPFV	PL. IPFV	T/A	PL	NEG	Switch-reference & sequence	interrogative, evidential, etc.	

2.2 Types of temporal categories expressed in Yaminawa

- Tense: graded, typologically notable for number of contrasts
- Aspect: verbal suffixes, reduplication
- Sequence: simultaneous vs. consecutive in the switch reference system, other clausal enclitics
- Circadian: describes the time of day of an event (night/day/morning)

3 Tense

- Relates topic time to utterance time (Klein 1994)
- Incompatible with imperfective, perfective, and habitual/perfect aspect markers in Yaminawa because occupy the same slot
- High number of graded distinctions, in table 2

Table 2. The graded tenses in Yaminawa

Past		Future	
-wa	last night	-waidaka	tomorrow, a few days from now
-waiyabea	yesterday		
-ita	days/weeks ago	-nūpukui	weeks/months from now
-yabea	weeks/months ago		
-ti	more than 6-9 months ago	-daka	Indeterminate, years from now
-di	more than 1-2 years ago		

¹ I am grateful to my Yaminawa and Nahua consultants for sharing their languages with me and for their intellectual contributions to this work. I am particularly

indebted to José Manuel Ramírez, Rosa Gómez, Rebeca Seido, and Delicia Gómez for their insights on this topic. All errors are my own.

- Used in Yaminawa to establish what the topic time is relative to the utterance time at an early point in the discourse, then aspect is used.

(1)a. Iskadikia.
 iska **-di** =kia
 be.like.this -PST.6 =EVID.REP
 'Así dice ha dicho (hace muchos años).'

b. Dii kai.
 dii ka **-i**
 forest go -IPFV
 '(He) was going to the forest.'

c. Dukuwede dii kaa.
 dukuwede dii ka **-a**
 man forest go -PRF
 'The man went to the forest.'
 (TN.MLGA.Shidipawāwē kashta ñüşhīwu widi.lines 1-3)

- When tense is not clearly established, default interpretation is past for perfective and habitual aspect and non-past for the imperfective

(2)a. Ĕ kai.
 Ĕ ka -i
 1SG.NOM go -IPFV
 'I am going' or 'I will go (soon, later today)'

b. Ĕ kaa.
 Ĕ ka -a
 1SG.NOM go -PRF
 'I went (earlier today)'

- A fun example of tense in interaction:

(3) **Context:** José is recounting a long and unpleasant trip he made to the city. He is unsure of when he left his hometown. Juan helps him try to figure out the timing based on José's sister's trip. (José left on Oct. 8 and returned a few days prior to the recording date Nov. 8.)

a. José: tii, awetiara Ĕ kayabea?
 tii awetia -ra Ĕ ka **-yabea**
 EXCL when -DUB 1SG.NOM go -PST.4
 'Ay, when did I go (weeks to months ago)?'

[...]

b. Juan: más de veinte días wiinũ porque el dieciocho chipi kaitanũ
 más de veinte días wi -i =nũ
 over twenty days take -IPFV =affirm
 porque el dieciocho chipi ka **-ita** =nũ
 because the 18th sister go -PST.3 =affirm
 'It has been over 20 days because your sister went (days/weeks ago) on the 18th.'

c. José: ia
 'Okay.'

d. Juan: dieciocho kaita, ya tiene más de veinte días
 dieciocho ka **-ita** ya tiene más de veinte días
 eighteenth go -PST.3 it's already been over 20 days
 'She left on the 18th; it's already been over 20 days.'

e. José: Ĕtsikai awetia kati?
 Ĕ -tsi =kai awetia ka **-ti**
 1SG.NOM -INTERR =contrast when go -PST.5
 'But when did I go (many months ago)?'
 (Conv.JMRS+JnGR.0541) (transcript edited for clarity/brevity)

- In some Panoan languages, graded tense markers may or must co-occur with non-graded tense marking (see Fleck 2001, 2007 on Matsés, and Tallman and Stout 2016 on Chácobo). **This is unattested in Yaminawa.**

3.1 Future tense and degree of certainty

- The precise semantics of the future tenses in Yaminawa have been elusive. In addition to temporal distance, they also have modal meanings, mostly relating to certainty
- In addition to the tenses in table 2, there are other suffixes with future-related semantics:
 - Imperfective aspect *-i*
 - Optative/hortative *-nũ* (used with 1sg to indicate intent)
 - Purposive (fut.) + imperfective *-xi-i*
- In particular, these morphemes are used to express future events that are expected to occur the same day (but possibly later).

- In texts and conversation, the ‘tomorrow’ future tense *-waidaka* often has high certainty, and is often used to make or communicate plans
- (4)a. Context: the speaker has just been asked when his son-in-law will be traveling.
- Mañana bajawaidaka*
 mañana baja **-waidaka**
 tomorrow go.downriver -FUT.1
 ‘He will go downriver tomorrow.’ (Conv.PGF+MRR+AT.0518)
- b. Context: the speaker is concerned for her grandchild and is telling her neighbors that she is going to take her to the health post.
- Nāskara iyushtawaidaka*
 nāskara iyu -shta **-waidaka**
 just.like.that take.person -DIM -FUT.1
 ‘Just like that, (I’m) taking her tomorrow.’
 (Conv.MML.LAW.MMS.0538)
- waidaka* can be used ironically to talk about events that are quite unlikely to occur, to humorous effect.
- (5) Context: closing the topic of a bad omen that was heard the previous night, the speaker is making a dark joke about mortality; she is very young and healthy.
- a. *mē iwaidakakūiki*
 mā ē i **-waidaka** -kūī =ki
 already 1SG.NOM do.ITR -FUT.1 -INTENS =EMPH
 ‘I could die any time.’ (“cualquier rato voy a morir”)
- b. *mā ānā café ayawaidakaki*
 mā ānā café aya **-waidaka** =ki
 2SG.NOM again coffee drink -FUT.1 =EMPH
 ‘Tomorrow you will be drinking coffee again.’ (at her wake)
 (Conv.MMS.MML.LAW.0538)
- In text work, speakers translate *-nūpukui* (intermediate future) as being weeks or months in the future and *-daka* (remote future) as being years in the future. *-nūpukui* is very infrequent – just a handful of non-repeated tokens in my corpus.

- nūpukui* appears to involve at least some degree of uncertainty:
- (6) Context: the speaker is quoting speech that was spoken to an ex-wife upon her husband leaving due to her affair with her brother-in-law
- a. *ē awara wixūnūpukuiba*
 ē awara wi -xud **-nūpukui** -ba
 1SG.NOM anything buy -BEN -FUT.2 -NEG
 ‘I won’t buy him (the love child) anything.’
- b. *aka, nā mī wakapā awara wixūnūpukui*
 aka da -N mī wakapa -N awara
 so DEM -same 2SG.POS brother.in.law -ERG something
 wi -xud **-nūpukui**
 buy -BEN-FUT.2
 ‘So this very brother-in-law of yours will buy him something.’
 (CN.PGF.0586)
- In just one instance have I found *-nūpukui* and *-daka* in proximity:
- (7) Context: quoted speech of the speaker’s late father-in-law, who was angry about family members who did not share meat.
- a. *ē daxū, a nē yawawu iyunūpukui*
 ē da =xū a n- ē yawa -wu
 1SG.NOM die =SS.PE 3SG EMPH- 1SG.NOM peccary -PL
 iyu **-nūpukui**
 take.with -FUT.2
 ‘When I die, I will take all the peccary with me.’
- b. *ē yawa wepuwāinūpukui*
 ē yawa wepu -waid **-nūpukui**
 1SG.NOM peccary cover -AM:go.doing -FUT.2
 ‘I will leave all the peccary hidden.’
- c. *mā ānā yawa pidakaba*
 mā ānā yawa pi **-daka** -ba
 2PL.NOM again peccary eat -FUT.3 -NEG
 ‘You will not eat peccary (ever again).’ (CN.JMRS.0298)
- This example makes it clear that *-daka* concerns a future that extends farther from the utterance time than *-nūpukui*

- Whether *-daka* involves a greater, lesser, or equal degree of certainty as *-nūpukui* will require further work.

3.2 Tense vs “temporal remoteness markers”

- Other Panoan languages make a high number of contrasts, but are these suffixes actually tense in the Kleinian sense?
- For Chácobo, Tallman and Stout (2016) argue they’re not, because in “switch contexts” (where tense changes in narration), the second use doesn’t relate topic time to utterance time, rather topic time to eventuality time.
- In Yaminawa, I have so far found just three examples of this (from a single speaker, out of over 6000 lines of past tense narratives).

- (8) Context: from a text set in the remote past (*-di*), in this case the mythological past.

Nã pia wuita, ãnã weiba, mã atu ãnãita

da -N pia wu -ita ãnã we -i -ba
DEM -same arrow take -PST.3 again bring -IPFV -NEG

mã atu ãnã -ita
already 3PL.ABS give -PST.3

‘The arrows that he had taken (days prior), he wasn’t carrying them, he had given them away (days prior) to them (his grandchildren).’
(TN.MML.Ruawu Dawawu.line 193)

- Most examples that superficially appeared to be switch contexts were actually reported speech.
- Switch contexts appear to be avoided by Yaminawa speakers. If we take the three instances as evidence that the “tense” markers don’t relate topic time to utterance time, rather topic time to eventuality time, this would mean Yaminawa is a tenseless language.

4 Aspect

- Relates eventuality time to topic time (Klein 1994)
- Two primary aspects:
 - Perfective *-a*
 - Imperfective *-i*

- Others:
 - Perfect/Habitual nominalizer *-bis*
 - Iterative/frequentative reduplication
 - Habitual/frequentative *-tai*
 - Iterative *-ria*
 - Continuous *-wawãĩ*

- Out of these, only the perfective, imperfective, or habitual can form a finite verb alone – the others require an additional T/A/M suffix.

- (9)a. *Nãtixũ nũ dikabis*

da -N -ti =xũ nũ dika -bis
DEM-same-all=LOC.COMP.TR 1PL.NOM hear-HABIT
‘Up to this very point is all we have heard.’

- b. *Ea ãnũ wãrã pãwãpãwãdi*

ea adu -N wãrã
1SG.ACC paca -ERG squash
pãwã- pi -ã -wad -i
REDUP.FREQ- eat -MAL -AM:COME.and.do -IPFV
‘A paca repeatedly comes to eat my squash.’

- c. *awe iriai*

a -we i -ria -i
3SG -comit do.ITR -always -IPFV
‘He did it (had sex) with her constantly.’

- d. *ẽ ayawawãĩdi*

ẽ aya -wawãĩd -i
1SG.NOM drink -CONT -IPFV
‘I will drink it continuously / throughout the day.’

- A small number of affixes combine tense/temporal distance and aspect, such as remote past imperfective: *-paudi*

5 Temporal relations in the switch reference system

- The switch reference system in Yaminawa marks whether a subordinate clause has the same or different subject distinction as a following clause, as well as whether the event was prior or simultaneous.

- It is ungrammatical to mark SR clauses for tense. They are temporally and syntactically dependent on the main clause.
- Same subject (simultaneous and prior event) SR clauses may have any of the non-finite aspectual morphology, but not the perfective or imperfective.
- Different subject (prior event) SR clauses may take the perfective, with the interpretation of being prior to the main clause (10a), but SR clauses take a different form of the imperfective (-ai) when they are interpreted as having temporal overlap with the main clause (10b).

(10)a. *Pĩã akadu, adu pakedi*

pia -N ak -a =du adu pake -di
 arrow -INSTR do.TR -PRF =DS.PE paca fall -PST.6
 'He (the man) shot it with the arrow, and (then) the paca fell.'
 (TN.MML.Adu ñũshĩwu.line 16)

Peda uaidu, buidikia

peda u -ai =du bui -di =kia
 day come -IPFV =DS.PE wake -PST.6 =EVID.REP
 'As the sun was coming up, he woke up, they say.'
 (TN.MML.Chai Kushi Wewadi.line 53)

- There is at least one clausal enclitic that encodes a temporal relationship between clauses, but not information about argument tracking
 - Immediately prior event =tã

(11) *wĩĩ utatã, pia wiakewũwãtã, pĩã akadu, adu pakedi.*

wĩĩ uta =tã pia wi -ake -wũwã =tã
 latex light=ipe arrow grab-circ -am:lateral=ipe
 pia -N ak -a =du adu pake -di
 arrow -INSTR do.TR -PRF =DS.PE paca fall -PST.6
 'He (the man) lit the rubber torch, grabbed his arrow from his side, and shot it with the arrow, and (then) the paca fell.'
 (TN.MML.Adu ñũshĩwu.line 16 – full version of 10a)

5 Circadian indicators

- Describe the time of day that an event took/takes place
- At least three identified so far:
 - At night: -shid ~ -shĩ
 - During the day: -waid ~ -wãĩ
 - In the early morning: -(y)uku

(11)a. *nũ budushĩpaudi.*

nũ budu -shid -paudi
 1PL.NOM dance -at.night-PST.6.IPV
 'We used to dance at night/all night' (E.LAW.0352)

b. *nũ budushidita*

nũ budu -shid -ita
 1PL.NOM dance -at.night-PST.3
 'We danced at night/all night (last week, sábadó, etc.)'
 (E.LAW.0352)

- These suffixes are compatible with the aspect markers (12a), also in SR clauses (12b).

(12)a. *"Eee!" da yabe ishĩkadi.*

Eee da yabe i -shid -kad -i
 (grito) DEM night do.ITR -all.night -PL.IPFV -IPFV
 'They were yelling "eee!" all night long that night.'
 (TN.MML.Xeki ñũshĩwu.line 15)

b. *atu kexewãĩaidu wari ñãtãpakeikia.*

Atu kexe -wãĩ -ai =du
 3SG.ABS watch -all.day -IPFV =DS.PE
 wari ñãtã -pake -i =kia
 sun atardecer -DIR:down -IPFV =EVID.REP
 'He watched them all day, and it was getting late, they say.'
 (TN.MML.Adu ñũshĩwu.line 85)

- The circadian indicators have an adverbial-like function that describes time of day; they do not help the listener identify the particular point in time that an event took/takes place.

6 Conclusion

- Yaminawa has a lot of temporal categories that are expressed morphologically.
- So far, there is no conclusive evidence that Yaminawa does not have tense. My inclination is that the graded temporal markers **are** tense.
- Targeted elicitation on presuppositional values of the graded tenses and the acceptability of “switch contexts” is necessary to conclusive answer whether or not Yaminawa is actually tenseless.
- In the current corpus, past tense narratives and conversation about past events dominates; the future is not well studied (though I would hesitate to say that it is not well represented)

References

- Fleck, D. W. (2007). Evidentiality and Double Tense in Matsigenka. *Language*, 83(3), 589–614.
- Fleck, D.W. (2001). *A Grammar of Matsigenka*. PhD Thesis, Rice University.
- Klein, W. (1994). *Time in Language*. London: Routledge.
- Tallman, A., and Tammi Stout (2016). “Tense and temporal remoteness in Chacobo (Pano)”. In M. Keough, N. Weber, A. Angheliescu, S. Chen, E. Guntly, K. Johnson, D. Reisinger, and O. Tkachman (eds.) *Proceedings of the Workshop on Structure and Constituency in the Languages of the Americas 21*, University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics 46, p.210-224