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Definiteness, Topicalisation and Theme: Muyang Narrative Discourse Markers

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1. Introduction¹

We are the knights who say 'Ni!'

- Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1974)

The Muyang² are the people who say *ni*, and say it frequently. They see themselves, however, as the people who say *nahəma*, which is certainly prominent in Muyang speech, but the particle *ni* is far more frequent, and indeed present in virtually every utterance. *Ni* is a marker of definiteness, and alternates with the more intense marker *nakəŋ*, and *nahəma* is a marker of topicalisation, and alternates with the less intense marker *ti*. This study will describe the role of these two pairs of particles in the structure of Muyang at discourse and sub-discourse levels.

1.1 Definiteness, topicalisation and theme: general definitions

Definite referents are those identifiable by the interlocutor(s) - cf. Chafe (1976:39), either because they have already been mentioned, or because all parties are aware of their relevance to the current proposition. In Muyang the definite marker is prominent, as might be expected, in the discourse reference system and has other functions related to its origin as a deictic particle. In instances where its use may seem to be optional, the presence or absence of the definite marker reveals that it also has thematic overtones.

Topicalisation is the marking of an element as the background to something that follows and which the speaker wishes by this process to highlight. *Topicalised constituents*³, like definite ones, are usually known or inferable by the interlocutor(s) and are thus normally definite (cf. Andrews (1985:78)) and may in Muyang be independently marked as such. But instead of being identified locally or thematically they act as a frame (Chafe (1976:50)) or point of departure (Levinsohn (1994:7)) for the further item of information which is the point of the communication and which is consequently thematically important. In other words topicalisation is the process of marking the an element as a 'topic' on which a 'comment' is to be expected: it is however the 'comment', not the 'topic', that is in 'focus'.

Topicalisation is, however, bidirectional (Levinsohn (1994:7)). The mere presence of a topic marker (which in Muyang normally occurs clause-finally and topicalises the entire clause, not merely the immediately preceding noun phrase) alerts the hearer to the fact that what he is about to hear is the point of the communication, and at the same time anchors that new information in relationship to what has just been heard. The topicalised element may, though, have its own prominence: this is especially the case where it is a noun phrase rather than the normal clause. In such cases the reference may be contrastive, switching to another participant. The normal use with clauses is resumptive, renewing the background setting for the focussed phrase - typically in the common tail-head construction where a clause is repeated and topicalised, slowing down the narrative and providing a firm launching point for the new information.

¹ Abbreviations used in the glosses:

| | | | | | |
|------|---|------------------------|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| AS | - | associative marker | POT | - | potential marker |
| COND | - | conditional marker | REC | - | reciprocal marker |
| COMP | - | complementiser | REFL | - | reflexive marker |
| CONT | - | continuation marker | REFMK | - | thematic reference marker |
| DEF | - | definite marker | REL | - | relative marker |
| IO | - | indirect object marker | SEP | - | separation marker |
| NEG | - | negative | TOP | - | topicalisation marker |
| PF | - | perfect tense | TOPIC | - | emphatic topicalisation marker |
| PFVE | - | perfective aspect | | | |

² Muyang is a central Chadic language spoken primarily in the arrondissement of Tokombéré in the Far North Province of Cameroon. It is classified by the Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun as Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, Centre-West, Wandala-Mafa, Mafa, South, with the code number 152 - Dieu & Renaud (1983: 357), and by the Ethnologue as Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, Biu-Mandara, A, A5 - Grimes (2000: 48).

In Muyang orthography the coronal consonants *s* [s], *z*, [z] *c* [ts], *j* [dz] and *ɲ* [ndz] represent their palatal allophones [ʃ], [ʒ], [tʃ], [dʒ] and [ndʒ] in the presence of the front vowels *e*, *i* and *ɛ* [y]. The digraphs *sl* and *zl* are used for [ʃ] and [ʒ] respectively.

³ Topicalised constituents are so called to distinguish them from 'topics' (Levinsohn (1994:6), cf. Andrews (1985:77f.)), which are further distinct from subjects, all of which (according to Li & Thompson (1976:461)) are normally obligatorily definite. Unlike a 'topic', which is normally a noun phrase (Andrews loc. cit.), a topicalised constituent can be anything, and in Muyang it is normally a clause.

Theme, as used here, refers to what is prominent in the mind of the speaker (represented by a word, clause or episode) at a specific point within the discourse as a whole, regardless or largely regardless of local syntactic considerations. Otherwise stated, it is what the speaker is talking about.

The interplay of thematic considerations with definiteness and topicalisation is not straightforward, as theme is a matter of the changeable will of the speaker and not of grammar, but some things can be clearly seen in the surface structure of the language. Particularly, the thematically strong forms of both definite and topicalisation markers (respectively *nakəŋ* and *nahəmə*) are apparent, and at a weaker level the mere presence or absence of the basic markers (respectively *ni* and *ti*) may be significant. Such thematic considerations, although manifested in the marking of specific clauses and noun phrases, apply rather to the episode or event in the narrative as a whole.

1.2 Muyang - overview and example of typical usage

The distinctions between the normal particles of definiteness and of topicalisation in Muyang are as follows:

| | <u>DEFINITENESS</u> | <u>TOPICALISATION</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Normal particle | <i>ni</i> (perfective form <i>na</i>) | <i>ti</i> |
| Item typically marked | Noun phrase | Clause or idea |
| Function | Reference or theme | Point of departure, clause subordination |
| Predictability | Normally obligatory ⁴ | Normally narrator-dependent |
| Intense form (narrator-dependent) | <i>nakəŋ</i> | <i>nahəmə</i> |

These particles normally follow the item qualified, occurring phrase- and clause-finally.

Topicalisation and the interplay of theme: in the opening of the folk story below, the first clause is marked by the intense topicaliser *nahəmə*, to throw attention forcibly onto the main event that follows and backgrounding the colourless standard opening phrase. This event is therefore thematically prominent at a high level. In the second sentence, the normal topic marker *ti* marks the known information that the fly is off to get a wife, which is repeated in a classic tail-head linkage with the function of slowing down the narrative, thereby again emphasising what follows (Levinsohn (1994:7) as the context for the scene which launches the story – the meeting with stork and his wife. The topicalised-phrase plus comment phrase unit functions in this example like a unit with a temporal or circumstantial clause plus a main clause, and in fact in Muyang topicalisation is the normal way of expressing logical relationships (temporal, conditional or otherwise, according to context) between grammatically coordinate clauses. The fact that they are cultivating their field is an incidental detail, a wind-down and not the climax of the sentence, hence the main clause is not topicalised, nor, of course, is the final one.

| | |
|---|--|
| A vad nahəŋ abu nahəmə, at day other 3s-be TOPIC | <i>The other day, now,</i> |
| ezəwi əhəraya akoro ka wal gayəŋ a Maloko. fly 3s-go-out 3s-go for wife AS-3s at Moloko | <i>fly went off to get a wife at Moloko.</i> |
| Naŋ abu akoro ka wal gayəŋ a Maloko ti, 3s 3s-be 3s-go for wife AS-3s at Moloko TOP | <i>So as he was going to get a wife at Moloko</i> |
| ərə ədi ahər ana ata zilim nday ata wal gani: 3s-come 3s-put-IO head to with stork 3p with wife AS-DEF | <i>he met stork and his wife,</i> |
| təwəs vədəŋ gatay. 3p-cultivate field AS-3p | <i>who were cultivating their field.</i> (Zil 002-6) ⁵ |

Thus in this opening we see the higher level topicalisation marking the launching of the story, and within that a lower level topicalisation which serves to continue the forward thrust of the narrative. Each of these has thematic overtones in the selection of material on which the speaker wishes his hearers to concentrate.

Definiteness and the interplay of theme: in the next clause from the same story, the field recurs in another tail-head linkage. In the preceding clause it was related to the main characters by a possessive construction, but now this is augmented by the definite marker *ni*, the field being already known. In the case of a non-unique item this usage is normal, but it is possible in certain circumstances for the possessor *gatay* to suffice in marking even a known object, without the addition of *ni*. Thus the inclusion of *ni* here shows that the field has at least some thematic importance in

⁴ The terms 'obligatory' and 'narrator-dependent' here distinguish what is normally required for good Muyang syntax (obligatory) from what gives good Muyang narrative diction (narrator-dependent).

⁵ For an explanation of the text reference system, see the Appendix.

this stage of the narrative, or rather that the episode in which it occurs is important, the field being in effect the only element available for marking with *ni* in this clause.

Eslini təbu təwəs vədəŋ gatay ni... So there they were cultivating their field... (Zil 007)
 There 3p-be 3p-cultivate field AS-3p DEF

Fly greets the pair, gets no reply, insults stork, and leaves. Stork's field now is marked only with the possessor without *ni*, probably an indication of the lower thematic importance in this explanatory aside, but it is also now *his* field, a subset and not identical to the original *their* field(s); potentially, therefore, a new item where *ni* would not be required. Stork, a unique character, needs no marking when he is mentioned using a noun. Fly in this continuous narrative is identifiable merely by the singular pronoun and the context. The fiancée, however, although of minimal thematic importance in her own right, is non-unique and is marked on her repetition after a significant interval by *gayaŋ* followed by *ni*, which shows at least that we have heard of her before, and that she is not another woman. Again, the possessor *gayaŋ* alone might be functionally sufficient, with the *ni* doing double duty as a mark of her identity and of the relative thematic prominence of the event in question.

| | |
|---|--|
| Eslini zilim èci ndo, there stork 3s-hear-PF NEF-PFVE | But stork didn't hear him, |
| naŋ abu awəsoɾo vədəŋ gayaŋ: 3s 3s-be 3s-cultivate-CONT field AS-3s | he was too busy cultivating his field: |
| wal ge zilim ècia. wife AS stork 3s-hear-PFVE | his wife heard, though. |
| Eslini àra àhəraya zla there 3s-come-PF 3s-go-put-PF then | So then [fly] |
| àdoro ka wal gayaŋ ni a Moloko... 3s-go-CONT-PF on wife AS-3s DEF at Moloko | went on his way to his fiancée at Moloko... (Zil 014-7) |

A little later in this story, fly leaves his destination and returns. As a unique character, even when known, he would not be marked by *ni*, but as a thematically important character at a significant turning point in the story he is legitimately marked by *nakəŋ*. More significantly, the fiancée who is totally incidental to the story and never occurs again, but who would normally be marked by *ni* as a known non-unique character, is also marked instead with *nakəŋ* as a tribute to the thematic importance of the subsequent event as a whole. Meanwhile the plural verb sufficiently maintains the stork and his wife, but their field, not now marked with a possessor, has an obligatory *ni* (with a perfective affix from the grammatical context) to mark it as known.

| | |
|--|--|
| Ezuwi nakəŋ àmətəbiya, fly REFMK 3s-tire-into-PFVE | Fly got tired |
| ka mələŋ ga migifiŋ kà wal nakəŋ a, on place AS NOM-become-close by woman REFMK PFVE | of his courting there, |
| naŋ abu ara. 3s 3s-be 3s-come | and set on his way back. |
| Ènjia ka mələŋ ga ya ti təwəs vədəŋ na... 3s-arrive-PFVE on place AS REL TOP 3p-cultivate field DEF-PFVE | He got to the place where they were cultivating the field... (Zil 043-6) |

In these selections we see a use of the definite marker *ni* which is within broad limits predictable within the participant reference system, but which, as with the much clearer use of *nakəŋ*, also modifies the thematic prominence of the clauses in which it occurs.

1.3 Topicalisation and focus – central Chadic comparisons

Central Chadic languages place a heavy functional load on topicalisation, and in this respect Muyang is no exception. Typically the marker used is *na*, for example in Mofu-Gudur - Hollingsworth & Peck (1992) and in Lamang - Wolff (1983:258),⁶ but it may have other forms, such as *ka* in Zulgo - Haller & Watters (1984) and *di* (the closest form to the Muyang *ti*) in Ouldeme - Kinnaird (1999). All these markers follow the topicalised constituent and mark it as a point of departure, and many of the contexts that will be described for Muyang are mirrored in these and other languages. (In spite of its superficial similarity to the prevailing central Chadic *na*, the Muyang marker *ni*, together with its perfective form *na*, have a totally different function).

⁶ Other languages which use *na* as a marker are Hdi - Frajzngier (2000: 388ff.), Moloko, and Mbuko - Gravina (2002). Cf. Kinnaird (1999:11).

It appears, however, that in some of these languages the topicalisation marker may interrupt normal word order at one of many potential points within a clause, to throw the highlighting onto what follows.⁷ Such a clause-medial construction scarcely occurs in Muyang: this is consistent with the normal functioning of *ti* at clause level. Where it does seem to occur, *ti* follows a verb and can be read as a quasi-complementiser (see section 3.2.4 below) presenting a separate existential clause.

Àmənjàki ti humbo ni kwayaya ka pakama. He noticed (that there was) flour all over his face.
 3s-see-on TOP flour DEF all-over on face (What) he noticed (was) ...⁸ (FH 023)

Languages of this group commonly left-shift an element from a sentence and topicalise it, followed by the rest of the clause (using the topicalised element as a point of departure for what follows), and this construction is commonly translated "as for...": see examples in e.g. Wolff (1983:259), Hollingsworth & Peck (1992:110), Haller & Watters (1984).⁹ Muyang topicalises certain brief sentence-initial elements, normally emphatic pronouns that reinforce the pronominal element of the verb in the main clause and which, since they occupy the position they would have if they were not topicalised, are not left-shifted (see section 3.4 and also section 2.1.3 below). This is more like inserting topicalisation into a single clause, but in a very limited manner: however, since the clause to the right of the topicalised element is always grammatically self-sufficient, one could also consider that the topicalised element becomes a separate proposition. Clear examples of left-shifting in this SVO language involve direct objects, both with and without topicalisation (see section 3.4.1).

Other examples of seemingly cleft clauses in Muyang appear to show right-shifting, with a short final element highlighted by preceding topicalisation. In the following example *wiyay* (sand) would normally occupy the slot between the verb and the indirect object, but here is focussed by apparently right-shifting and by topicalising the rest of the clause: similar dislocations occur in Zulgo (Haller & Watters, 1984:39).¹⁰

Ahəliya ana zal gani na ti, The thing that she brought out for her husband
 3s-gather-IO-out for man AS-DEF DEF-SEP TOP (ce qu'elle donne à son mari.)
 wiyay. was sand. (Zil 024)
 sand (c'est le sable.)

However, the Muyang transcriber's French gloss given above shows that such apparent splittings in Muyang are more naturally read as two clauses: in the following example the words *wur nakəŋ*, if read as right-shifted, do not fit readily into the main sentence as they stand (the verb *àmənjàya* in this form requires a prepositional clause (as given) rather than a direct object, and if it did take a direct object the object would be followed by *a*, as is the clause), and thus the transcriber in his gloss adds another verb. Hence it again seems more natural to regard the words *wur nakəŋ* as a separate clause rather than the normal direct object within its clause with *ti* inserted before it.

Àmənjàya ka aləŋ a ti, wur nakəŋ. She looked behind her: there was the child!
 3s-look-out by back SEP TOP child REFMK (elle a regardé derrière et a vu l'enfant.) (Tet 060)

Another example of a noun phrase which is at least in apposition following topicalisation also seems to be read as an existential clause. This could of course also be the case with some of the examples from other related languages.

Nahkay ti wur ga mənani nahəŋ avu ti, zləba gayəŋ... Now there was another brother, his friend...
 so TOP child AS mother-DEF other 3s-be TOP friend AS-3s (or il y avait un frère qui était l'ami de Takwatsa)
 (Tak A.11)

⁷ See e.g. Hollingsworth & Peck (1992) examples (17) and (25), pp. 113f, from Mofu-Gudur. Gravina (2002) has these examples from Mbuko:

Uno nà, slay (PM018) A dəzl-ay anan ahay agay nà, tə ambasay awan. (BA029)
 I want TOP egg 3Spfv arrive-ING it to.here home TOP with victory STATE
 "What I want is eggs." "He brought it home victoriously."

⁸ The original Muyang transcriber wrote the following as a gloss for this clause, preferring an existential clause to an object of a verb of perceiving:
 "elle avait la farine sur les lèvres de la mouche."

⁹ Gravina (2002) has this example from Mbuko:

Nen nà, liŋer uno inde ite bay (CG008)
 I TOP string my there also NEG
 "I don't have any string." ("As for me, my string is also not here.")

¹⁰ Another example from Gravina (2002) is similar:

Əna ka rac nen bay, anga sə təm-ay iken uho a məke wa nà, nen. (LM054)
 but 2Spfv eat me NEG because SUB save-ING you outside at hole away TOP I
 "But you mustn't eat me because it was I who rescued you from the hole."

Another example appears to show topicalisation to highlight a single clause-final word, but the original French gloss again shows that this is read as an existential clause, with the subject left-shifted (without topicalisation) to the beginning of the topicalised element:

...ngam zlam gani naŋ ni ahàr àdàm kajalaki ahàr ti,
 because(Ful) thing AS-DEF 3s DEF head 3s-say-PF 2s-think-on head TOP
 sulumani,
 good-DEF
 day ti mæk naŋ ara azum.
 first TOP then 3s 3s-come 3s-eat

...this thing, you must think about it
 (il faut que cette chose à laquelle tu penses)
 [so that it's] good
 (soit bonne)
 so that he'll eat it. (Mari 082-4)
 (afin qu'il vienne manger.)

In sum, Muyang behaves in many ways like the languages that use *na* as a topicaliser: however, topicalised elements that are not clauses are restricted to short sentence-initial items such as focussed noun phrases or temporal adverbials (see section 3.4 below), while elements following topicalisation that are definitely not separate clauses are restricted to wh- question markers (see section 3.3 below¹¹).

2. The marking of definiteness and of theme: ni and nakəŋ

2.1 Definiteness: the nature of ni

Ni is underlyingly a spatial deictic meaning “there (at an intermediate distance)”, intermediate between *hi* (“here”) and *tegi* (“over there”). However, this spatial function (clear in first element of the parallel conflation with itself *hini*, *nini* and *teguni* (section 2.3.3), gains a referential significance in discourse as a marking of definiteness – this to the extent that the simple spatial usage of *ni* is by comparison not at all prominent in Muyang speech.

Noun phrases are frequently marked with this referential *ni*. It has several functions: at the first level it marks the noun phrase as definite (known); secondly it thereby functions as a maintenance marker in the participant reference system, and thirdly it may also by its presence, but perhaps more significantly by its absence where it might be expected, indicate the degree of thematic prominence which the speaker currently assigns to the participant that it designates. The participant reference system when *ni* normally operates is fully discussed in section 2.2. *Ni* can also be phonologically bound to a noun phrase or to a clause: this bound form of *ni* is discussed in section 2.3. *Ni* can also be used in certain circumstances to mark clauses: this use of *ni* is discussed in section 2.4 and finally the collocation *ni ti* is discussed in section 2.5.

2.1.1 The syntactic collocation ni + a

When it co-occurs with the marker of perfective aspect or separation *a*, which may be present for syntactic reasons, *ni* takes the form *na*. This happens either in the case of perfective aspect or in that of separation directionals (which are, fundamentally, the same thing).

Perfective aspect:

Tàra tinjia a vedaŋ va nahəma,
 3p-come 3p-arrive-PFVE at field in-PFVE TOPIC
 tədəfikia vedaŋ na ana tay a.
 3p-show-IO-PFVE field DEF-PFVE to 3p PFVE

When they got to the field,
 they showed it to them. (FH 004-5)

Mæk afəkad biyem gayəŋ ni esi yam.
 then 3s-put-down wood AS-3s DEF 3s-drink water
 Èsikaba yam gayəŋ na nahəma,
 3s-drink-in-on-PFVE water AS-3s DEF-PFVE TOPIC
 awayay azakabu biyem gayəŋ ni asləka.
 3s-want 3s-take-in-on wood AS-3s DEF 3s-leave

Then she put down her wood to drink water.
 When she'd finished drinking her water,
 she was going to take up her wood and leave.
 (WC 012-4)

Separation directional (outward movement):

A, ere gani nak kəhi ti
 oh thing AS-DEF 2s 2s-say-IO TOP
 Iŋgazlaya tawi gayak ya kagraŋ na ti
 show-out work AS-2s REL 2s-do DEF-SEP TOP

“Oh, the thing is, you say to it
 ‘Show the thing that you do’

¹¹ The same restriction appears to apply in Mofu-Gudur: Hollingsworth and Peck (1992:111f).

naŋ agrukaya huya.
3s 3s-do-2sIO-out at-once

and it'll do it for you at once." (IW C24-6)

Separation in association with the affix -*fəŋ*.

Bi mirkwi ara adi ahar ana kali.
perhaps stranger 3s-come 3s-put-IO head to 2p
Eslini kicikaba
then 2s-undertand-on-in-PFVE
kukoro kazafəŋ mbolo ga zal mirkwi na...
2s-go 2s-take-close bag AS man stranger DEF-SEP

Perhaps a stranger comes to you.

Then when you find out

you go and take the stranger's bag from him...
(Mar 012-3)

The surface form *na* is thus always a conflation of *ni* and *a*, the latter occurring according to the syntactic demands of the main verb of the clause: in their referential function there is no distinction between *ni* and *na*.

2.1.2 The definite noun phrase: maintenance marking with thematic overtones

The normal referential function of *ni* within discourse can be illustrated by two phrases from a folk tale, the opening one, and one from the opening of the second episode:

A vad nahaŋ eyeŋ dro a gosko vu...
at day other squirrel 3s-go at market into

One day squirrel went to market... (SC 001)

Tədəgoro a gosko ni vu...
3p-go-CONT at market DEF into

Off they went to the market... (SC 023)

The phrase *a gosko vu* is, of course, extremely common in Muyang. The variant *a gosko ni vu* has several functions¹²: at the simplest level it labels the market (a non-active non-unique participant) as the same one that squirrel went to the first time. The distance over which *ni* can successfully function is non-local and thus at discourse level: in this example the market remains identifiable even across episodes in a story.

This marking of participant continuity is thus a discourse function in its own right, even though the fact that it is the same market is not in itself particularly significant: any market would do for the purpose. However, it *is* the same market, and as a non-unique item is obligatorily labelled as such in the participant reference system (see section 2.2 below). Not to label it with *ni* might raise doubts – is it the same market, or if not, why aren't we told so specifically, and what is the importance to the story of the change?

Seeing in other terms, we might say that the market, as the springboard of the main action following the second visit (which depends on the meat bought there), does have some thematic importance: that it is marked by *ni* as being not merely a circumstantial detail. But we cannot show from this story that it would *not* be marked by *ni* even if it had no thematic importance.

In any case, in an intervening episode, when squirrel recounts his purchases to hyena, he says:

Nəsəkumbiyu a gosko bu.
1s-buy-hither-PF at market in

"I bought them at a market." (SC 013)

Within that local conversation the market has not been previously mentioned and thus, as in its first mention in the main narrative, it is not marked by *ni*.

2.1.3 *Ni* used for topicalisation?

Ni marking a noun phrase is sometimes used in a manner very similar to topicalisation in highlighting what follows. In the following example¹³ a wife arrives at a well:

Təcah yam akaba tay ti,
3p-draw water with 3p TOP
ədəm : Leli ni,
3s-say 1p DEF

When they were drawing water together

she said "As for us,

¹² The simple spatial reference is not one of these functions, as the theoretically parallel phrases *a gosko hi/tegi vu* "to this/that market" are not found as such in Muyang.

¹³ This story, 'The Indiscreet Wife' is set out in the Appendix, to which the reference given applies.

zal goro ðngætbiya zlam geli nahaj a gili a, my husband has brought home something
 man AS-1s 3s-find-home-PFVE thing AS-1p other at bush PFVE for us out of the bush
 do ti ahəməm? you know." (IW A.38-40)
 NEG TOP how

The emphatic pronoun used by the wife to introduce her information, *leli ni*, occupies the position of a front-shifted element, although its referent finds no place in the syntax (as distinct from the semantic content) of the clause that follows. *Leli* is by default definite, but being a pronoun theoretically does not need to be marked as such. Here the front-shifting shows emphasis¹⁴, and also implies contrast with the women (although *Muyang* does not extend the distinction seen in verbal affixes between exclusive and inclusive "we" into the pronoun system, the significance here is clearly exclusive). The function of *ni* in this phrase is thus not the default one of participant reference: rather, it has a thematic role – in fact the same one as topicalisation in throwing attention forward onto the next clause. In this it is similar to the collocation *ti ni*, where the topic marker adds a point of departure and clarifies the situation (see below, section 3.5.1): this usage may simply be a contraction of *ti ni*. The fact that this formula is not an accident of speech is shown by its repetition at the end of this incident (here, perhaps coincidentally, the referent does have a syntactic role in the following clause):

Leli ni, əgia hini məngəta ahər geli a. So as for us, we're in clover! (IW A.45)
 1p DEF 3s-happen-PFVE here 1p-find-PFVE head AS-1p PFVE

In an example from another story the 'child', in fact the hero Takwatsa, being a known participant represented by a non-unique noun, is correctly referenced by *ni* in the discourse. Here, though it is apparently front-shifted, the word *wur* is, like *leli* in the previous examples, a dummy to carry the focus, since it would be normal to refer to this character either by his proper name or by a pronoun (as in the following clause here): the phrase is a way of throwing attention onto his refusal, exactly as in topicalisation.

Wur ni, məjani aslər naɟ day, acuhway do. That boy - his mother kept sending him,
 child TOP mother-DEF 3s-send 3s first 3s-accept NEG but he didn't want to go. (Tak 045)

A similar sentence-initial usage marked with *ni* occurs with *nahaj* 'other'. In the first instance following, the reference is to water and is front-shifted. The other instances are examples of a formulaic expression using the same words in a semantically weakened form as a conjunction.

Nahaj ni həzləvəd həzləvəd ədələsəkabu. As for the rest, he muddied it up.
 other DEF disturbing 3s-disturb-on-in-PF
 Nahaj ni naɟ abu zlam gayan. After that he waited. (Tak 258-9)
 other DEF 3s 3s-be thing AS-3s

Mək pilis ni əhəraya əzumaba amu na. Then the mare ate up the honey.
 then horse DEF 3s-go-out-PF 3s-eat-out-PF honey SEP
 Nahaj ni ənəhada zlam gayan a. After that she rested. (Tak 157-8)
 other DEF 3s-sit-PFVE thing AS-3s DEF-PFVE

Sləh ənday akaba hijid gani. He swallowed it up with the bowl.
 swallowing 3s-swallow-PF with calabash AS-DEF
 Nahaj ni biz əzligaya hijid na ti, After that, when he passed it out behind
 other DEF passing-through 3s-throw-out-PF calabash DEF-SEP TOP
 tasa kəta bambəlaɟ tasa ge virzegena. it fell out a brand new golden bowl. (Tak 495-7)
 bowl brand-new falling bowl AS precious-metal

2.2 The participant reference system and theme – *ni* and *nəkəɟ*

As a marker of definiteness, *ni* of course also has a role in the *Muyang* participant reference system. It is used in alternation with the more prominent marker, *nəkəɟ*. The following discussion cites mainly examples from texts which have a cyclic story line, and thus illustrate series of events that are parallel. These cyclic episodes are tabulated in the Appendix, to which the lettered references given apply (IW – 'Indiscreet wife', TBH – 'Toad, Buck and Hare', Tak – 'Takwatsa').

¹⁴ However, here as is usual in *Muyang*, if an element is pulled out of a clause for emphasis, the clause itself is intact and the dummy or carrier element is that which is left-shifted. See section 3.4 below.

2.2.1 Presentation – marking with *nahaŋ* or zero

When a participant is first presented it is in the form of a noun which must be marked with *nahaŋ* 'a certain' (lit. 'another') if the participant is non-unique, or unrelated to a known character or his actions. The stock opening formula applies this to a day:

Seŋ! A vad *nahaŋ*, bay èdi zum ga sandu. *Story! One day, the chief held a wrestling match...*
 Forthwith! at day other chief 3s-prepare-PF wine AS wrestling (WC 001)

Thus this use of *nahaŋ* is normal for nameless human participants when presenting a situation or character out of context, either at the beginning or later in a story.

Seŋ! Zai *nahaŋ* araŋ gayaŋ abi. *Once upon a time there was a man with nothing. (IW A.1)*
 Forthwith! man another thing AS-3s 3s-not-exist

Wal *nahaŋ*, wal aksongaŋi... *There was a woman whose husband didn't love her... (Tak A.1)*
 woman another woman unloved-DEF

Wal medewel *nahaŋ* àra ècifiŋ daɗay gana... *Now there was another old woman who heard the noise... (Tak 176)*
 woman old other 3s-come-PF 3s-hear-close-PF noise AS-DEF-DEF

Nahkay ti wur dahalay *nahaŋ* avu wur ga bay gani... *Now there was a girl, the chief's daughter...*
 so TOP child girl other 3s-be child AS chief AS-DEF (Tak 355)

Nahkay ti wur ga mənani *nahaŋ* avu ti zləba gayaŋ... *Now there was another brother, his friend... (Tak A.11)*
 so TOP child AS mother-DEF other 3s-be TOP friend AS-3s

Nahkay wal medewel *nahaŋ* abu ti ni...¹⁵ *Now there was an old woman... (Tak 405)*
 so woman old other 3s-be TOP DEF

Animal participants in folk stories are treated as unique, virtually as a proper name, and certainly familiar. Thus they are presented without *nahaŋ*.

Seŋ! Krəŋ àra keti, *Story! Toad went again*
 Forthwith! Toad 3s-come-PF again
 àra àdi ahàr ana hadagər... *and came across (a) buck... (TBH A.1-2)*
 3s-come-PF 3s-put-IO-PF head to buck

Seŋ! A vad *nahaŋ* eyeŋ àro a gosko vu... *Story! One day squirrel went to market...*
 Forthwith! At day other squirrel 3s-go-PF at market into (SC 001)

Seŋ! Eyeŋ àzəbiyu awak gayaŋ, asawaday ana naŋ. *Story! Squirrel got himself a goat and was walking out with it. (SEH 001)*
 Forthwith! Squirrel 3s-take-home-PF goat AS-3s 3s-walk with 3s

The chief also falls into this unique category.

Seŋ! A vad *nahaŋ*, bay èdi zum ga sandu. *Story! One day the chief was held a wrestling match.*
 Forthwith! At day other chief 3s-prepare-PF wine AS wrestling-match (WC 001)

Seŋ! Bay èkeley fiki gayaŋ ezewed kru kru mahkər. *Story! The chief had 30 hectares of dry-season millet*
 Forthwith! Chief 3s-cut-PF karal AS-3s cord ten ten three (Mon 001)

Proper names (unique, of course) are fairly rare in traditional stories, and are introduced after the presentation of the participant (here in his relation to the character first introduced) by a common noun.

Wal *nahaŋ*, wal aksongaŋi... *There was a woman whose husband didn't love her...*
 woman another woman unloved-DEF
 Wur gayaŋ abu təzalay naŋ Takwaca. *She had a son whose name was Takwatsa. (Tak A.1)*
 child AS-3s 3s-be 3p-call 3s Takwatsa

¹⁵ See section 3.5 for the collocation *tini*.

Once the stage has been set with one character, other participants are if possible presented in relationship to that character, either as the result of his activities or by defined relationship to him. In the former case new participants are introduced by an unmarked noun.

Àhəraya àdi ahàr ana edij. *It happened that he came upon a bird. (IW A.3)*
 3s-come-out 3s-put-IO head to bird

Where possible, the relationship of a new participant to the known character is defined by a possessor (as also in the introduction of Takwatsa).

Nahkay àra ənija ana naŋ agam a nahəma, *So when he got home with it*
 so 3s-come 3s-arrive-PFVE with 3s home PFVE TOPIC
 àŋgəhadi ana wal gani. *he told his wife. (IW A.20-21)*
 3s-tell-IO to woman AS-DEF

2.2.2 Maintenance – marking with zero, *ni* or *nakəŋ*

2.2.2.1 Before discontinuity

After the first presentation, until a discontinuity of subject, a participant is referenced merely by verbal affixation (the person prefix).

Asawadəy e gili gayəŋ tali-tali zlam gayəŋ. *He was walking in his fields minding his own business.*
 3s-walk at field AS-3s wandering thing AS-3s
 Àhəraya àdi ahàr ana edij... *It happened that he came upon a bird... (IW A.2-3)*
 3s-come-out 3s-put-IO head to bird

Depending on context, the third plural verbal prefix may have a local resumptive reference or a general, impersonal reference to background characters whose presence may be assumed.

Təhəŋgribiyu keti. *They (toad and buck) turned back. (TBH A.45)*
 3p-return-hither-PF again

Təzalay məvayam nak kəsər naŋ do tək ahəmam? *Don't you know what a hare is? (TBH B.12)*
 3p-call hare 2s 2s-know 3s NEG QMK how

When the narrator judges that the subject is clear, as for example in a dialogue, there is merely verbal affixation even for changed subjects: especially, in reported conversation, there is often be no overt indication of change of speaker, save, here, the word *a*, *oh*, used as a formula to open speech (it is rare in real dialogue¹⁶).

Cəpa ti edij nakəŋ ahkay ti : *That instant the bird said*
 Moment TOP bird REFMK thus TOP
 Nu dəgiya edij ciliŋ do. *"I'm not just a bird, you know."*
 1s TOP bird only NEG
 A nak mam? *"What are you then?"*
 Oh 2s what
 A nu edij ciliŋ do, *"I'm not just a bird,*
 Oh 1s bird only NEG
 navay zlam daya do ti ahəmam? *I give something as well!" (IW A.7-11)*
 1s-give thing also NEG TOP how

With nominalised verb (or infinitive), used by certain storytellers in quick-fire narrative, no subject at all need be expressed if the agent is already on stage:

Tàra təhəliya bəza na ana fat ti, *When they took their eggs into the sun*
 3p-come 3p-take-into-PFVE children DEF-PFVE to sun TOP
 ŋgarama ti ni naŋ abu ahər adəbəy zlam məzumani. *there was a crow flying by looking for food.*
 crow TOP DEF 3s 3s-be 3s-fly 3s-seek thing NOM-eat-DEF
 Àra àdia ahàr ana bəza ge mindəwid na, *When he found the ants' eggs*
 3s-come 3s-put-PFVE head to children AS ant DEF-PFVE
 mək mandani cək cək. *he pecked them all up. (Zil 076-9)*
 then NOM-swallow-DEF peck peck

¹⁶ It may even be a residual form of *ahi* "he said to him".

Məŋ ga mənduz ni birketə mək məhuḥkiana
 mother AS [tree] DEF breaking then NOM-break-on-DEF-SEP
 ka bəbəmbeli a.
 on elephant SEP
 Bəbəmbeli - A nacuhway, do ti ahəmam?
 elephant Oh 1s-run NEG TOP how
 Dap məcəlkiani ka embəzey.
 trampling NOM-tread-on-DEF on [kind of insect]
 embəzey dəzlər aku.
 [kind of insect] lighting fire

*Then the tree broke and fell
 on an elephant.
 The elephant wanted to run
 and he trod on "Embuzey".
 "Embuzey" burst into flame. (Zil 067-71)*

The use of ideophones instead of finite verbs as a very vivid action (as in the last clause in the previous example) normally requires a subject, expressed as a noun, without other marking even if the participant is already on stage. It is not a style used by all narrators.

Təzaya, dirləŋgi tələd a məŋ ga arav gəḥakani vu.
 3p-take-out hyena jumping at mother of fəderbia big-DEF into

*They brought out [the knife],
 and hyena jumped into a big fəderbia tree. (HW 141)*

Krim-krim mis huwa aləŋ gir-gir...
 quickly people running behind pursuing

People were quickly running after him... (HW 181)

2.2.2.2 After discontinuity: *ni* and *nakəŋ*

2.2.2.2.1 The use of an unmarked noun

After a discontinuity, where the speaker considers that the identity of the participant needs to be clarified by the use of a noun, non-unique participants that have been already introduced (whether animate or inanimate) are normally referenced by the noun either with *ni* or with *nakəŋ*. Unique participants are normally referred to by the unmarked noun in places where non-unique participants would be marked by *ni*. In the story of Toad, Buck and Hare the action is complicated by a plurality of toads, but in some less prominent episodes where it is clearly the main toad that acts he is represented by an unmarked noun.

Nahkay krəŋ əhərkiaya.
 so toad 3s-go-on-out-PF

So toad came out to meet him. (TBH A.53)

Nahkay mək krəŋ əsləka ana awak gayəŋ a.
 So then toad 3s-leave-PF with goat AS-3s SEP

So then toad left with his goat. (TBH B.56)

Similarly the animal participants of other beast tales are normally not marked by *ni*.

Nahkay eyəŋ əhəl aslu gayəŋ krim-krim...
 so squirrel 3s-gather-PF meat AS-3s quickly

So squirrel took his meat quickly... (SC 118)

Similarly, of course, proper names are not marked with *ni*.

Takwaca ənjia ana agwazi gayəŋ na slasləŋsləŋ ti...
 Takwatsa 3s-arrive-PFVE with cock AS-3s AS-PFVE walking TOP
Takwatsa arrived with his cock... (Tak A.13)

When a known non-unique participant is unmarked (a rare occurrence) this may be due to a stumbling in speech. *Ediŋ* 'bird' is a non-unique noun and is thus normally and correctly marked with *ni*. the apparent exception that follows is immediately corrected.

Nahkay mək edəŋ day cəpa təgray ahkay ti,
 so then bird also moment 3p-do-PF thus TOP
 edəŋ ni day abi va bi...
 bird DEF also 3s-not-exist more not-exist

*So then in a moment [the bird also], while they did this,
 the bird also wasn't there any more... (IW A.61-62)*

2.2.2.2.2 The use of *ni* – a reference marker

The default maintenance marker for a noun already introduced is *ni*, which functions almost as a local marker of definiteness, obligatorily present if a non-unique participant is identifiable, unless *nakəŋ* replaces it. Such uses of *ni* often occur in a less prominent part of the narrative such the wind-down or opening of a scene or a comment that does not carry the narrative forward:

Zal ni ahkay ti: A nəggəta zlam goro edidiŋ a. *The man said "I've found myself something here."*
 man def thus TOP Oh 1s-find-PFVE thing AS-1s truly PFVE (IW A.17)

Zal ni ərə ɛnɟia nahəma... *When the man arrived...* (IW A.69)
 man DEF 3s-come-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE TOPIC

Nahkay mək edidiŋ ni naŋ abu. *So there the bird was.*
 so then bird DEF 3s 3s-be
 Ba kəla wudəra ga hay ədiva ana tay a faŋ ti, *Whenever they needed millet*
 only every need AS millet 3s-fall-IO-REFL-PFVE to 3p PFVE actually TOP
 ba təhi ana edidiŋ ni ahkay, *they just had to speak to the bird*
 only 3s-say-IO to bird DEF thus,
 ba təhi ana edidiŋ ni ahkay. *like that.* (IW A.32-34)
 only 3p-say-IO to bird DEF thus

When in the Toad Buck and Hare story the toad, a unique character, is marked by *ni*, it is in a context of other toads, where the intention, at least, is to distinguish him from the crowd he has been addressing:

Mək krəŋ ni əhəndərkəbu ndam gani... *Then our toad lined up his people...* (TBH A.31)
 then toad DEF 3s-align-on-top people AS-DEF

Normally the same applies to a possessed non-unique item: on the first introduction it is not marked with *ni*, and thereafter it is¹⁷. Thus in the following phrases that come from parallel episodes in a story the usage is predictable: in the first, a brother gives water to Takwatsa's donkey (already mentioned). In the second, it is Takwatsa that gives water to his brother, who gives it to his own horse (not Takwatsa's, but one among many, not previously singled out in the story). Consequently Takwatsa's donkey, a referenced known participant, is marked *gayay ni*; the brother's horse, here mentioned specifically for the first time, simply with *gayay*.

Mək avi ana azoŋgo gayay ni, esi. *Then he gave some to his donkey and it drank.* (Tak 043)
 then 3s-give to donkey AS-3s DEF 3s-drink

Mək bac əni ana pilis gayay. *Then he gave some to his horse.*
 then giving 3s-give-IO-PF to horse AS-3s
 Wur ga məŋani ni əvi ana pilis gayay, esi esi. *[That is] his brother gave some*
 child AS mother-DEF DEF 3s-give-IO-PF to horse AS-DEF 3s-drink 3s-drink *to his horse, and it drank.*
 (Tak 265-6)

However, Takwatsa's own horse, the focus of much of the story (and therefore of course more thematically significant than that of his brother), is always marked with *gayay ni*.

Takwaca ərə əhəraya əbəkia zlam ke pilis gayay na... *Takwatsa came out and put*
 Takwatsa 3s-come-PF 3s-come-out-PF 3s-put-on-PFVE thing on horse AS-3s DEF-PFVE *the equipment on his horse...*
 (Tak 297)

Takwaca nakəŋ suwwa ədəboro məlaŋ ge pilis gayay ni. *Takwatsa looked for his horse's tracks*
 Takwatsa REFMK forthwith 3s-look-CONT place AS horse AS-3s DEF (Tak 319)

Similarly, in the case of a non-unique noun possessed by a participant represented by a noun, the whole noun phrase is normally marked with *ni*, whether the head word is present or assumed from the context:

Əra nahəma ənjəki ke ge eyeŋ ni həya... *So then he started on squirrel's...* (SC 064)
 3s TOPIC 3s-start-on-PF on AS squirrel DEF at-once

Kəla sla ge eyeŋ ni ənjəgəni biliŋ ciliŋ. *All that was left was squirrel's cow.* (SC 073)
 all cow AS squirrel DEF 3s-left-PF one only

However, *ni* is not always used in such circumstances: the cow is sufficiently identified by the possessive phrase. Thus the absence of *ni* may be taken as an indicator of its relative thematic unimportance at this stage:

¹⁷ The same normal usage that applies to *gayay* applies also to *gani* (section 2.3.2.1). In the Indiscreet Wife text, every occurrence of *wal gani* ('his wife', lit. 'the wife of that situation') save the first is followed by *ni*. Of course, the wife is also highly thematic...

Ānjəgəni sla ge eyeŋ ciliŋ akaba aslu məkələni. *All that was left was squirrel's cow with his dried meat.*
 3s-left-PF cow AS squirrel only with meat NOM-dry-DEF¹⁸ (SC 063)

This absence of the definite marker brings us to the question of the interplay of theme in the use of *ni*.

2.2.2.2.3 Narrator-dependent uses of *ni* – thematic considerations

Although the use of *ni* following a noun marked by the possessive *gayaŋ* normally follows the pattern for *ni* on its own, the use of *gayaŋ* in its own right identifies a noun to an extent that *ni* might become optional in certain circumstances. In these circumstances the thematic role of *ni* corresponds, though by its absence rather than by its presence, to that of *nakəŋ*: it is not so much the marked participants that are thematically more or less prominent as the whole event in which they partake. The following two sets of extracts come from two similar stories where a goat is offered as prize in a contest, but not won. In both cases the goat is first presented as possessed (thus correctly related to the main character) but, predictably, it is not at that point marked with *ni*. In each story at a subsequent point it is, again predictably, marked with *ni*, but at the wind-down of each story it is (unpredictably?) no longer so marked, though clearly in each case the same goat.

Seŋ! Eyeŋ əzəbiyu awak gayaŋ, asawadəy ana naŋ... *Story! Squirrel was walking along with his goat...* (SEH 001)
 Forthwith Squirrel 3s-take-hither-PF goat AS-3s 3s-walk with 3s

Mək əzəbiyu awak gayaŋ ni, *Then he brought his goat*
 then 3s-take-hither-PF goat AS-3s DEF
 əwələ dwa kə məŋ ga zlam a. *and tied it to a tree.* (SEH 039-40)
 3s-tie-PFVE tying by mother As thing PFVE

Nəhkay mək eyeŋ əpicəh awak gayaŋ, *Then squirrel untied his goat*
 so then squirrel 3s-untie-PF goat AS-3s
 əsləka ana naŋ a. Āndəvəyā. *and went home with it. The end.* (SEH 078-9)
 3s-leave-PF with 3s SEP 3s-end-out-PFVE

Seŋ! Krəŋ əra keti... *Story! Toad came again...*
 Forthwith toad 3s-come-PF again
 ana awak gayaŋ a əhar bu bilegeni. *with his goat in his hand as well.* (TBH A.1-2)
 with goat AS-3s at hand in also

Krəŋ nəkəŋ naŋ abu, *So there toad was*
 toad REFMK 3s 3s-be
 asawadəy ana awak gayaŋ ni zlam gayaŋ keti. *walking with his goat again.* (TBH B.1)
 3s-walk with goat AS-3s DEF thing AS-3s again

Nəhkay mək krəŋ əsləka ana awak gayaŋ a. *Then toad went home with his goat.* (TBH B.56)
 so then toad 3s-leave-PF with goat AS-3s SEP

Here the significant factor seems to be that in the wind-down at the end of a story the dramatic tension is at an end: it is not so much the goat (which after all is the prize retained) that is lacking in thematic prominence in these parallel episodes so much as the event as a whole. At another point in the second narrative, where the goat is tied up preparatory to the contest, the episode is parallel to a point in the first where the goat is marked *gayaŋ ni*, but here it is totally unmarked. The significance of this seems to be that at this point the mention of the goat is simply parenthetical, impersonal, part of an aside, whereas in the first narrative it is the main character that does the action, which is reinforced by an ideophone and thus more prominent.

Nəhkay məka təwələ awak a. *(So then they [somebody] tied the goat up).* (TBH A.15)
 so then 3p-tie-PFVE goat PFVE

Conversely, minor objects and participants may be referenced with *ni* on their first presentation if they are a predictable or thematically salient part of the normal scenery of the story. In this example the women at the well have not been mentioned before, but are to be expected in such a context (indeed, the definite article would naturally be used in this context even in English). Also, they, and more importantly the event in which they partake, are thematically prominent in the story that is about to unfold.

¹⁸ On the local use of the bound definite marker with nominalisations see below, section 2.3.1

A vad nahəŋ ti,
At day another TOP
wal gayəŋ ni ərə ərə ka yam ti,
wife AS-3s DEF 3s-come-PF 3s-go-PF on water TOP
əhəriyu ədi əhər ana wal ndəhəŋ ni...
3s-go-into-PF 3s-fall-IO-PF head to woman other-PL DEF

Another day
his wife went out to get water,
and there she found the other women... (IW A.35-37)

2.2.2.2.4 The use of *nakəŋ* – a thematic marker

Like *ni*, *nakəŋ* may only be applied to a known participant, one already mentioned (or at least implied) in the narrative. Unlike *ni*, *nakəŋ* is used (replacing either *ni* or zero) entirely at the speaker's will, and may be applied equally to unique and non-unique participants. The choice of whether or not to use *nakəŋ* instead of *ni* is not dependent on structural factors such as a preceding discontinuity (though it may often coincidentally occur in such places): rather, it depends on the speaker's judgement of the thematic prominence of the episode as a whole within the narrative. For instance, in this case of a unique character where he is about to gather his henchmen to cheat his opponent, he is marked with *nakəŋ*:

Krəŋ *nakəŋ* sulek əndiyu əhər a yam vu. Toad went down into the water... (TBH A.24)
toad REFMK descending 3s-swallow-in-PF head at water into

In the same way other unique participants that would normally be unmarked, such as individuals with proper names, are marked with *nakəŋ* at points of drama.

Takwaca ənjia ana əgwazl gayəŋ na sləsluŋsluŋ ti... Takwatsa arrived with his cock... (Tak A.13)
Takwatsa 3s-arrive-PFVE with cock AS-3s AS-PFVE walking TOP

Ga Takwaca *nakəŋ* zla nahəma təsəkumi əgwazl. But for Takwatsa they (just) bought a cock (Tak A.5)
AS Takwatsa REFMK then TOPIC 3p-buy-IO-PF cock

Like *ni*, *nakəŋ* may be used to mark a relative clause, even one without, at first, an express head noun:

Yaw ga meni gayəŋ ya ta əzay *nakəŋ*,
OK AS so-and-so AS-3s REL TOP 3s-takePF REFMK
təfəkiviyu nəŋ a əhəy vu, wur ga bay gani ni,
3p-put-on-into-PF 3s at house into child AS chief AS-DEF DEF
ba ewi bilegeni ewi bəza.
only 3s-bear also 3s-bear children

And the one that he took,
the chief's daughter they gave him,
just kept giving birth too. (PC 646-8)

Nakəŋ may mark a pronoun: here Takwatsa elopes with the chief's daughter. The narrative carefully builds up the tension, using both *nakəŋ* and *nahəma* (section 3.6):

Nəhkəy həjəŋ ga miledə də,
so tomorrow AS morning early
mis təhəraya tədəgoro e gili.
people 2p-go-outPF 3p-go-CONT-PF at fields
Mis tizligi hay, mis tizligi hay.
people 3p-sow millet people 3p-sow millet
Nday *nakəŋ* təhəraya - mis təsləkakəba,
3p REFMK 3p-go-out-PF people 3p-leave-on-in-PFVE
dəwik-dəwik tədəgoro e gili nahəma -
quiet 3p-go-CONT-PF at fields TOPIC
təhəraya tədəm Hi ti...
3p-go-out-PF 3p-say-PF here TOP
Takwaca *nakəŋ* əhi Hi nahəma,
Takwatsa REFMK 3s-say-IO here TOPIC
nəra nəsləka, do ti əhəmam? - Aya? - A, iy.
1s-come 1s-leave NEG TOP how yes Oh yes

So early the next morning
the people went out to the fields.
Folk were occupied sowing millet.
They then - when everyone had left,
and it was quiet because they had all gone -
they said: "Now..."
Takwatsa said to her "Now,
I'm leaving." - "Really?" - "Yes"
(Tak 386-92)

Nakəŋ may without overload mark two participants in a single clause, and the same participant in consecutive clauses – the repetition of *nakəŋ* serves to mark the event as a whole rather than the individual participants: it attaches to any available noun within the clause¹⁹. Like *ni*, *nakəŋ* may independently be followed by *ti* (section 2.5).

¹⁹ The number of nouns in a Muyang narrative text is quite restricted, and this may be the origin of the freedom with which *nakəŋ* is used at appropriate points in the story. For examples of this usage see immediately below.

Eyeŋ nakəŋ suwwa ɔrukioro ka mbeli nakəŋ... *Squirrel went straight on to elephant...*
 squirrel REFMK directly 3s-go-on-CONT-PF on elephant REFMK (SEH 056)

Nəhkay mək wal nakəŋ ahi ana eɗiŋ nakəŋ ti, *So then the woman spoke to the bird*
 so then woman REFMK 3s-say-IO-PF to bird REFMK TOP
 ba eɗiŋ nakəŋ adaday aɣkaya gus-gus ti, *and the bird just moved its tail like this*
 only bird REFMK 3s-move thus moving TOP
 ba hay adəgaya ciliŋ, ba hay adəgaya ciliŋ... *and millet just poured out....* (IW A.27-30)
 only millet 3s-fall-out only only millet 3s-fall-out only

In this respect *nakəŋ* may be used even for minor and inanimate participants, though normally those with some thematic importance: in the first of the following two examples the honey (previously mentioned by the fetishist who gives Takwatsa's mother instructions) plays an important role in winning a horse for Takwatsa. In the second example millet boule (couscous) is highly thematic in the story line.

Nəhkay mək wal nakəŋ ɔhəraya, *So then the woman went out*
 so then woman REFMK 3s-go-out-PF
 suwwa ɔra ɔro ka amu nakəŋ e gili. *straight looking for the honey in the bush.* (Tak A.18-19)
 directly 3s-come-PF 3s-go-PF on honey REFMK at bush

Nday təbu edi ɗaf nakəŋ asivu ana tay. *While they were there she cooked and served them*
 3p 3p-be 3s-cook boule REFMK 3s-cut-IO-into for 3p *millet boule.* (PC 198)

But sometimes it is only the event, and the significance of the event in which they participate, rather than the active importance of the individual participants as such, that determines the use of *nakəŋ*. We have seen in the Introduction how a totally incidental participant may be thus marked on the strength of the general thematic prominence of the event as a whole: fly's fiancée as such is incidental to the story and is totally omitted in another version – she is only introduced here as the purpose of his journey, an insignificant background detail. She is in her own right a candidate for *nakəŋ* only by virtue of being definite, i.e. previously mentioned: the use of *nakəŋ* here is an echo of its application to fly.

Ezawi nakəŋ ɔmətafiya, *Fly got tired*
 fly REFMK 3s-tire-into-PFVE
 ka mələŋ ga migifiŋ kà wal nakəŋ a... *of his courting there...* (Zil 043-4)
 on place AS NOM-become-close by woman REFMK PFVE

In the Takwatsa text, the time of day when the brothers water their horses occurs cyclically, and is in this weak sense thematic, a *Leitmotiv*:

A, fat ɛsliə, məvi yam ana pilis a, do ti aħəmam? *"It's time to water our horses"*
 Oh sun 3s-suffice-PFVE 1p-give-IO water to horse PFVE NEG TOP how (Tak 029)

Tàkoro təvibiya yam ana pilis gatay ni, fat esliə. *They went to water their horses*
 3p-go-PF 3p-give-IO-hither water to horse AS-3P DEF sun 3s-suffice-PFVE – it was time. (Tak 232)

Nəhkəy fat nakəŋ ɔra ɛsliə. *So then it was the time.*
 so sun REFMK 3s-come-PF 3s-suffice-PFVE
 Təhəlkaba pilis a. *They took out horses.* (Tak 239-40)
 3p-take-on-out horse SEP

The final episode is climactic in the story: the horses, which, *en bloc*, are definite participants (as marked in the second episode), do not even merit a *ni* (they are about to be outshone by the hero's). However the time of day has no importance apart from *punctuating the narrative*: it is definite and in a sense thematic but as such it has no prominence (the time is incidental except as a frame for the action). Rather, it is the episode itself that is prominent in the speaker's mind, and which lends that prominence to the time of day which is marked with *nakəŋ*.

Later, Takwatsa meets his mother, grown very frail, at the well and asks for a drink. The narrative builds up to the climax (Takwatsa turns, by means best not discussed in detail, her bowl into gold), and *nakəŋ* is liberally applied to all possible participants. In a weak sense, again, they are all thematic, but only as furniture to the episode: not all have the same prominence – the woman is rightly very prominent, but the water and the well are much less significant at this point, even though they have featured before in the story and are thus, unlike the bowl which is actually far more

important, legitimate candidates for marking with *nakəŋ*. Rather, again, these elements borrow prominence from the episode as a whole, or, alternatively, we are witnessing the phenomenon of *nakəŋ* spread.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|-------|---|
| Nahkay mək suwwa wal | nakəŋ | acahaya | yam | nakəŋ | a, | <i>So the woman drew some of the water</i> |
| so | then | forthwith | woman | REFMK 3s-draw-out-PF | water | REFMK SEP |
| a suwa | nakəŋ | ba | mək | ətəlikabaya. | | <i>from the well and gave it to him.</i> |
| at well | REFMK out | then | 3s-put-IO-on-in-out-PF | | | |
| Takwata | nakəŋ | əsiaba | ndac, | | | <i>Takwata gripped it drank it all up</i> |
| Takwata | REFMK 3s-drink-out | gripping | | | | |
| sləh | ənday | akaba | hijid | gani. | | <i>swallowing it with the bowl as well.</i> |
| swallowing | 3s-swallow with | calabash | AS-DEF | | | (Tak 492-5) |

Nakəŋ is rare in texts that do not tell a story: in the following case the shame of not being able to produce a drink adds intensity to a passage where tea (explicitly) and money (implicitly) have been mentioned before, and thus makes the use of *nakəŋ* appropriate in the speaker's mind. Again, *nakəŋ* seems to spread in a prosodic manner²⁰.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---|
| Ama tamal arəŋa | gayak | abi | fəntivir | ti, | | <i>But if you don't have anything at all</i> |
| but | COND | thing | AS-2s | 3s-not-exist | at-all | TOP |
| naŋ | ni | humbo | məjərvani | day | abi, | <i>that is, you don't even have mixed flour -</i> |
| 3s | DEF | flour | NOM-mix-DEF | also | 3s-not-exist | |
| yaw | ga | ndam | ya | ta | kakodahay | sehi |
| OK | AS | people | REL | TOP | 2s-brew | tea |
| REFMK | | | | | | REFMK |
| ŋgəta | siŋgo | nakəŋ | a | day | abi | ti, |
| find-PFVE | money | REFMK | PFVE | also | 3s-not-exist | TOP |
| aḅəlay | do. | | | | | |
| 3s-be-good | NEG | | | | | |
| | | | | | | <i>when there's no money to hand -</i> |
| | | | | | | <i>it's not good.</i> |
| | | | | | | (Mar 153-6) |

2.2.2.2.5 The use of the pronoun naŋ

2.2.2.2.5.1 Naŋ plus ni used in differentiation

The third singular pronoun *naŋ* when followed by *ni* is used (regardless of number) as a differentiation device following a noun:

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------|--------|------------|----|-------|-------------|-------|---|
| Məka wur | ga | məŋani | naŋ | ni | aziya | yam | na... | <i>Then this brother of his brought out the water</i> |
| then | child | AS | mother-DEF | 3s | DEF | 3s-take-out | water | DEF-SEP |
| | | | | | | | | <i>[the others didn't]</i> (Tak A.15) |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------|-----------|-------|-----|----------|------|-----|-----|-------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Təhəraya | nahəma, | təsəkumi | pilis | ana | bəza | nday | naŋ | ni | keti. | | <i>They went out again and bought</i> |
| 3p-go-out-PF | TOPIC | 3p-buy-PF | horse | for | children | 3p | 3s | DEF | again | | <i>horses for those children</i> |
| | | | | | | | | | | | <i>[not for Takwata]</i> (Tak B.3) |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|-----|-----|-----|---------|-------------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-----|-----|--|---|
| Nday | ka | fat | naŋ | ni | taway | məvi | yam | ana | pilis | gatay | ni | do. | | <i>That day [unlike the others] they</i> |
| 3p | on | day | 3s | DEF | 3p-want | NOM-give-IO | water | to | horse | AS-3p | DEF | NEG | | <i>didn't want to water their horses.</i> |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | (Tak 294-5) |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|--|---|
| Kay, | kagray | fida; | naŋ | ni | pilis | gayak | do. | | <i>You're lying, that's not your horse.</i> |
| well | 2s-make | lie | 3s | DEF | horse | AS-2s | NEG | | (Tak 345) |

Naŋ ni can also refer anaphorically to a situation as a whole, with a similar emphasis.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|------------|-------------|--------|--------|-----|-----|----|-----|--|
| Naŋ | ni | məŋani | əgri | dabari | gayaŋ, | do | ti | nu | do. | <i>In that case it was his mother that</i> |
| 3s | DEF | mother-DEF | 3s-do-IO-PF | means | AS-3s | NEG | TOP | 1s | NEG | <i>sorted it out for him, not me.</i> |
| | | | | | | | | | | (Tak 284) |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|----------|-------|-------|--------|----------|------|--|---------------------------------|
| Naŋ | a | magam | ti, | naŋ | ni | məsər | gayaŋ | cudo, | diya | ga | way? | <i>If he's at home that's his problem,</i> | |
| 3s | at | home | TOP | 3s | DEF | NOM-know | AS-3s | DEF | indeed | business | AS | who | <i>no-one else's.</i> (Tak 238) |

The usage *naŋ naŋ ni* is found only in certain texts, and appears to be an intensification of *naŋ ni* with specific contrastive emphasis (see also section 2.3.4.1 below).

²⁰ The concept of 'prosody', that is, a suprasegmental articulatory feature that operates at word level, is an important one in understanding the phonology of Muyang and other central Chadic languages. Here, it seems, we can see a 'prosody' of thematicity behaving in a similar way at sentence level. As with phonological prosodies, only susceptible elements are affected – in the current case, known noun phrases.

Tisliŋikivu maslaŋ naŋ naŋ ni ana maslaŋ nahaŋ ni *They cut that [particular] person's throat*
 3p-cut-throat-IO-on-in someone 3s 3s DEF for someone other DEF *for the other one... (HW 011)*

But it may be simply emphatic, not implying any particular contrast.

Àheraya, wal naŋ naŋ ni *Afterwards that [horrible] woman*
 3s-go-out-PF woman 3s 3s DEF
 àra àro kà maharam afa ga zal nahaŋ. *went and worked magic against another man.*
 3s-come-PF 3s-go-PF by fetish with AS man other (WM 014-5)

2.2.2.2.5.2 Naŋ as a pronoun of local reference

Pronouns, typically this 3s *naŋ*, are as would be expected used for participants in follow-up clauses. This often in occurs in set phrases: normally *naŋ* does not refer to anything out of the immediate context.

Naŋ refers to the subject of the passage without further qualification where the sentence is existential (with no finite verb):

A Takwaca naŋ te-te zlam gayan. *"Takwatsa just kept quiet"* (Tak 235)
 oh Takwatsa 3s quiet thing AS-3s

Àheraya naŋ a yam ni bu... *So it happened that she was in the water...* (Tak 468)
 3s-come-out-PF 3s at water DEF in

Naŋ can legitimately refer to the subject of a passage as a direct object.

Wur ni, meŋani aslɛr naŋ day, acuhway do. *His mother kept sending the boy,*
 child TOP mother-DEF 3s-send 3s now 3s-accept NEG *but he didn't want to go (Tak 045)*

Pilis ni àra èpia naŋ a ciliŋ haya ti... *As soon as the horse saw him...* (Tak 335)
 horse DEF 3s-come 3s-see-PFVE 3s PFVE only at-once TOP

Nahkay mək a vad nahaŋ zla nahəma, *So then one day*
 so then at day other then TOPIC
 Takwaca nakəŋ zla, àra àzalay naŋ. *Takwatsa called her...* (Tak 511-12)
 Tqkwatsa REFMK then 3s-come-PF 3s-call-PF 3s

Mək wur gani nakəŋ èliaba naŋ a. *Then her son buried her (Tak 527)*
 then child AS-DEF REFMK 3s-bury-out-PFVE 3s PFVE

Naŋ is only used as the subject of a verb within a set collocation, collapsed phonetically to [na:bu]:

Nahkəkay meŋani ni naŋ abu naŋ abu. *So his mother just stayed there. (Tak 053)*
 so mother-DEF DEF 3s 3s-be 3s 3s-be

The use of *naŋ* in a set comitative/instrumental prepositional phrase (collapsed phonetically to [anaŋ]) is common: the first usage illustrated here is extremely common.

Laf àzəbiyu eŋiŋ nakəŋ, *He grabbed the bird*
 snatching 3s-take-hither-PF bird REFMK
 mək àra ana naŋ aŋam a. *and took it home (went home with it). (IW A18-19)*
 then 3s-come-PFVE with 3s home PFVE

Bi nazlavaya bilvi ga araŋ goro ana naŋ a... *Perhaps I'll gather jujube berries with it. (IW C.5)*
 perhaps 1s-gather-out jujube AS something AS-1s with 3s SEP

Muyang has no means of subsuming direct objects or comitative or instrumental phrases within verbal extensions, so in the cases illustrated here either the full pronoun is used or the object is wholly omitted, as in the final clause below. The omission of *naŋ* here may in itself be an indication of thematic prominence.

Aday ni àni ləp ləp, delulə a ahay bu, *The stick gave [her] a thorough beating,*
 stick DEF 3s-give-IO beating wailing at house in

ázləba zat.
3s-beat-PFVE full

the house was full of wailing. (IW C.29)

2.2.2.2.6 The use of *nahaŋ* in maintenance

Nahaŋ literally means 'other', and this literal meaning is close to the presentational usage discussed in section 2.2.1 above. Thus when marked with *ni*, *nahaŋ* it has this literal meaning and is no longer presentational.

Ba wur ga məŋani nahaŋ ni acəhiaba. *The other brother always kept him some.* (Tak 056)
only child AS mother-DEF other DEF 3s-draw-IO-out

Wur ga məŋani nahaŋ zləba gani ni aləŋ aləŋ. *The other brother, his friend, was behind.* (Tak 307)
child AS mother-DEF other friend AS-DEF DEF back back

2.2.3 Summary: the use of the participant reference markers

2.2.3.1 Presentation: *nahaŋ*, zero or possessor

Nahaŋ is normally required at the presentation of all non-unique human characters, marking a generic noun such as *zal* "man".

Zero marking - an unmarked noun - is used in the case of unique participants (animal characters in folk tales, the chief, and proper names). It is also used at the first presentation of a new participant that an already-introduced participant meets.

A possessor such as *gani* or *gayaŋ* relates a newly-introduced participant to a known active character, if possible.

2.2.3.2 Maintenance: *nakaŋ*, *ni*, *naŋ ni* etc.

Nakaŋ is used to reference any participant, major or minor, unique or non-unique, active or passive, when the speaker judges that the event containing or introduced by that clause is of major thematic importance to the story.

Nakaŋ may be used to mark several participants (e.g. subject and object) in one clause, or the same participant in subsequent clauses: it seems that it sometimes functions at a prosodic level.

Ni is used to mark non-unique participants where *nakaŋ* is not chosen, for instance at less prominent points in the narrative such as in wind-downs. Though it may seem thus to have little more than the character of a resumptive local definite marker, some perturbations in normal usage are due to thematic considerations: the absence of *ni* signals an absence of thematic prominence.

Naŋ ni following a noun is used to differentiate participants where there is some element of contrast or emphasis.

An unmarked noun is only used for unique participants (animal characters, the chief, proper names).

Naŋ and other personal pronouns is used to refer to any participant in the immediate context where no ambiguity is possible. *Naŋ* in particular is often used in set collocations.

Verbal affixes are used to continue a narrative where no discontinuity or ambiguity arises.

Nominalised verbs and ideophones, used for vividness, require a noun (normally unmarked) as subject.

2.3 Local definiteness: *ni* as a bound form

In accord with its underlyingly deictic nature (see section 2.1), *ni* (unlike, for the most part, *hi* and *tegi*) binds with a number of words closely enough to become a phonological unity, with the sense of "that one in the immediate context". Local definiteness of this kind may be defined as less thematic at discourse level. Thus although *ni* as a definite marker at discourse level can normally be classed as a particle that is morphologically separate from the noun phrase to which it attaches, in these local cases a close phonological binding to the qualified constituent occurs to form the suffix *-ani* (with its phonological variant *-eni*) which shows a close association. The qualified constituent in such cases is normally a word, but may also be a noun phrase.²¹

²¹ The bound form *-ani* in Muyang is closely paralleled in function by *ane* in Ouldeme (Kinnaird, personal communication).

2.3.1 Nominalisation and adjectives

Ni attaches closely in this way to nominalised verbs²² and to adjectives (functionally one category) to form the suffix *-ani* (in this phonologically bound form the prosodic variant *-eni* consistently occurs).

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| zum | <i>eat</i> | (verb root) |
| mə-zum dəf | <i>eating millet boule</i> | (nominalised verb with direct object) |
| mə-zum-ani | <i>eating</i> | (nominalised verb) |
| zlam mə-zum-ani | <i>something to eat</i> | (nominalised verb functioning as "adjective") ²³ |
| gəɖak | <i>a lot</i> | (adverb) |
| zal gəɖak-ani | <i>an important man</i> | ("adjective") |

In these cases *ni* in its form *-ani* still functions as a referential marker. In the isolated nominalised verb the *-ani* suffix implies an obligatory reference to context, which accounts for the absence of the suffix when an object is specified: *məzumani* "eating (with reference to something)", *məzum dəf* "eating millet boule"²⁴. When the nominalised verb functions adjectivally there is a subtle change of emphasis: the glosses of *zlam məzumani* and of *zal gəɖakani* could be rendered 'thing (with the act of eating)' and 'man (with the quality of bigness). In both cases the information is accessible from world-knowledge as represented by the lexicon, and thus the two are precisely parallel, the reference being to the generality of the concept. Each noun-phrase may, according to context, be further marked by *ni*, applying this time to the noun-phrase as a whole and with thematic overtones: *zlam məzumani ni* "this particular food", *zal gəɖakani ni* "this particular important man".

A nominalised construction may be expanded by affixation or by other phrasal elements. In this first case the verbal affix *-kabu* intervenes before the *-ani*.

Nahkay yam nahaj ni mədɛlβəsakabani. *So the rest of the water was all disturbed.*
 so water other DEF NOM-disturb-on-in-DEF (Tak A.16)

In the following extract the nominalised *məbəlani* is possessed, the possessor being included in the string marked by *-ani*.

Ahkay kamənjaki məbəlay ga tayani ti kərzləŋ-kərzləŋ. *You could see they were beautiful, shining.*
 thus 2s-look-on NOM-be-good AS 3p-DEF TOP shining (PC 542)

Similarly, an adjective may be qualified and negated within the local string:

day tesl məro məro doani nahəma... *... also ones that are not particularly short...*
 also short much much NEG-DEF TOPIC (PC 389)

The two-level use of *-ani* with *ni* may be seen in the extracts that follow. The first (inner) level with the affixal *-ani* is not one of discourse, while the second (outer) level with a separate *ni* is in the area of participant reference and thematic function. In the first case, *guziteni ni*, an attributive adjective occurs in a relative clause terminated by *ni*.

Àhi bibijungur, *He said to him, "Hippo,*
 3s-say-IO hippo
 nu hini ya kamənjaɭu guziteni ni ti *I, the little one you see here, now,*
 1s here REL 2s-look0at-1sIO small-DEF DEF TOP
 amal mədɛm məgəjahvu ti, *if we say let's have a tug of war, then*
 COND 1p-say 1p-pull-REC TOP
 kisliku do. *you can't beat me."* (SEH 029-30)
 2s-suffice-on-1s NEG

In the following example we again have an attributive adjective (*ngulededeni*) in a noun clause separately marked by *ni*, followed, incidentally, by a complicated nominalisation (*madəgakuanɪ*) where the affix *-ani* terminates a directional/pronominal string of affixes to bind the whole cluster.

²² The nominaliser itself is the prefix *m(a)*, cf. *məzum dəf* in the following example.

²³ The grammatical category of "adjective" here is questionably distinct from "noun in apposition".

²⁴ Compare the obligatory possessedness of the nouns *bəŋ* and *məŋ* (section 2.3.2.2 below).

Dahalay ga bay ahkay ti
 daughter AS chief thus TOP
 adəm nu hini ngalededəni ni ti,
 3s-say 1s here striped-DEF DEF TOP
 mimiz ge ezəwi vrək-vrəkani ni ti,
 blood AS fly foul-DEF DEF TOP
 ha ere madəgakuani ka nu!
 until thing NOM-fall-on-1s-DEF on 1s

The snake said
 "Now here am I, the one who am so pretty:
 (to think that) the blood of that disgusting fly
 should go so far as to fall on me!" (FJ 34-6)

The following complex example has a series of words with the *-ani* affixe, each with its separate role. *Məgani*, as we shall see (section 2.3.2.2), requires the termination in the absence of a direct possessor, *guziteni* is another attributive adjective, *gani* marks the phrase in its general context, and *bəlaḡani* is another attributive adjective in an emphatic position, the whole noun phrase being marked by a separate *ni*.

Nahkay a vad nahəḡ keti,
 so at day other again
 wur ga məḡani guziteni gani bəlaḡani ni keti,
 child AS mother-DEF small-DEF AS-DEF one-DEF DEF again
 əra əjalay ahər.
 3s-come-PF 3s-think-PF head

So another day again
 his single small brother
 thought about it again. (PC 173)

2.3.2 Substitution

In a few cases, this bound form of *ni* has no overt specific referent, but rather substitutes in a shorthand way for the contextual background.

2.3.2.1 Gani (and gani ni) versus gayəḡ ni

The bound form of *ni* appears in the word *gani*, very frequently used in Muyang: in this form the referential marker when attached to the association marker *ga* substitutes for the whole referent (*ga-ni* (AS-DEF)). This is distinct from *gayəḡ* (AS-3s DEF) *ni*, where a pronoun is combined with the association marker followed by a separate *ni*. The referent of *gani* may be anything, from a human being to a complex event or general concept. Thus in the following example the definite reference of the words *wal gani* is to the couple ("the woman in this particular context")²⁵:

Nday te-te, zilim əci ndo.
 3p quiet stork 3s-hear NEG-PFVE
 Wal gani əcia, təhəḡarifəḡ ndo.
 wife AS-DEF 3s-hearPFVE 3p-reply-close NEG-PFVE

They didn't reply: stork didn't hear.
 The wife did hear, but they didn't reply.
 [The wife in this situation...] (FJ 004-5)

Thus the form *gani* often refers loosely to a whole concept (here "the fly in this particular context"):

Ezəwi gani amasləkabiyu va do aw?
 fly AS-DEF POT-3s-return-hither again NEG QMRK

The fly that did this will come back, won't he?
 [The fly in this event...] (Zil 039)

In the following example, rather than just "his beak", we may interpret "the beak that was made dirty by what he had just eaten":

Asəmadki mə gani səmad səmad ka wal medewel ni.
 3s-wipe-on mouth AS-DEF wipe wipe on woman old DEF

He wiped it off his beak on the old woman.
 [The beak of that event...] (Zil 083)

This general back-reference is confirmed when the phrase is repeated by the victim without a change of grammatical person (otherwise one might expect a change to *gayak* (AS-2s DEF) *ni*):

Kara kasəmadku mə gani ka nu ti kamam?
 2s-come 2s-wipe-on-1s mouth AS-DEF on 1s TOP why

"Why did you just wipe it off your beak on me?"
 [The beak of that event...] (Zil 085)

By contrast, *gayəḡ ni* (AS-3s DEF), refers to a specific possessor, typically human or animate and often the grammatical subject of the clause. Unlike the case of *gani*, the full range of possessive pronouns is found with *ni*²⁶, which has a primary function as a maintenance reference marker. In addition, however, the item thus marked has in consequence

²⁵ "His wife", with reference simply to the husband, would be *wal gayəḡ* (AS-3s DEF) *ni*.

²⁶ In their standard contracted forms, *goro*, *gayak*, *gayəḡ*, *geli*, *gekuli*, *gatay*.

some thematic prominence. In the following example the goat is definite, having already been mentioned, but is also the prize just won:

Mək əzəbiyu awak gayəŋ ni *Then he took home his goat.* (SEH 039)
 then 3s-take-home goat AS-3s DEF

In the first following example the wife is presented for the first time by *gani*, which identifies her sufficiently with regard to her husband (and his situation). What distinguishes *wal gayəŋ ni* in the second following example from *wal gani* in the first is primarily the fact that the wife, now an agent, is going to the well and is thematically prominent, whereas in the first it is the fact that the man was silly enough to tell his wife (a gaffe underlined by the thematically heavy topicaliser *nahəma*). In the first case the wife merely needs to be marked as belonging to the situation (local definiteness), while in what follows we are encouraged to pay attention to what she is about to do.

Nəhkay əra ənjia ana nəŋ agam a nahəma, *So when he got home with it*
 so 3s-come-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE with 3s home PFVE TOPIC
 əŋgəhədi ana wal gani. *he told his wife.* (IW A.20-1)
 3s-tell-IO-PF to wife AS-DEF

A vad nəhaŋ ti, *Another day*
 at day other TOP
 wal gayəŋ ni əra əro ka yam ti... *when his wife was going for water...* (IW A.35-6)
 wife AS-3s DEF 3s-come 3s-go on water TOP

It is also perfectly possible to say *gani ni* at a subsequent mention of a thematically quiescent character. The narrow reference field of *-ni* in *gani* does not fulfil the same wider participant reference (and thematic) role as the separate *ni*, and thus both are needed²⁷.

Əra ənjia ana nəŋ agam a, *When he got home with it*
 3s-come-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE with 3s home PFVE
 əhi ana wal gani ni keti, *he said to his wife again...* (IW B.20-21)
 3s-say-PF to wife AS-DEF DEF again

Əra ənjia nahəma, *When she got home,*
 3s-come-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE TOPIC
 zal gani ni əsləkabiya a gili gayəŋ na keti. *her husband returned from his bush again.* (IW B.68-9)
 man AS-DEF DEF 3s-return-home-PFVE at bush AS-3s DEF-PFVE again

In the following example there are three uses of *gani*. The first *gani* refers in a typical way to the preceding general concept, but the next two examples mirror the use of *gayəŋ ni* in the previous example rather closely, in each case following a time-adverbial: the only distinction here is that at that point the hyena is not thematically prominent, but rather the wife (the dominant character in the story).

Əhəraya mək əhərkiya məvayam na *So it turned out that then she skinned the hare*
 3s-come-out-PFVE then 3s-skin-on-PFVE hare DEF-PFVE
 akaba makombro na. *along with the monitor.*
 with monitor DEF-PFVE
 mək ədi eli gani. *Then she prepared a sauce with them.*
 then 3s-prepare-PF sauce AS-DEF
 Ka nəŋ ni *At that time*
 on 3s DEF
 zal gani dirlengi nəŋ abi a məgam fəfaŋa bi. *her husband the hyena hadn't come home yet.*
 husband AS-DEF hyena 3s 3s-away at home yet NEG
 Zamama nahəma, mələkarawa əgia ti, *After a while, when it was evening,*
 time TOPIC evening 3s-happen-PFVE TOP
 zal gani ənjia a məgam a. *her husband came home.* (HW 025-30)
 husband AS-DEF 3s-arrive-PFVE at home PFVE

In fact, in this whole text, the form *gayəŋ ni* does not occur. However, *gayəŋ nəkəŋ* and *gani nəkəŋ*, more intensive forms, do:

²⁷ See further Section 2.2.

Zama ti *In a moment*
 time TOP
 wal gayan nakəŋ əhəlibiyu daf e mite va. *his wife brought him out millet boule into the yard.*
 woman AS-3s REFMK 3s-bring-IO-hither boule at yard into-PFVE (HW 034)

Wal gani nakəŋ əhi ahkado *His wife said*
 woman AS-DEF REFMK 3s-say-IO-PF COMP
 nak zum daf ciliŋ səki. *"Just you eat your millet boule."* (HW 045)
 2s eat boule only just

These particular variants occur within the text in that order, the reference of *gani* thus perhaps being to an established domestic situation, similar to the relationship of pronoun to noun.

2.3.2.2 Obligatorily possessed nouns: *bəŋ* and *məŋ*

The words *bəŋ* and *məŋ* mean respectively father and mother: whenever they are not followed by the association marker *ga* (e.g. *məŋ ga zlam* "mother of thing" = tree) they are followed by the bound form *-ani*, often itself followed by another *ni* or *nakəŋ*. This usage is because these words define a relationship that is always specific and are thus obligatorily possessed: the person referred to must be *someone's* parent. The form *-ani* thus, like *gani* (see above), refers to the background context, i.e. to this *someone*, and is translatable by the appropriate possessive adjective.

Bəŋani ni day kaw aday, *His father and mother*
 father-DEF DEF also snatching stick
 məŋani ni day kaw aday... *each snatched up a stick...* (PC 195)
 mother-DEF DEF also snatching stick

Bəŋani nakəŋ ədəm ahkay. *That's what his father said.* (PC 191)
 father-DEF REFMK 3s-say thus

Nahkəkay məŋani ni naŋ abu naŋ abu. *So there his mother was.* (Tak 053)
 so mother-DEF DEF 3s 3s-exist 3s-exist

Nahkay məŋani nakəŋ əra əsləkaba ədoro ke kəzir. *Now his mother had gone to look for grass.*
 so mother-DEF REFMK 3s-come 3s-depart 3s-go-CONT on grass (Tak 200)

This usage extends into the derivative expression (literally "child of mother") used for brother or sister:

Mək wur ga məŋani nakəŋ suwwa əsləkabiya ana mili na. *Then his brother came straight*
 then child AS mother-DEF REFMK straight 3s-return with ring DEF-PFVE *back with the ring.* (Tak 317)

2.3.2.3 Nihi

This is a lexicalised conflation of *ni* (DEF) and *hi* ("here"). As with *gani*, the *ni* sums up the context, so that the combination could be loosely glossed "the background here". As with other bound forms of *ni*, this can be made more definite and thematic with a further *ni*, as in the second example below.

Nihi nahəma, vumikabiyu zla, ga bəza. *"Now then, boys, let him have it!"*²⁸
 now TOPIC give-2p-IO-on-in-into then AS children (Mon 205)

Aya nihi ni nahkay aw? *"So that's the way it was, was it?"*
 so here DEF thus QMRK (Zil 037)

Əhi mam? *"What did he say?"*
 3s-say-IO-PF what?
 A, zlam gani nihi *"Oh, what he said was such-and-such."*
 oh, thing AS-DEF here *[that we have already heard]* (IW A.24)

2.3.3 Demonstratives and adverbs – formulaic uses

The addition of bound local definiteness to adverbs and other words produces more or less lexicalised forms.

²⁸ The expression *ga bəza* is idiomatic, and does not imply association.

hini

The pairing of the definite marker *ni* with the locative/temporal adverb *hi* “here” or “now” is very common, and has the meaning “the (one) here”, thus “this (one)”.

Hini mam? *What's this here?*

nini

This is a pairing of *ni* with itself. It means “the one at a little distance”, an intermediate deictic between *hini* and *teguni*. As such, it sheds an interesting light on the underlying nature of *ni* as a spatial deictic: *nini* can be translated as “that (one) there”.

teguni

Similarly, the adverb *tegi* “over there” combines with the definite marker to form *teguni* “that (one) over there”.

kani

Synchronically *kani* is a noun meaning “today”, but it seems composed of the preposition *ka* “on” followed by the definite marker – “on this [day]”. Similar is *eweni* “yesterday”, (compare *awa nahay* “the day before yesterday”), but, logically, *hajəŋ* “tomorrow” does not have the *ni* termination. The phrase *si hajəŋ*, loosely “see you tomorrow”, does not in fact refer to a specific day.

eslini

A somewhat different case is *eslini*, which with its meaning of “there” or “then/next” functions synchronically as an adverb, but which may have had a similar origin.

kigeni

This agglutinated word is an extension of *gani* which is added to the preposition *ka* (with the palatal prosody of the *ni* prevailing leftwards, as in *eweni* “yesterday”) to give the meaning “according to what is normal” or “normally”.

2.3.4 Emphasis

A standard emphatic process is to duplicate a noun phrase (or part of it) and add *ni* to it. The fundamental meaning of a repeated noun phrase followed by *ni* is an emphatic underlining of the constituent. A direct coupling with the second utterance of the noun phrase using the bound form *-ani* also occurs, as with nominalisations and adjectives: it creates a closer essential emphasis – “self” or “the real thing”.

2.3.4.1 Contrastive emphasis with non-bound *ni*

We have seen in section 2.2.2.2.5.1 above that *naŋ naŋ ni*, in duplicating the pronoun, adds more emphasis to the differentiating construction *naŋ ni*. In the following example the normal phrase *ambəl ga sla* “cow-leather” is interrupted by the emphatic back-referencing construction which, with the topicalisation, heavily underlines *ga sla*:

Nahaŋ ni kəzəbiyu ambəl gayak.

other DEF 2s-take-home skin AS-2s

Ambəl naŋ naŋ ni ti

skin 3s 3s DEF TOP

ga sla.

AS cow

Then you get your skin.

This [particular] skin I'm talking about, of course,

is cow-leather. (Tin 012-3)

This also works with possessive pronouns and noun phrases:

Āŋgakabu aslu ni:

3s-return-on-in meat DEF

gayaŋ gayaŋ ni dəŋ,

AS-3s AS-3s DEF piled

ge eyeŋ ge eyeŋ ni gəzit.

AS squirrel AS squirrel DEF small

He shared out the meat:

(the meat) for himself, in a big pile,

(but the meat) for the squirrel, only a little. (SC 091-2)

The following example shows two methods of emphasis, both involving topicalisation: the first apparently right-shifts the grammatical object from its normal place between the verb and indirect object into a position of focus (but see above, section 1.3), and the second repeats the whole verb while left-shifting the possessor as well as duplicating it.²⁹

²⁹ In the phrase *ana zal gani na* the *gani* refers locally to the husband, while the *na* refers to missing direct object, sand.

Ahəliya ana zal gani na ti,
 3s-gather-IO-out for man AS-DEF DEF-SEP TOP
 wiyəŋ.
 sand
 Gayəŋ gayəŋ ni ahəlaya ti,
 AS-3s AS-3s DEF 3s-gather-out TOP
 ahəlaya dəf a.
 3s-gather-out boule SEP

*The thing that she brought out for her husband
 was sand.
 For her very own what she brought out,
 she brought out millet boule. (Zil 024-5)*

2.3.4.2 Intensive emphasis with bound *ni*

This emphatic duplication also occurs with the bound form *-ani*. This has a distinctly more internal reference consistent with other uses of the bound form. In the following case this signifies “the real thing”:

Nak kəzum dəf dəfani ti,
 2s 2s-eat boule boule-DEF TOP
 kəhəluwaya wiyəŋ ti kamam?
 2s-gather-1sIO-out sand TOP why

*“You’re eating proper boule,
 why did you bring me out sand?” (Zil 028-9)*

In the following example the repeated pronoun followed by bound *ni* is reinforced by the expression *ahar gayak* “by yourself”.

Kani du
 today TOP(Fulfulde)
 si təvukkabiyu kwa
 OBLIG(Hausa) 3p-give-2sIO-on-home OBLIG
 do ti,
 NEG TOP
 nak nakani kəbi kəzum ahər gayak bi.
 2s 2s 2s-NEG-exist 2s-eat hand AS-2s NEG-exist

*Today,
 you must be fed:
 otherwise
 you alone aren’t going to eat a thing by yourself.
 (Mon 202-3)*

Emphasis is of course another way of underlining theme, so in this case we are again within the discourse nature of *ni*.

2.4 The use of *ni* at clause level

We have seen that *ni* is both a marker of definiteness and an indicator of thematic prominence, insofar as the two concepts can be practically distinguished. There follow some other specific uses of *ni* apart from the marking of simple noun phrases: again, the choice of whether or not to use it depends to some extent on thematic considerations.

2.4.1 Relative clauses

Relative clauses, whose nature is to define, are normally by virtue of their nature part of a definite noun phrase (“the person/thing that...”), and are thus almost invariably delimited by a final *ni* which properly speaking marks the head noun.

Ere gani ya àgravabiyu ni zləzladə...
 thing AS-DEF REL 3s-do-REFL-home DEF difficult

*The thing that has happened here is difficult...
 (WC 084)*

Àdəbabiyyu divi gatay ya tēvelin ni ...
 3s-look-home path AS-3p REL 3p-go-round DEF

*He looked for the way that they had gone round...
 (S+C 057)*

Occasionally, of course, the noun phrase containing the relative clause is *not* definite:

Àsər ere ya ti ahi va do.
 3s-know thing REL TOP 3s-say-IO more NEG

*He didn’t know what he could say to him any more.
 (SC 094)*

Tamal ti bay ya ti àzəgadə maslaŋ nahan a ti,
 COND TOP person REL TOP 3s-throw-PFVE someone other PFVE TOP
 tislinqikivu həya...
 3p-kill-on-into at-once

*If one of them throws the other,
 they kill [the other] for him
 straight away... (WC 005-6)*

The thing that someone does not know may still be marked with *ni*, probably because there is more thematic emphasis on it being *something*, rather than just a total lack of ideas. Also, the combination *ya ti* (see section 3.4.3) does occur together with *ni*.

Ègia àsər ere ya ti agray ni va do So at that point she didn't know what to do any more.
3s-happen-PFVE 3s-know thing REL TOP 3s-do DEF more NEG (IW B.75)

Noun phrases containing relative clauses can also (rarely) be signalled, like other noun phrases, with the thematically strong participant reference marker *nakəŋ* in place of *ni*. here as of course always the reference is to the head word and the significance is at a high discourse level.

Həya meni wur ge məŋani gəđakani At once that elder brother,
at-once (filler) child AS mother-DEF big-DEF
ya zlam gayəŋ abu nakəŋ... the one who was rich... (WM 156-7)
REL thing AS-3s 3s-be REFMK

Baba, ere ya ti aɡri daliya ana ahur geli nakəŋ, Father, that thing that has been harming our beans,
Father thing REL TOP 3s-do-IO harm to bean AS-1p REFMK
naŋ hi. it's this here. (Mon 032)
3s here

Thus there is a logical bias towards a noun phrase containing a relative clause being marked by *ni*, but, that said, the choice of zero, *ni* or *nakəŋ* at the close of a noun phrase containing a relative clause is not essentially different from that in other noun phrases.

2.4.2 Clauses with local back-reference

Relative clauses are a sort of half-way house, being theoretically part of a noun phrase to which a following *ni* properly applies, but other clauses are also so marked. These all refer to a specific concept or event that is prominent in the speaker's mind (and thus thematically important).

In this example from the end of a story an etiology is given: fly's head is bandaged, and as a result is parti-coloured. Two clauses are marked with *ni* in a strongly deictic, but thus of course also thematic, sense. In the second case especially, there is a clear definite reference to the reader's background knowledge of flies.

Andav ahkay ni. That's the way it ended.
3s-end-PF thus DEF
Ha kani, Even today,
until today
ezəwi ahar gani bəđ-bəđani tata didiliŋani daya ni. (that's why) flies have that white and black head.
fly head AS-DEF white-DEF next black-DEF also DEF (Zil 150-2)

In the following example hyena has challenged elephant to a wrestling match, and in elephant's response the reference of *ni* to the challenge is plain.

Nak kara makadvaba ata nu a day ni, The very idea of yours, fighting with me first!
2s 2s-come 1p-fight-out with 1s SEP first DEF
nu ti makadvu ata nak aw? - am I the sort to fight with you? (HW 113-4)
1s TOP 1p-fight with 2s QMK

In the following example a wife tells how to comfort her husband: the normal word order if the mouth (which is not in the least definite or thematic in this case) alone were marked with *ni* would be *a ma ni vu*. thus it is the whole clause that is marked.

Kazay duwa kəfiviya a ma vu ni [That's the occasion when] you take your breast
2s-take breast 2s-put-in-into at mouth into DEF and put it into his mouth. (Mari 178)

A clear and regular case of marking clauses that make back-reference with *ni* occurs after the phrase *kwa enekwiŋ* "just now". The usage is overwritten by topicalisation, where it occurs.

Kwa enekwiŋ zilim ɛndivikabaya kur a ni, *Just now when stork insulted you*
 since just-now stork 3s-insult-on-in-out-PFVE 2s PFVE DEF
 kɛhɛŋgarifɛŋ naŋgay? *why didn't you reply?*
 2s-reply-close why-not
 Àhi ɛndivi nu ɔhu mam? *He said, "How did he insult me?"*
 3s-say-IO 3s-insult 1s 3s-say-1sIO what
 Kwa enekwiŋ ɔgrikaba sa ana leli a ti, *"Just now when he greeted us*
 since just-now 3s-do-IO-on-in-PFVE greeting to 1p PFVE TOP
 kici ndo ti, *you didn't hear,*
 2s-hear-PF NEG TOP
 ɔhuk... *he said...."* (FJ 015-20)
 3s-say-2sIO

Àhi ɛdiɛfiŋ kwa enekwiŋ kindivi nu ni kamam? *He said, "Why did you really insult me*
 3s-say-IO truly since just-now 2s-insult 1s DEF why *just now?"* (FJ 028)

All the recorded examples of *kwa enekwiŋ* followed by *ni* (as opposed to *ti*) in fact relate to the pointing out of an insult. In these cases the use of *ti* would background the reporting of the insult, as indeed happens in the first example above when the speaker goes on to cite the actual words, which *ti* throws into prominence.

2.4.3 Insults

Insults are a special case, as the labelling aspect of them – naming a person using a derogatory noun - asserts a definite thing-ness. In the following example the use of *ni* is typical, and the second occurrence attaches phonologically to the preceding word (another close internal reference), and thematically to the whole noun phrase.³⁰

A kɛhɛŋgrufɛŋ do ti kamam? *"Why don't you answer me?"*
 oh 2s-reply-1sIO-close NEG TOP why
 Ziya ma ni *Long-mouthed thing*
 long mouth DEF
 elifi ga zɛlaba ga wal gayakani. *(like) your wife's axe handle!"*
 handle AS axe AS wife AS-2s-DEF
 ɛndiviyu naŋ aŋkay. *He insulted him like that.* (Zil 11-13)
 3s-insult-into-PF 3s thus

Àhu ziya ma, *"He said to me 'Long mouth*
 3s-say-1sIO-PF long mouth
 elifi ga zɛlaba ga wal goroani ti, *handle of my wife's axe'*
 handle AS axe AS wife AS-1s-DEF TOP
 naŋ ni ti ma mɛdɛmani aw? *- is that the kind of thing to say?"* (Zil 143-5)
 3s DEF TOP word NOM-say-DEF QMRK

Insults, of course, are intended by the speaker to have great thematic prominence.

2.5 The collocation ni ti

When *ni* and *ti* occur together in that order, each normally has its distinct role: in the following example *hini* "this – the one here" is a set grouping (section 2.3.3) separately topicalised.

Aɔɛm, Yawa hini ti *He said, "Well, this one here, you see,*
 3s-say well here TOP
 jekjeka akada goro ni huya zla. *is just exactly like mine."* (S+C 072)
 exactly like AS-1s DEF just then

In the following example the hernia is definite, having previously been mentioned, and thematic (he wouldn't have been nearly so funny without it), and the fact that Jerevu jumped is also known, and used as a point of departure for the new information that the girls laughed.

Tàra tɛpiya Jerevu naŋ abu aher ana ngurukuk ni ti, *When they saw Jerevu jumping with the hernia*
 3p-come 3s-see-PFVE Jerevu 3s 3s-be 3s-jump with hernia DEF TOP

³⁰ However, the tone on the final *ni* in both these cases is high, as in the isolated word, whereas the tone of the affixal *-ni* is usually mid. The high tone, as in the case of these insults, is usually phrase-final.

tədəgiki ana seri.
3p-fall-IO-on to laughter

they fell about laughing. (Zil 065-6)

In the next example *ni* concludes the definite relative clause, while the *ti* topicalises all the preceding material:

Àhi ana mbeli,
3s-say-IO to elephant
Nu hini ya kamənjalu ni ti,
1s here REL 2s-look-at-1s DEF TOP
nisli arəŋ do...
1s-suffice-IO something NEG

He said to elephant
"I here, the one that you're looking at,
I can't do anything..." (SEH 003-4)

In the next case the negative marker is both made definite (and thematically salient) and topicalised (see also section 3.4.2 below). It is made thematically salient because the negative is emphatically the contrary of the preceding clause, more so than in the case of the parallel expression *do ti*.

Hini kəpələma bəbəŋ ge kula, bəza goro,
here 2-pay-2p-PFVE father AS 2p-PFVE children AS-1s
do ni ti
NEG DEF TOP
akal nu nəbi,
normally 1s 1s-not-exist
təzələbbiya nu a dal-dal.
3p-beat-home-PFVE 1s PFVE much

"Now here you've avenged your father,
my children:
if that hadn't happened
then I wouldn't be here -
they beat me up so." (S+C 073-4)

In all these cases the markers *ni* and *ti* fall naturally and individually into place, and their juxtaposition is coincidental.

3. Topicalisation and theme: *ti* and *nahəma*

As was said in the Introduction, topicalisation has the function of making the known, topicalised element a point of departure for what follows, thus backgrounding the topicalised element and highlighting what follows. The normal Muyang topic marker *ti* regularly occurs clause-finally, thus the typical topicalised element is an entire clause. The role of this topicaliser is extremely extensive, not only in terms of its frequency in the language, but in the variety of clausal relationships that it signals.

3.1 Topicalised clauses – optionality and theme

The study of discourse markers is rendered somewhat imprecise owing to their dependence on the mindset of the speaker at any one time (cf. Jones (1992:128, 134)). This is particularly so of the topicalisation marker, where a simple pause or just an implied logical clause structure may in certain cases, as we shall see in section 3.2, do as well (cf. Wolff (1983:258f.)). Indeed, since Muyang does not deal to any great extent in adverbial clauses that are syntactically marked as subordinate, but marks the relationship of such clauses by topicalisation, syntactically we normally find two main clauses separated at will by *ti*, and syntax is not violated if *ti* is omitted, only the higher-level thematic relationship between the clauses is altered.

The relationship between clauses where the topicaliser may be present or absent can be defined thematically. For example, when the relationship between clauses is temporal/circumstantial, the first is normally topicalised in order to highlight the second thematically – the final clause is the climax of the sequence:

Dirləŋgi nakəŋ ara esey zla.
hyena REFMK 3s-come 3s-cut so
Asay aslu ni kacawala ahkay ti,
3s-cut meat DEF light thus TOP
ya ti adəs do diki-dikiyani ni ti,
REL TOP 3s-weigh NEG NEG-DEF DEF TOP
adəm hini hi ga bay ga vu.
3s-say-PF this here AS owner AS body

So hyena started cutting up (the meat).
As he cut it lightly,
into pieces that hardly weighed anything,
he said, "This is for the owner". (SC 082-5)

But this is not obligatory, even in what approximates to a tail-head construction. Here the two actions are thematically on the same level, a sequence with no climax:

Àhəriyu àsekumbiyu sla gayaj, sisi.
 3s-go-in-PF 3s-buy-hither cow AS-3s 5-francs
 Àsekuma sla na,
 3s-buy-PFVE cow DEF-PFVE
 àru ka melaŋ ga aslu məkəleni.
 3s-go-PF on place AS meat NOM-dry-DEF

*He went in and bought himself a cow, for five francs.
 When he had bought the cow,
 he went to where they sell dried meat. (SC 002-4)*

In procedural texts tail-head clauses divide the action up into steps, but topicalisation of these clauses is not common during a simple sequence of actions: again, no particular action in such a sequence is thematically more important than another.

Mazay ndizeni məzləb məzləb.
 1p-take red 1p-beat 1p-beat
 Məzləba, əzləbva,
 1p-beat-PFVE 3s-beat-REFL-PFVE
 mək masak.
 then 1p-sieve
 Məsakaba,
 1p-sieve-distinct-PFVE
 mək mazay nahaj bədbədani mihi.
 then 1p-take other white 1p-crush
 Əhiva,
 3s-crush-REFL-PFVE
 mazay mebedəkəbu tay.
 1p-take 1p-mix-on-in 3p

*We take the red [clay] and beat it.
 When we've beaten it and it's beaten,
 then we sieve it.
 When we've sieved it out,
 then we take the white [clay] and crush it.
 When it's crushed,
 we take it and mix them. (Pot 011-4)*

In this particular text temporal clauses are only topicalised when they are not immediately tail-head: i.e. not immediately sequential and thus implying a change of pace and some thematic shift of emphasis.

Mək kafəkəf ekəli.
 then 2s-put-down 3s-dry
 Kejehekəbu, kejehekəbu,
 2s-gather-on-in 2s-gather-on-in
 àgra kay ekəlia ti,
 3s-do-REFL-PFVE much 3s-dry-PFVE TOP
 əsliya kaway va do ti,
 3s-suffice-PFVE 2s-want more NEG TOP
 məsək kukoro ka has.
 then 2s-go for red-earth

*Then you set it out to dry.
 You gather it all up,
 then when all of it has dried
 and it's enough and you don't want any more
 then you go and get some red earth. (Pot 057-9)*

In a similar text the tail-head construction is also topicalised when there is no immediate sequence of action – the link is thematic – a change of pace and emphasis - rather than merely sequential.

Kəjalay ahar.
 2s-think head
 Kəjala ahar a ti,
 2s-think-PFVE head PFVE TOP
 mək kataskay zlam məzum gayak.
 then 2s-plan thing NOM-eat AS-2s

*You have a think.
 When you've thought
 then you plan your meals. (Mar 077-8)*

Another procedural text also uses topicalisation in tail-head constructions where there is no direct sequence of actions (as at either end of the pause in work while the piece dries in the sun).

Kizidekiya lala njələta,
 2s-carve-on-out well clean
 akaba kəgri gododuk lala.
 with 2s-do-IO hollow well
 Kizideba ti,
 2s-carve-out-PFVE TOP
 kafəkədi ana fat.
 2s-put-down-IO to sun
 Kəfəkədiya ana fat a,
 2s-put-down-IO-PFVE to sun PFVE
 fat ekəliŋaba lala ngelef-ŋgelef.
 sun dry-CAUS-out well very-dry

*You carve it out nice and clean
 and you make the hollow well.
 When you've carved it out
 you lay it in the sun.
 When you've laid it in the sun.
 the sun dries it out thoroughly.*

Èkəliŋaba ti, *When it's dried out*
 3s-dry-CAUS-out-PFVE TOP
 mazlara gani kazaya keti... *then you take it up again...* (Tin 005-9)
 now(Mandara) AS-DEF 2s-take-out again

Another example of a break in the sequence of actions confirms this rule:

Kendefki kulum ni gwar a dalahar gani bu. *You pierce the hollowed wood through on top.*
 2s-pierce-on hollow DEF towards at crown AS-DEF in
 Kəndefa ti, *When you've pierced it*
 2s-pierce-PFVE TOP
 mazlara gani kafəkad... *then you lay it down...* (Tin 010-1)
 now(Mandara) AS-DEF 2s-put-down

In such instances we seem to see the speaker assigning greater thematic importance to changes of thematic focus in the activity than to mere procedural sequences of actions, and this thematic importance is signalled by topicalisation.

3.2 Clauses related by topicalisation

Where clauses are linked by *tɪ*, neither is grammatically subordinate to the other. Rather, the topicalised clause is backgrounded by the topicaliser in order to highlight the following clause. The syntactic relationship between these clauses is largely dependent on the context: thus these clauses read naturally in relationships such as time (or more loosely, circumstance), condition, and purpose. Sections that follow will treat each of these relationships in turn. Although such linked clauses are not, grammatically speaking, in a full main-clause to subordinate-clause relationship in either direction (but simply concatenated), there is a subordination of the topicalised clause which is thematic rather than grammatical. Thus if we use labels such as "temporal clause", these are functional rather than syntactically distinctive. Only the specific condition markers go any way towards subordinating a clause in the classic sense with a specifically defined link, and the fact that in remote conditions they may mark both protasis and apodosis negates any idea of grammatical subordination even there.

3.2.1 Clauses related temporally or circumstantially: tail-head constructions

Topicalised clauses readily fall into sequential temporal relationships, without the need for any specific temporal marker. As we have already noted, these "temporal clauses" are not syntactically subordinate, but only thematically so in being marked as a point of departure for what follows. One could equally say that the topicalised clause gives the circumstantial background for what follows. Non-topicalised verbs and clauses in Muyang may also, though perhaps rarely except in the case of verbs of motion, be concatenated to mark a simple sequence of activities.

3.2.1.1 Clauses concatenated without topicalisation

In the following extract of dialogue, a whole sequence of proposed activities, involving motion in different directions, is sequenced before the goal is reached - and only then is the sequence as a whole topicalised:

Macuhway makoro, *"We'll run on*
 1p-run 1p-go
 minjia, *and when we get there*
 1p-arrive PFVE
 masləkəbiya məhəŋgribiyu eri ti, *we'll turn round and come back,*
 1p-return-hither 1p-give-back-hither face TOP
 tamal bay gani ətama nu ana huwa kam, *and if that person beats me in the race*
 COND person AS-DEF 3s-surpass-PFVE 1s with run TOP (Ful)
 azay awak ni. *he gets the goat."* (TBH A.11-3)
 3s-take goat DEF

In the story from which these extracts is taken, there is much toing and froing as the proposal is acted out, and the verb "to arrive" has varying treatments, but when it is topicalised (once) this is done with the thematically powerful *nahəma*, not with *tɪ*. Thus the temporal sequence of the clauses (which is in any case not in focus) is, by default, implicit in their juxtaposition, without, in most cases, any topicalisation.

Nahəkəy hadagər ədiki ana huwa təŋgəm təŋgəm, *So buck started to run jumping*
 so buck 3s-fall-on-PF to run jumping jumping
 ɛnji bak *when he had got a little way*
 3s-arrive-PF little

ðhi nak eley krəŋ?
3s-say-IO 2s where toad

he said "Where are you, toad?"
(TBH A.36-7)

Ènji ɓak keti nahəma,
3s-arrive-PF little again TOPIC
kɪnji eley krəŋ?
2s-arrive-PF where toad

When he had got a little way again
"Where have you got to, toad?" (TBH A.40)

Acuhway acuhway ènjia wudak wudak,
3s-run 3s-run 3s-arrive-PFVE almost almost
nak eley krəŋ?
2s where toad

On he ran, and when he was almost there
"Where are you, toad?" (TBH A.42)

Ènji ɓak
3s-arrive-PF little
ba azalay
only 3s-call
krəŋ awuli ka ma.
toad 3s-reply-IO on front

When he had got a little way,
he kept on calling,
and a toad kept replying in front. (TBH A.50)

3.2.1.2 Clauses linked by topicalisation

It is only in the explanation that precedes the sequence of activities described in the previous section that *ti* is used to underline the connection between clauses: this points out to the hearer (the buck) that he needs to act when he has run on – it is not just a natural sequence.

Kɪnji ɓak ti
2s-arrive little TOP
kazalay nu.
2s-call 1s

"When you get on a little,
call me." (TBH B.20)

Where clauses are related by topicalisation, often the semantic link between them is entirely dependent on the context, and is weak. A conditional or consequential relationship could often be read into them quite as easily as a temporal one:

Ba asa arəŋ gana gəzit ti
only 3s-cut-SEP something AS-DEF-SEP small TOP
'Ga bay ge vu',
AS owner AS body
asa kay ti
3s-cut-SEP much TOP
'Ga bay məhərani'.
AS person NOM-skin-DEF

So it went on: when/if/as/Ø he cut off a little bit [of meat]
"That's for the owner."
When/if/as/Ø he cut off a big bit
"That's for the skinner." (SC 089-90)

Kəjurkabu meteliŋ ge huzluv
2s-choose-on-in buttock AS millet-stalk
ya ti sulumani nɔrətətani ni nahəma,
REL TOP good-DEF sharp-DEF DEF TOPIC
kəjurkaba kalkal ti,
2s-choose-in-on-PFVE equal TOP
kəcəl, kəcəl kɪnjikiviya faŋ ti,
2s-climb 2s-climb 2s-arrive-on-into-PFVE actually TOP
ŋgaya wuse day kəhi ba.
COMP hello first 2s-say-IO NEG

"Select the ends of millet stalk
that are nice and sharp, then
when you have arranged them neatly
climb up and when you get to him
don't even say 'Hello'." (SC 104-8)

The topicalised point of departure for a temporal sequence may be a noun with temporal significance as well as a clause:

Aya məlakarawa ti,
yes evening TOP
məzuma zlam ka ahar a ti
1p-eat-PFVE thing on hand PFVE TOP
makoro.
1p-go

"Yes in the evening
when we've eaten what we have,
we'll go." (S+C 012)

3.2.1.3 Clauses linked in tail-head constructions

Classic tail-head constructions also occur with topicalisation, with a temporal/circumstantial link of variable strength. Though the tail-become-head clause is thematically subordinate to the new information that follows, it is in its grammatical form a mere repetition of the preceding clause and in its form just as much a main clause in the head position as in the tail.

| | |
|--|---|
| Mazlara gani edrem ni cizlim àdiya a yam va. | <i>Then the horn leapt right into the water.</i> |
| now AS-DEF horn DEF leaping 3s-fall-into-PFVE at water into-PFVE | |
| Edrem ni àdiya a yam ni va ti, | <i>When the horn had leapt into the water,</i> |
| horn DEF 3s-fall-into-PFVE at water DEF into-PFVE TOP | |
| dūwa ni day avu a mandaray ga tay ni bu va bi... | <i>there wasn't any milk in their jars, either... (IW B.62-4)</i> |
| milk DEF also 3s-be-in at jar AS 3p DEF in longer not-exist | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Nahkay zal ni àdēm wal ni ti | <i>So the man said: "This wife of mine</i> |
| thus man DEF 3s-say woman DEF TOP | |
| èci slimi dō gōdak, | <i>she doesn't understand much:</i> |
| 3s-understand name NEG big | |
| hajəŋ təhiya ma eci dō, | <i>every day you tell her something</i> |
| tomorrow 3p-say-IO-PFVE word 3s-understand NEG | <i>and she doesn't understand.</i> |
| hajəŋ təhiya ma eci dō ti, | <i>Since every day you tell her something</i> |
| tomorrow 3p-say-IO-PFVE word 3s-understand NEG TOP | <i>and she doesn't understand,</i> |
| nəgri mam ana wal ni mam? | <i>what can I do with her?"</i> |
| 1s-do-IO what to woman DEF what | <i>(IW B.76-7)</i> |

3.2.2 Clauses related conditionally

Conditional clauses need not be structurally distinct from temporal clauses: the context alone often supplies the idea of condition, certainly in open conditions. Semantically the topic marker *ti* serves as little more than a highlighter of the following clause, and a conditional relationship between such clauses is implicit at best. If in the following example the clauses were not topicalised the implication would be that this is a normal, boring, everyday sequence of actions.

| | |
|--|--|
| Təgəjaha bay gana ti, | <i>If someone [whoever] succeeds in pulling</i> |
| 3s-pull-PFVE person AS-DEF-PFVE TOP | |
| təzligakiviya ka maslaŋ nahəŋ na ti, | <i>their man and throws him down onto the side</i> |
| 3p-throw-on-into-PFVE on person other DEF-PFVE TOP | |
| azay awak ni. | <i>of the other, then he takes the goat. (SEH 022-3)</i> |
| 3s-take goat DEF | |

In the following example the condition is more specific, as the apodosis is a firm negative:

| | |
|--|--|
| Àhi hi nahəma, | <i>He said "Now then,</i> |
| 3s-say-IO here TOPIC | |
| ru kədibiya aku ana leli a mara meviyek, | <i>go and search out some fire for us to grill it:</i> |
| go 2s-make-home-out fire for 1p SEP 1p-come 1p-grill | |
| dō ti, | <i>otherwise</i> |
| NEG TOP | |
| mafəkad nahkay ti | <i>if we leave it like that</i> |
| 1p-leave thus TOP | |
| àbəlay dō. | <i>it's not good."</i> |
| 3s-be-good NEG | <i>(SC 099-100)</i> |

It is also possible to insert an explicit condition marker, (*t*)*amal*, normally in less likely conditions: in such cases the protasis is almost invariably topicalised.

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Tamal kəgəjaha nu a ti, | <i>"If you succeed in pulling me</i> |
| COND 2s-pull-PFVE 1s PFVE TOP | |
| nədəgukviya ka nak a nahəma, ³¹ | <i>and I fall down on your side,</i> |
| 1s-fall-2s-IO-into-PFVE on 2s PFVE TOPIC | |
| əgia kəzuma awak na | <i>then you've won the goat,</i> |
| 3s-happen-PFVE 2s-win-PFVE goat DEF-PFVE | |
| dō ti ahəmam? | <i>definitely."</i> |
| NEG TOP how | <i>(SEH 044-5)</i> |

³¹ On the use of *nahəma* here see below, section 3.6.

Amal nənggəta dabari gana ti, nasləka, do ti ahəmam? *If I find a way I'm leaving.*
 COND 1s-find-PFVE means AS-DEF-PFVE TOP 1s-leave NEG TOP how (Tak 361)

However the topicalisation of clauses introduced by (*t*)amal, though normal, is not obligatory. In the following cases the condition is quite open:

Tamal məlafat əgĩa, kafəkad bəci. *If it is afternoon, you put down your mat. (Mar 003)*
 COND afternoon 3s-happen-PFVE 2s-put-down mat [In the afternoon....]

Eslini tamal sulay afəŋ, əvuk. *Then if he has any money, he gives it to you. (Mar 053)*
 there COND money 3s-close 3s-give-2sIO

Watu amal kazlapay, zlapay nəngu ticəkki va do. *That is, if you say anything they don't accept it.*
 that-is(Ful) COND 2s-speak speaking even 3p-hear-2sIO-on more NEG (Db 040)

Amal kwa zal gani ni naŋ abi nəngu, *Even if her husband was not there*
 COND indeed man AS-DEF DEF 3s 3s-not-exist even
 asivu ana gədamay gani ni lala. *she served her brother-in-law well. (PC 199-200)*
 3s-cut-IO-in for in-law AS-DEF DEF well.

The following example also uses the coordinate marker *akal*, indicating a hesitant desire, to introduce the apodosis. This is not an open condition, but the expression of a wish: the protasis is topicalised each time, the second time using a Fulfulde marker. This particular passage is rich in discourse features.

Àhi ana wal gani: Dəgiya nu ti, *He said to his wife, "You know,*
 3s-say-IO-PF to wife AS-DEF indeed 1s TOP
 nawayay ti akal nakoro nəmənjiyu kəsa goro, *I'd like to go and see my village*
 1s-want TOP COND 1s-go 1s-look-into village AS-1s
 do ti ahəmam, tamal ti kəgəskaba ti ni.³² *actually, if you accept."*
 NEG TOP how COND TOP 2s-accept-PFVE TOP DEF
 Wal gani àhi: Hini aw? *His wife said "Is that it?"*
 wife AS-DEF 3s-say-IO-PF this QMK
 A iy, do ti ngam ahàr àhu ru a kəsa goro vu. *"Yes, I must go to my village;*
 oh yes NEG TOP because(Ful) head 3s-say-1sIO-PF go at village AS-1s into
 Tamal ti kəgəskabu kam akal masləka, do ti ahəmam? *if you'll accept, let's go, why not?" (PC649-54)*
 COND TOP 2s-accept TOP(Ful) COND 1p-leave NEG TOP how

On the topicalisation of the conditional marker itself, see below, section 3.4.5.

3.2.3 Purpose clauses

The relationship between a topicalised and the subsequent highlighted clause can be one of purpose. Again, the interpretation of the relationship between the clauses is largely contextual, but the topicaliser adds considerably to what would otherwise be a weak juxtaposition of clauses in a quasi-purpose relationship. The examples in this section include the relevant section from the original free translation by the Muyang transcriber: in his French, at least, there is an element of purpose in all these clause relationships, where otherwise the purpose content seems to vary from apparently quite clear to extremely weak and indistinguishable from a mere sequence of actions.

In such cases the clear position of *ti* clause-finally begins to break down: without losing its essential nature as a topicaliser it drifts across the boundary into a clause-initial position which corresponds to that of a complementiser such as the English '(so) that' or 'in order to'. As such it can virtually start a sentence: in the following example *kwa* is normally clause-final.

Hojo həlkaba ma wacawaci kay kay kwa *You'd better open your mouth wide quickly*
 better open-wide mouth quickly much must
 ti təsukkabiyu vəzi vəzi ti capa kərəha... *- so they can fill you up with big lumps (of meat)...*
 TOP 3s-cut-2sIO-on-hither large-lumps TOP quickly 2s-be-full-PFVE (ils te mettent des morceaux pour te rassasier vite) (Mon 213-4)

Nəhkay məŋani àdəm Bəza goro hini ti nəgray ahəmam *So his mother said 'Oh dear me,*
 so mother-DEF 3s-say-PF children AS-1s here TOP 1s-do-SUBJ how

³² On the use of *ti ni* here see below, section 3.5.2.

ti nəŋgəti pilis ana wur goro ni ti naɣray ti mam? what am I to do to find my son a horse?
 TOP 1s-find-IO horse for child AS-1s DEF TOP 1s-do TOP what (pour trouver un cheval à mon enfant) (Tak 057-8)

Kɪnʒi ɓak kazalay nu ti nəwəluk ti When you get a little way, call me, so I reply so that
 2s-arrive-PF little 2s-call 1s TOP 1s-reply-2sIO-SUBJ TOP (...pour que
 kəsər ti amal nu ka ma, amal kələŋ nəŋgu ti... you'll know whether I'm in front or even behind..
 2s-know TOP COND 1s on front COND behind even TOP tu saches que si je suis devant ou è derrière) (TBH A.20-1)

When the speaker wishes to change the emphasis, the order of clauses may be reversed (purpose before "main"), with the first still topicalised and the final clause still stressed.

Ha ti nəŋgətfəŋ asak ma ti nəwəlki naŋ ana naŋ ti, In order to find something to reply to him,
 until(FUL) TOP 1s-find-close leg word TOP 1s-reply-on 3s with 3s TOP (jusqu'à trouver la parole pour le convaincre)
 nəŋjəki gwar eley? where do I have to begin? (PC 508-10)
 1s-begin towards where

The following example uses the optative negative marker *ba*, underlining its nature as purposive.

Àhəŋgarivu ahər ana tay He bent down their heads
 3s-bend-into-PF head for 3p
 ti məlaŋ məsliŋani ni epivu ba. so you couldn't see where their throats had been cut.
 TOP place NOM-cut-throat-DEF DEF 3s-see-REFL NEG (pour ne pas voir les traces) (Tet 084)

Without the topicaliser we often find a simple juxtaposition of clauses, where the purpose is avowedly weak, sometimes to the point of being merely a sequence of actions:

Mək əfəkəf ɓiyem gayəŋ ni èsi yam. Then she put down her wood to have a drink.
 then 3s-put-down-PF wood AS-3s DEF 3s-drink-PF water (elle a déposé son bois pour boire de l'eau) (WC 012)

Mək əvi ana azoŋgo gayəŋ ni, esi. Then he gave some to his donkey to drink.
 then 3s-give-IO to donkey AS-3s DEF 3s-drink (il donnait à son âne pour boire) (Tak B.15)

Àra əza aday nəkəŋ a ədoro ana naŋ ka yam. She took the stick to go to the well with it
 3s-come 3s-take-PFVE stick REFMK PFVE 3s-go-CONT with 3s on water (elle prit le bâton pour amener au puits)
 (IW C.51-2)

Ècikaba adagwalay a məŋgəhaf ni vu nahəma... She got up to look into the tree...
 3s-stand-out-PF 3s-examine at tree DEF into TOPIC (elle s'est levée pour regarder dans l'arbre)
 (PC 314)

Muyang has other, clearer ways of expressing purpose. One is by using the associative marker *ga* with an infinitive:

Həma ni dək, əhəlbiyu galiyoŋ mota ga bay ni, On the whole mountain, he took the chief's tractors
 mountain DEF all 3s-take-home tractor car AS chief DEF
 ga matəhad məlaŋ ni. to plough it. (PC 713-4)
 AS NOM-plough place DEF (pour creuser la terre)

Ŋgurukuk gani ga məhər məlaŋ ana naŋ aw? Is that testicular hernia for jumping about with?
 hernia AS-DEF AS NOM-jump place with 3s QMRK (est-ce pour sauter?) (Zil 125)

Ga məbəviyu ana evid ga ahər ge tindu ni. (They're) for putting in the holes in the stock of the harp.
 AS NOM-put-into for hole AS head AS harp DEF (pour mettre aux petits trous de la guitare) (Tin 066)

Commonly in folk stories, an imaginary first-person speech expresses a purpose, intention or desire.

Wudaka ti eyəŋ ədiyu a ahay vu A nisiyeya yam a ti, When squirrel went inside for a drink...
 scarcely TOP squirrel 3s-fall-into-PF at house into oh 1s-drink-out water SEP TOP (pour boire) (SC 075)

Akal àdèm nàdɛbabiɣu a divi vu nahɛma,
 COND 3s-say-PF 1s-see-hither at road on TOPIC
 àdèm Əh əh wurani eniwia nahaj a do aw?
 3s-day-PF oh child-DEF POT-1s-bear-PFVE other PFVE NEG QMRK

*She rather wanted to follow them
 (elle voulait poursuivre en route)
 but said 'I'll have another foal, won't I?'*
 (Tak 152-3)

3.2.4 Complement clauses

Following on from what we have seen with clauses in a purpose relationship, there are other juxtapositions where the topicalisation marker functions in some way like a complementiser, again with no difference in syntax from its other functions. In these cases it is still normally active in highlighting what follows by backgrounding the introductory clause, but there are some cases where we may be witnessing grammaticalisation into a simple complementiser.

The verb *mənjaki*, “notice”, when the object is a clause, normally requires *tɪ* as if it were a complementiser.

Àmənjaki ti *He saw that (what he saw was that)*
 3s-look-on TOP
 humbo ni kwayaya ka pakama. *he had flour all over his mouth.* (FH 023)
 flour DEF everywhere on face

Àmənjaki ti mis àvu. *She saw there was someone in there.* (PC 315)
 3s-notice-PF TOP person 3s-be-in-PF

Tamal ti kàmənjaki ti kələma zlam gayak a kay nahɛma *If you notice that you've made a lot...*
 COND TOP 2s-notice-PF TOP 2s-make-PFVE thing AS-2s PFVE many TOPIC (Pot 136)

The verb *wayay*, “want”, also normally has *tɪ* to introduce a direct-object clause when there is a change of person.

Ay hi ti nawayay ti ru kəzubiya fat a. *Now then, I want you to go and bring me the sun.*
 but here TOP 1s-want TOP go 2s-take-1s-IO-home-SEP sun SEP (PC 600)

Nawayay ti ya kədiki mbiyitani... *I want you to do your quick run...* (Tak 141)
 1s-want TOP REL 2s-put-IO-on quickly-DEF

Ŋgam tawayay ti zal Pələta ka Caɓacaɓa eslini anjəhad va ba; *So they don't want Fulfulde people*
 Because 3p-want TOP man Fulfulde on Tsabatsaba there 3s-stay longer NEG *to stay in Tsabatsaba any more;*
 Tawayay ti tōro a kəsa gatay vu bilegeni ya təsləkabiya ni. *they want them to go back to*
 3p-want TOP 3p-go-SUBJ at village AS-3p into also REL 3p-leave-hither-PFVE DEF *the village they came from.*
 (Db 059-60)

But when the same person wishes and acts there is no topicalisation following *wayay*.

Zilim awayay azafəŋa ga njədə. *Stork wanted to (intended to) take it from her by force.*
 stork 3s-want 3s-take-close-SEP AS force (FJ 012)

When the verb *pɪ*, “see”, has a clause as an object it too may be topicalised (there is insufficient data to show whether or not this is always the case).

Tamal kəpəm ti *...and if you see that*
 COND 2-see-2p TOP
 azalay faj nahɛma... *he is actually calling, then...* (TBH A.28)
 3s-call actually TOPIC

The verb *həraya*, literally “go out” often has the impersonal sense of “it happened that”, or simply “so then”. Here, topicalisation has more of its normal function in underlining the following clause where desired by the speaker, and appears to be optional. The first example here has the verb in both senses:

Àhəraya təhəraya laf əgəs wal bətal pat ana mingic. *So then when they came out he grabbed*
 3s-come-out-PF 3p-come-out-PF snatch 3s-take-Pf woman sieze cut-throat with knife *the woman and cut her throat*
 with a knife (PC 701)

Àhəraya ti wur gayaŋ ni àbi va bi. *So then [now what happened was that]*
 3s-go-out TOP child AS-3s DEF 3s-not-exist more not-exist *her foal was no longer there.* (Tak 149)

Àhəraya ɛnɟia aɣam a. *So then she arrived home.* (PC 197)
 3s-go-out-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE home PFVE

The verb *dəm*, “say” (with its parallel form *hi* marking the presence of an indirect object) may have its own complementiser *ahkado*, but this is optional. If there is any distinction between the presence and absence of *ahkado*, its presence seems to introduce more of a quotation than is the case when it is absent: Muyang does not otherwise distinguish between directly and indirectly reported speech.

Aɗəm: Hi ti nasləka. *He said, “Now I’m leaving.”* (Tak 402)
 3s-say-PF here TOP 1s-leave *[He said he was leaving then]*

Wur ga məŋani ɣəɗakani ni àdəm ahkado: *The elder brother said*
 child AS mother-DEF big-DEF DEF 3s-say-PF COMP *“I don’t love her at all any more.”* (PC 170-1)
 Fərera nawayay va do.
 completely 1s-want more NEG

Wal gani àhi ahkado haɟəŋ ti kəŋgəkivu keti, *His wife said “Tomorrow you must start again:*
 wife AS-DEF 3s-say-IO-PF COMP tomorrow TOP 3s-return-ON-in again *they tell you something and (you say)*
 təhuk ma ti kəɗəm ahkado kici do ti ni... *you don’t understand...”* (HW 204-5)
 3p-say-2sIO word TOP 2s-say-PF COMP 2s-understand NEG TOP DEF...

Təsuka ɗaf ga mileda a ti hi ti, *When they cut you some millet boule this morning*
 3p-cut-2sIO-PFVE boule AS morning PFVE TOP here TOP *you said you didn’t want any.*
 kəɗəm kawayay do.
 2s-say-PF 2s-want NEG *You said you had malaria,*
 Kəɗəm ahər egizləkuk ti hi ti, *so why did you go and get me damp millet?*
 2s-say-PF head ache-2sIO TOP here TOP *(Tet 21-3)*
 kukoro kəhəlbiyu hay meɗeni ti ahmamaŋ?
 2s-go 2s-bring-hither-PF millet NOM-soak-DEF TOP how

Often when there is no complementiser *dəm* has the weakened sense of “say to oneself”, i.e. “want” or “think”, and in such cases *ahkado* is inappropriate.

Akal àdəm naɗəbabiyu a divi vu nahəma, *She rather wanted to follow them*
 COND 3s-say-PF 1s-seek-hither at road on TOPIC *(elle voulait poursuivre en route)*
 àdəm Əh əh wurani eniwia nahəŋ a do aw? *but said ‘I’ll have another foal, won’t I?’*
 3s-day-PF oh child-DEF POT-1s-bear-PFVE other PFVE NEG QMRK (Tak 152-3)

Wal medewel àdəm ahkado: Nu zlam gayaŋ, *The old woman said, “You know, as for me,*
 woman old 3s-say-PF COMP 1s thing AS-3s *I wanted to see a child with my own eyes...”*
 nəɗəm enipia wur ke eri a aw ti... *(Tet 067-8)*
 1s-1s-say-PF POT-1s-see-PFVE child on eye PFVE QMK TOP

The use of *ti* in the following example stresses the desire:

Amal kəɗəm ti kəŋgəti pilis ana wur gayaŋ ni nahəma, *If what you want is to find a horse for your son,*
 COND 2s-say-PF TOP 2s-find-IO-SUBJ horse for child AS-2s DEF TOPIC *go into the fields.* (Tak 062-3)
 ru koro e gili.
 go go-CONT at fields

Such verbs of saying do not often use *ti* in the manner of a complementiser, but when they are omitted *ti* more often occurs: the lack of a verb and the presence of the topicaliser highlight the following speech.

Cepa ti *In a moment*
 moment TOP *the bird [said] [what the bird said was]*
 eɗiŋ nakəŋ ahkay ti,
 bird REFMK thus TOP *“I’m not just a bird, you know.”* (IW A.7-8)
 nu ɗəgiya eɗiŋ ciliŋ do
 2s TOPIC bird only NEG

Zal ni ahkay ti,
man DEF thus TOP
a nəŋgəta zlam goro efiɗiŋ a.
oh 3s-find-PFVE thing AS-1s truly PFVE

The man [said]

"Ah, I've really found myself something." (IW A.17)

In the foregoing examples the words *ahkay ti* are optional, and their absence presents a quotation which the narrator chooses not to highlight by topicalisation:

Wal medewel ni:
woman old DEF
Kaw kəzumbiya zlam gayak a ti,
well! 2s-eat-hither-PFVE thing AS-2s PFVE TOP
kara kasəmadku ma gani ka nu ti kamam?
2s-come 2s-wipe-on-1s mouth AS-DEF on 1s TOP why

The old woman said

Well! When you've finished eating

why do you wipe your beak on me?

(Zil 084-5)

3.3 Topicalisation highlighting question words

Normally the topicalisation of a preceding element highlights a clause that follows. Question words (wh- questions) form a notable group where the highlighted element is typically a single word. Unlike Ouldeme, Muyang has no special topic marker for questions, either when a clause or a noun phrase is topicalised (cf. Kinnaird (1999:10)³³. The use of a topicaliser is not obligatory to highlight questions, but it does naturally tend to be used in intense questions such as the demanding of an explanation, as opposed to simple information questions. The latter typically have no preceding topicalisation:

Ay hini kara kuŋgoro ananaw?
but here-DEF 2s-come 3s-return-CONT when

"So when are you going back?"

(SC 017)

Kara kamam?
2s-come why

"Why have you come?"

(PC 623)

Àhuk mam?
3s-say-2sIO-PF what

"What did he say to you?"

(Zil 142)

Kəwayum way?
2-want-2p who

"Whom do you want?"

(Ch 166)

Kinji eley?
2s-arrive where

"Where have you got to?"

(TBH A.47)

With complex questions, typically with some agenda, the use of an immediately preceding topicaliser is the norm. In this respect question words do not differ from clauses highlighted by preceding topicalisation.

Aku kəzum ahay ga bay ti kamam?
fire 2s-consume house AS chief TOP why

Fire, why did you burn down the chief's house?
(Zil 102)

Nak kəzum daf dafani ti,
2s 2s-eat boule boule-DEF TOP
kəhəluwaya wiyəŋ ti kamam?
2s-gather-1sIO-out sand TOP why

"You're eating proper boule,

why did you bring me out sand?" (Zil 028-9)

Kahajalay hi ti
2s-hurry here TOP
mara məzum hi ti mam,
1p-come 1p-eat here TOP what
hay ni day abi va bi ni?
millet DEF also 3s-NEG-exist longer NEG-exist DEF

"Now you're in a hurry

what are we going to eat now?

- you know there isn't even any more millet."

(HW 186-7)

Bay gani duŋ-duŋani ahi ana mis kadumvu ni ti way?
person AS-DEF unique 3s-say-IO to people kill-2p-REFL DEF TOP who

"So who's the person that tells them to fight?" (HW 112)

³³ Kinnaird's differing classification of Muyang particles (id. p. 12) was based on data that was at the time scanty and unprocessed.

Ay ti bay Muyang a haslani,
but TOP chief Muyang at ancient-DEF
ya ta enjenjeni lekulum keserum ni ti way?
REL TOP first 2p 2-know-2p DEF TOP who

But now, the Muyang chief long ago -
who do you know was the first chief?
(Ch 197-8)

Àhi kàra kàfəkaɗ ti eley?
3s-say-IO 2s-come 2s-put-down TOP where

He said to her "Where did you put it?"
(IW B.73)

Avər nak ti, kətəɗ kamam?
rain 2s TOP 2s-fall-PF why
ahay ga bay biç-biceni hini ti,
house AS chief jam-full-DEF here-DEF TOP
aku azumaba ti,
fire 3s-eat-out TOP
nətəɗ va do ti,
1s-fall more NEG TOP
anətəɗ ananaw?
POT-1s-fall when

"Rain, why did you rain?"
"With this big compound of the chief's,
when it catches fire;
if I'm not to rain then,
when should I?"
(Zil 98-101)

Təɗəm Takwaca ti, naŋ ti ana azongo gayan ni ti,
3p-say Takwatsa TOP 3s TOP with donkey AS-3s DEF TOP
ahəlvu gayan dəga nihi do ti
3s-gather-REFL AS-3s thence now NEG TOP
aminjiyu ti ananaw?
POT-3s-arrive-into TOP when

They said "That Takwatsa with his donkey,
if he's only leaving now,
when will he get here?"
(Tak 233-4)

Nihi ti abazl mis abazl mis ti ahəmam?
now TOP 3s-kill people 3s-kill people TOP how

"Now what's this about her killing people?"
(WM 073)

Ezəwi kəbəkɪ mimiz ka dahalay ga bay kamam?
fly 2s-pour-on blood on girl AS chief why
Zilim əsu ziŋ-ziŋ ti ahəmam.³⁴
stork 3s-hit-1sIO beak TOP how

"Fly, why did you bleed on the snake?"
"Stork pecked me with his beak - that's why."
(FJ 081)

Questions represented by clauses can, of course, be similarly highlighted, just like any other clause.

Àhu ziya ma,
3s-say-1sIO long mouth
elifi ga zɫaba ga wal goroani ti,
handle AS axe AS wife AS-1s-DEF TOP
naŋ ni ti ma məɗəmani aw?
3s DEF TOP word NOM-say-DEF QMRK

"He said to me 'Big mouth -
my wife's hoe-handle!'
Now is that something that should be said? (Zil 143-5)

Ezəwi kwa enekwiŋ ɛndivikabaya kur a ti
fly [just-now] 3s-insult-on-out-PERF 2s PERF TOP
nak eley?
2s where

"When fly insulted you just now
where were you?"
(Zil 036)

3.4 Topicalisation of elements other than clauses

Topicalised elements that are not clauses are normally brief. They fall into two categories: first there are short items that normally occur sentence-initially and seem to be adopted as carriers for the topicaliser, in order to throw attention onto what immediately follows. However, noun phrases in this position are also, as a rule, in focus. Other such topicalised elements are adverbs (functioning as conjunctions) and, similarly but not normally sentence-initially, the negative marker: these tend to form standardised phrases where topicalisation is obligatory.

Somewhat different is the topicalisation of the relative and conditional markers, which functions optionally within the relative or conditional clauses to show the degree of foregrounding that their content has in the speaker's mind.

³⁴ In this example *ti ahəmam* is virtually identical to *do ti ahəmam* (see section 3.4.2).

3.4.1 Topicalised noun phrases: focus and contrast

It is possible (but rare) in Muyang to topicalise a subject noun, apparently within a clause without obvious dislocation: this however brings out the two-way thrust of topicalisation in putting focus on the topicalised element as well as highlighting what follows.³⁵ Since the conjugated verb of the clause that follows the topicalised noun is self-sufficient, it would also be possible to interpret the topicalised noun as a separate, duplicated proposition, as in the case of two subsequent clauses of which the first is topicalised.³⁶

Nahkay dirlenggi nakəŋ ɔdəm Hini nahəma, *So hyena said, "You know,*
 so hyena REFMK 3s-say-PF here TOPIC
 bay ti awayay nu ka haɗ gayəŋ do ɛdidiŋ... *that chief really doesn't want me on his territory..."* (WC 042-3)
 chief TOP 3s-want 1s on ground AS-3s NEG truly *(that chief: - he really doesn't...)*

In one case there is clear duplication, for emphasis:

Muyang ti, zal Muyang do aw, *He was Muyang – a Muyang man:*
 Muyang TOP man Muyang NEG QMK
 gəɗakani naŋ ni dek Muyang do aw. *this important man was quite Muyang, of course.* (Ch 195-6)
 large-DEF 3s DEF all Muyang NEG QMK

When (much more frequently) a topicalised emphatic pronoun occurs sentence-initially, this looks like a specifically left-shifted dislocation for the purpose of focus:

Nak ti kawayay nu ka haɗ gayək do cuɗo... *"You - you really don't want me on your patch..."* (WC 056)
 2s TOP 2s-want 1s on ground AS-2s NEG indeed *('As for you, you...')*

Although normal Muyang syntax does not require the presence of a separate personal pronoun before a conjugated verb, the usage is common enough, without topicalisation, to show mild emphasis: in these cases, as in most examples of a topicalised emphatic pronoun, the pronoun is immediately followed by the verb carrying a pronominal prefix in the same person. Here there is no need to posit left-shifting.

Si nagaraba wal gayəŋ ya a ahay bu na, *I'll have to get rid of his wife from the house*
 must 1s-drive-out wife AS-3s REL at house in DEF-SEP
 nu nakoro nigɪ wal gayəŋ kwa. *and become his wife myself.* (WM 012-3)
 1s 1s-go 1s-become wife AS-3s must

Manjəhad hini ahkay ti, nu nəsar do... *This kind of lifestyle – I don't know it...* (Mar 136)
 NOM-life this thus TOP 1s 1s-know NEG

Nak kəzum ɗaf ɗafani ti... *"You're eating proper boule..."* (Zil 028)
 2s 2s-eat boule boule-DEF TOP

Àhi nidi ɗaf ga mam? *She said, "What do you want me to cook millet boule with?"*
 3s-say-IO-PF 1s-cook boule AS what
 Nak kəhu həlaba ti, *You told me to take [the millet] out*
 2s 2s-say-IO1s-PF take-out TOP
 kəbiyu ka meftiter ti, ahəmam? *and put it on the ant-hill – what now?"* (WD 189-90)
 2s-put-into-SUBJ on ant TOP how

When sentence-initial noun phrases (most frequently pronouns) are topicalised there are often two parallel referents on stage, and in each case the topicalised one is being more clearly contrasted to the other (A, not B) than would be the case without topicalisation. Thus although the topicalisation still acts normally as a point of departure for the new utterance which is thematically highlighted, it also throws a degree of contrastive focus on the topicalised referent itself, which is thus foregrounded with reference to the other member of the pair (even if that other member is unmentioned). Such topicalised elements seem to be limited to pronouns or to possessed nouns.

This first example has two parallel participants, squirrel's and hyena's cows. Hyena starts to devour his, and here the stress is not so much on the difference between them as it is on the following statement, as in normal topicalisation. However, squirrel's cow, that is not being asked to sacrifice limbs to hyena's hunger, is still in the background.

³⁵ See above, section 1.3.

³⁶ Cf. a similar case (Tak 045) where a front-shifted idea is represented by a noun, with duplication but without topicalisation, cited in section 2.1.3 above.

Ay dəgiya dawali, *“But, my friend,*
 but indeed friend
 goro ni ti, *as for mine [my cow],*
 AS-1s DEF TOP
 amasləka ana asak a cə kwa *he’ll just have to get home on two legs,*
 POT-3s-return with leg SEP two OBLIG
 do ti ahmāmam? *won’t he?” [Even though yours won’t, my cow*
 NEG TOP how *must get by with two legs] (SC 046-7)*

In the following examples a personal pronoun is topicalised, and forms part of a chain of topicalised elements, often quite brief, that runs to the highlighted climax. There is again an implied contrast with other participants, specific or otherwise, which puts focus on the topicalised pronoun. As with untopicalised pronouns, those that are topicalised are normally followed immediately by the verb conjugated in the same person: the first example given here forms an exception due to expansion of the pronoun and front-shifting (and topicalisation) of the direct object of the verb.

Ay nak ti bəbəmbeli, nak gəḏakani ni ti, *But you, elephant, you being so large,*
 well 2s TOP father-elephant 2s big-DEF DEF TOP
 embəzey gəziteni ti kəcəlki ti, ³⁷ *and ‘embuzey’ being so small, for you to step on him –*
 [insect] small-DEF TOP 2s-step-on TOP
 ḡgudaruk mam? *what harm had he done you? (Zil 109-12)*
 3s-harm-2s-PF what

Jerevu, nak ti, kəḥər ana ngurukuk ti, kamam? *Jerevu, why did you jump with your hernia?*
 Jerevu 2s TOP 2s-jump-PF with hernia TOP why *[You of all people] (FJ 076)*

Nu ti, nəḡəjah kur koksah ti, ahəmām? *“Me, I not pull you, how come?”*
 1s TOP 1s-pull 2s NEG TOP how *[I am a lot stronger than you] (SEH 009)*

In this final example the possessed noun *huwa* substitutes for the normal verb in the same person as the topicalised pronoun:³⁸

Àhi hi ti, nu ti, huwa goro ti, *He said “Now, then, as for me, when I run,*
 3s-say-IO here TOP 1s TOP running AS-1s TOP
 si a yam bu. *it’s got to be in the water.”*
 OBLIG at water in *[You run normally, but I don’t] (TBH A.16)*

This last example just cited has two noun phrases in the topicalisation chain, but starts with an adverb. The cases of topicalised noun phrases and adverbs are functionally close, as the next section will show.

3.4.2 Topicalised adverbs or conjunctions

Certain adverbs are regularly topicalised in a sentence-initial position. They function in a way very similar to that of the topicalised noun phrases in the previous section, often, like them, making a chain of topicalised elements to build up tension. Many of these have become set phrases, such as *hojo ti*, *hi ti*, *(n)ahkay ti*, *nəḡḡu ti*, and *day ti*. The adverb may also modify a clause which is topicalised as a whole, but significant here is its use as a conjunction which acts as a kind of carrier for the topicaliser. In each of these cases the normal topicalisation function of highlighting the following element is present: these words also occur without *ti*. A frequent word so topicalised with some semantic content is *hojo* “better”.³⁹

Hojo ti kafakabu wandəḡ, do ti ahəmām? *You’d better put your shorts on. (Mar 063)*
 better TOP 2s-put-on short NEG TOP how

Hi is common speech-initially, topicalised to throw attention forwards, often in a chain of topicalised elements:

³⁷ This clause shows the use of a front-shifted topicalised object noun phrase. Such dislocations are also possible without topicalisation:
 Nu ti, pilis goro ni əmal nəḡḡət ndo ti,
 1s TOP horse AS-1s DEF COND 1s-find-PF NEG-PFVE TOP
 nəḡḡoro əḡam va do.
 1s-return-CONT home more NEG
“As for me, if I don’t find my horse,
I’m not coming home any more.” (Tak 310-1)

³⁸ Compare
 Nu ti, nəcuhway ti a yam bu
 1s TOP 1s-run TOP at water in
“As for me, I run in water.” (TBH B.16)

³⁹ Hojo is not obligatorily topicalised: see (Mon 213-4), section 3.2.3.

Ay hi ti *Now, then,*
 but here TOP
 nak kara kacuhway gwar ke dən-dəŋ nahəma, *you're going to run on the bank – but, you see,*
 2s 2s-come 2s-run towards on bank TOPIC
 nu nacuhway a yam bu. *I run in the water.”* (TBH B.19)
 1s 1s-run at water in

Nahkay əhəraya tədəm Hi ti, *So then they said, “Now...”*
 so 3s-go-out-PF 3p-say-PF here TOP
 Takwaca əhi Hi ti, nu ti, pilis goroni ni ti, *Takwatsa said “Now, about me and my horse,*
 Takwatsa 3s-say-IO-PF here TOP 1s TOP horse AS-1s-DEF DEF TOP
 amal nəŋgəta dəbari gana ti *if I find a way to do it*
 COND 1s-find-PFVE means AS-DEF-PFVE TOP
 nasləka do ti əhəmam? *I'm leaving.”* (Tak 359-61)
 1s-leave NEG TOP how

Nahkay normally functions as a conjunction introducing a new section of narrative, when it is topicalised it highlights the new development. On the other hand *ahkay* is a true modifier, attaching to a clause which is then topicalised as a whole.

Nahkay ti wur ga məŋani nahəŋ avu ti, zləba gayəŋ. *Now there was another brother, his friend..*
 so TOP child AS mother-DEF other 3s-be TOP friend AS-3s (Tak A.11)

Nahkay ti wur dahalay nahəŋ avu wur ga bay gani. *Now there was a girl, the chief's daughter..*
 so TOP child girl other 3s-be child AS chief AS-DEF (Tak 355)

Nahkay ti fra fra, *So he galloped off*
 so TOP galloping
 əhəraya ədi ahər ana yam ni. *and came across the water.* (Tak 252-3)
 3s-go-out-PF 3s-put-IO head to water DEF

Təhəraya ahkay ti, ba pilis ba fra fra. *So there they were, the horse just galloped..*
 3p-go-out-PF thus TOP only horse only galloping (Tak 420)

Ahəl eri ahkay ti prəzl-prəzl. *It shone like anything.* (Tak 204)
 3s-gather eye thus TOP shining

Nəŋgu can modify a phrase which is then topicalised, or a temporal phrase or a conjunction, in each case throwing the attention, as normally, on to what follows.

Kwa bay gani məŋgətəvə əhəmam nəŋgu ti, *“No matter what kind of person it might be*
 whatever person AS-DEF 3s-find-REFL-SUBJ how even TOP
 navay do. *I'm not giving it.”* (Tak 331-2)
 1s-give NEG

Amal ga wur nəŋgu ti, *“If we're talking of children*
 COND AS child even TOP
 nu a haslani nəŋgu ti nəbu ana wur dagwa bilegeni. *I once used to have a grown son, too.”*
 1s at formerly even TOP 1s-be with child youth also (Tak 485-6)

The phrase qualified by *nəŋgu* can however be minimal, and though it cannot be in the initial position *nəŋgu* can function as a quasi-conjunction, a carrier for the topicaliser.

Ay nəŋgu ti *“But we might even*
 but even TOP
 cə matəkar a day. *try it out first.”* (TBH B.14)
 perhaps 1p-try SEP first

Day in its primary meaning of “first” can be topicalised modifying a clause (or other adverbial), but also in its own right as a conjunction.

Nawayay ti nədəm ahkado nəpəsaba day ti, *“What I want is to rest first,*
 1s-want TOP 1s-say-PF COMP 1s-rest-out first TOP

amoro ka ahar bəlaŋ, do ti ahəmam? so we can all go together.” (HW 153-4)
 POT-1p-go-CONT on hand one NEG TOP how

Nəhkay wur ga məŋani nəkəŋ dhi Ay kay nəŋgu ti, So his brother said “Well,
 so child AS mother-DEF REF MK 3s-say-IO well well even TOP well, if we ask
 kay mihinda day ti
 well 1p-ask-COND first TOP
 tamal mənŋət ndo kwa day ti, and we don't find anyone
 COND 1p-find NEG-PFVE except first TOP
 amanjəhad. we'll just stop.” (PC 020-10)
 POT-1p-sit

Si məlavaf kwa day ti andəhad kwa day ti azakaba. Only at night did he take it off.
 Except night except first TOP 3s-lie except first TOP 3s-take-off (PC 220)

...gayaŋ bay kəgur. “...so it's your chiefdom for you to rule.”
 AS-2s chief 2s-rule
 Day ti təkəfad nu ahalay ni. So that's how they installed me here. (Ch 176-7)
 first TOP 3p-place-PF 1s here DEF

Ahər adəm slamalumvu You must have order
 head 3s-say repair-2p-REC
 a huŋ ahay ge kəli vu, in your household,
 at belly house AS 2p in
 day ti so that
 first TOP
 bəza ge kəli amal təbu nəŋgu ti, your children – that is if you have any –
 children AS 2p COND 3p-be even TOP
 təsər manjəhadani naŋ ni. know this way of living. (Mar 125-7)
 3p-know NOM-five-DEF 3s DEF

This list is not exhaustive: any brief sentence-initial adverbial may potentially be topicalised:

A vad nahəŋ ti... Another day... (IW A.35)
 At day another TOP

3.4.3 Topicalised negative marker

The negative marker *do* may be topicalised, again as a carrier but with contrasting semantic content. Typically this occurs after a thesis or proposition which is then supported by supplementary material.

Àhi : “Wal गया दगिया गरय, do ti, abazl mis, do ti ahəmam.”
 3s-say-IO-PF wife AS-2s indeed chase NEG TOP 3s-kill people NEG TOP how
 He said “You must get rid of your wife: if you don't - she's murdering people, you know.” (WM 152-3)

In the preceding sentence the first *ti* topicalises merely the negative marker *do*, which stands for the negation of the preceding clause, equivalent to “If you *don't* get rid of your wife, then (realise that)...”. The final *do ti ahəmam* is reduced semantically to a tag, whose function is mildly emphatic. This tag is a common and regular feature of Muyang speech. It can be loosely translated as “If not, then what?”: again the topicalised negative marker refers to the preceding clause.

Another example shows the thesis-supplement relationship again:

A a ere gani ya àgravabiyu ni zləzlada, What has happened is difficult:
 oh oh thing AS-DEF REL 3s-do-REFL-home DEF difficult
 do ti, nu nàra nəhəriyu ti, that is, when I went there
 NEG TOP 1s 1s-come 1s-go-into TOP
 nəzəgada meni wur ga bay a ti, I knocked down the chief's son,
 1s-throw-PFVE FILL child AS chief PFVE TOP
 awuri bəruv ana tay ti which annoyed them -
 3s-hurt-IO heart to 3p TOP
 mək təkəvabiya, do ti ahəmam? and of course they drove me out. (WC 084-7)
 then 3p-put-on-out-1s-home-PFVE NEG TOP how

This sentence is structurally parallel to the first cited, with an initial proposition supported by what follows – a comment headed by *do ti*, and this comment is then tagged by *do ti ahəmam*. Note, incidentally, the fine series of topicalised clauses each successively throwing attention forward to the final clause.

Although this supplementary *do ti...* construction serves as a point of departure for the main, highlighted, part of the sentence, it also throws focus back on the thesis, the preceding clause, merely by topicalising its converse. In this respect it functions like the tail-head construction in reviewing the previous statement, in reverse, as a background for what follows: thus in both the preceding examples the content of the initial clause is picked up by the *do ti* that follows it and which highlights both the preceding and following material. In the same way in the *do ti ahəmam* tag which concludes both sentences, *do ti* highlights the preceding material as well as thrusting attention on to the question *ahəmam* – effectively “if X be the case, what then?”

3.4.4 Topicalised relative marker

The Muyang relativiser *ya* is often followed by the topicaliser *ti*. This construction mirrors the pattern of *do ti* (see above) in that the topicalisation throws attention both ways, primarily to what follows the *ti*, but also less directly to what precedes, in this case the head of the relative clause. The content of a relative clause headed by *ya ti* is clearly highlighted; it is information that is important in the speaker’s mind:

Asay aslu ni kacawala ahkay ti,
 3s-out meat DEF light thus TOP
 ya ti ədəs do diki-dikiyani ni ti,
 REL TOP 3s-weigh NEG not-at-all-DEF DEF TOP
 ədəm hini hi ga bay ge vu.
 3s-say this here AS owner AS body
He cut the meat lightly
 – (the meat) that didn’t weigh much –
 and said “This part here is for the owner.”
 (SC 083-5)

Kəjurkabu meteliŋ ge huzlɔv
 2s-choose-on-in buttock AS millet-stalk
 ya ti sulumani njerətətani ni nahəma...
 REL TOP good-DEF sharp-DEF DEF TOPIC
“Select the ends of millet stalk,
the ones that are nice and sharp, then...”
 (SC 104-5)

Nahkəkay eyeŋ əjalay ahər gayəŋ,
 so squirrel 3s-think head AS-3s
 əsər ere ya ti ahi va do.
 3s-know thing REL TOP 3s-say-IO more NEG
So squirrel puzzled:
he didn’t know what he could say to him any more.
 (SC 093-4)

Əgia əsər ere ya ti agray ni va do.
 3s-happen PFVE 3s-know thing REL TOP 3s-do DEF more NEG
It got to the point that she didn’t know what
to do any more.⁴⁰ (IW B.75)

The absence of *ti* in a relative clause usually occurs when there is no particular highlighting of the content of the clause. It is in the background of the speaker’s mind, an incidental, almost redundant detail.

Ŋgazlaya təwi gayak ya kəgray na.
 show-out work AS-2s REL 2s-do DEF-SEP
“Show forth your thing (that you do)”
 (IW C.57)

Zlam gani ya kəkədvəbiyu ni
 thing AS-DEF RFEL 2s-kill-REC-hither DEF
 nəŋ eley?
 3s where
“The booty (you won in the wrestling match) –
where is it?” (HW 150)

Tawayay ti toro a kəsa gatay vu bilegeni
 3p-want TOP 3s-go at village AS-3p into also
 ya təsləkəbiya ni.
 REL 3p-return-hither-PFVE DEF
Also, they wanted to go back to their village
(that they’d come from). (Db 060)

The relative marker also occurs in set phrases where its semantic force is weakened, and where it is never followed by *ti*.

Ka fat ya kani nəŋgu ni ti
 on day REL today even DEF TOP
Even today,

⁴⁰ On the distinction between relative clauses with and without *ti* see above, section 2.4.1)

leli akaba Pəlatata ga Cabacaba *we and the Fulani of Tsabatsaba*
 lp with Fulani-PL AS Tsabatsaba
 micivu geli abi kay bi akaba tay bi. *don't get on much together at all.* (Db 062)
 NOM-understand-REC AS-1p 3s-NEG much NEG with 3p NEG

A yindale hini ti hud ya vad timey? *"Come off it, Hyena, it's the middle of the night!"*
 oh hyena (Mandara) this TOP belly REL night TAG (Mon 103)

3.4.5 Topicalised conditional marker

The conditional markers *amal* and *tamal*⁴¹ are not infrequently followed by the topic marker, though such a juxtaposition is by no means the rule. This is distinct from the topicalisation of the entire conditional clause (for which see above, section 3.2.2). It apparently underlines the protasis: the speaker wishes to lay stress on the fulfilment of that condition in particular.

Ama tamal ti *"...but if*
 but COND TOP
 māgəjahvu ti, *we actually were to have a tug-of-war*
 1p-pull-REC TOP
 kəgəjah nu koksah. *you couldn't pull me at all".* (SEH 005-6)
 2s-pull 1s NEG

Yaw amal ti *"OK, if*
 OK COND TOP
 acuhworo ka ma keti ɛnji bak azalay ti, *he does run in front a little again and calls,*
 3s-run-CONT on front again 3s-arrive little 3s-call TOP
 ba kəwəlumi nahkay. *you just reply."* (TBH A.30)
 only 2-reply-2p-IO thus

Amal ti azum daf afa goro do ti akal naŋ abu nahkay aw? *If he didn't actually eat my food,*
 COND TOP 3s-eat boule chez AS-1s NEG TOP COND 3s 3s-be thus QMRK *would he be like that? (PC 106)*

As with relative clauses, the absence of *ti* following a conditional marker signals that the outcome of the condition that follows is of no particular significance to the speaker one way or the other.

Kapalay azay ga sla gayak keti *You collect your cow dung again*
 2s-gather excrement AS cow AS-2s again
 amal abu ni. *- if there is any.* (Pot 078)
 COND 3s-be DEF

Amal nak day kebes do nahəma, *"If you're not well either,*
 COND 2s also 2s-be-well NEG TOPIC
 konjəhaduma a magam a huya *just sit by the door..."* (Tak 383-4)
 2-sit-2pl-SEP at doorway SEP consequently

Nəwəluk ti kəsər ti *"I'll call you so that you know*
 1s-call-2sIO TOP 2s-know TOP
 amal nu ka ma, amal kələŋ nəŋgu ti, *whether I'm in front or even behind,*
 COND 1s by front COND by-back even TOP
 kəsərkaba eslini a *then you'll know."* (TBH A.21-2)
 2s-know-distinct then SEP

3.5 The use of *ti* followed by *ni*

Ti is immediately followed by *ni* at two levels, that of the noun phrase and that of the clause. In both instances the original deictic nature of *ni* (see section 2.1 above) seems close to the surface of meaning: this comes out especially clearly in the clause-final usage.

3.5.1 Noun phrase level

In accord with the contrastive focus evoked by topicalising a noun phrase (section 3.4.1), the combination of *ti* and *ni* at this level explicitly evokes a switch of reference between two participants, even where (as in the second example

⁴¹ It looks as if the origin of *tamal* might have been a conflation of *ti* and *amal*. But if so, in contemporary usage there is no obvious distinction between the two forms: *tamal* often follows *ti* in its own right.

following) there is no dislocation. The function of the added *ni* is to highlight the fact of the switch of reference. The switch is between two participants in themselves and their actions or purpose, or a switch from the wider group to one member. In each case, moreover, the participant marked with *ti ni* is the most prominent one of the pair, and the action that is thereby introduced is, as normal with topicalisation, highlighted. The basic deictic origin of *ni*, in addition to its membership of this grouping, is also clear: the reversal of elements that distinguishes this expression from *ni ti* (section 2.5) is what gives a strong deictic highlighting to the noun phrase so marked.

In the following example both husband and wife experience the breakdown of the marriage, but in different ways:

Tamal kəbu kazlapumkaba bi ti, *If you don't speak to each other*
 COND 2-be 2-speak-2p-distinct-out not-exist TOP
 zal ni naŋ anjəhad e gili zlam gayan. *your husband stays in the bush on his own.*
 man DEF 3s 3s-live at bush thing AS -3s
 Kala nak ti ni nak manjəhadani a dala bu. *Just like you- you're out on your ear too.* (Mar 141-3)
 like 2s TOP DEF 2s NOM-live-DEF at world in

In the next example the group who hide in trees are a new participant, but here within a larger group. The contrast again concerns their action, as opposed to that of the rest that hide generally in the bush: all are responding to the threat of attack.

Bəza, bəza, bəza dek tənday ahar e gili a. *All the children went down into the bush.*
 children children children all 3p-swallow head at bush PFVE
 Ndaŋan ti ni təcəlaya a mənŋəhaf a arən va nahkəkay. *But some of them just*
 others TOP DEF 3p-climb-into-PFVE at tree at somewhere into-PFVE thus *climbed into trees somewhere.*
 (Db 050-1)

The next example has the introduction of a character (hyena's wife) into the story: like all folk story animals, she is unique, and the action switches to her abruptly, and contrasts her purpose with that of the others – she goes out for wood, they to attend a wrestling match.

Nahkəkay təharaya *So they went out,*
 so 3p-go-out
 vad ga kadvu ni əra ənja. *for the day of the wrestling match*
 day AS fight DEF 3s-come 3s-arrive-PERF *had arrived.*
 Wal ge dirlənŋi ti ni əro ka biyem gayan bilegeni. *Hyena's wife went out as well, for wood.*
 wife AS hyena TOP DEF 3s-go-PF for wood AS -3s also (WC 007-8)

In this extract from "Takwatsa" (section 2.2) there is again a switch of subject: the mare robbed of her foal remains distracted, meanwhile the old woman arrives home with the stolen animal.

Nahan ni anjəhadə zlam gayan a. *Then she (the mare) stayed put on her own.*
 other DEF 3s-sit-PFVE thing AS -3s PFVE
 endigid məlan gani. *and licked the place (where the honey had been).*
 3s-lick place AS-DEF
 Wal medewel ni ti ni ənja ana wur ge pilis na... *The old woman, meanwhile,*
 woman old DEF TOP DEF 3s-arrive-PFVE with child AS horse DEF-PFVE *arrived home with the foal..*
 (Tak 158-60)

Earlier in the same story the fetishist instructs the old woman in what to say to the animals she meets, using the typical manner of marking a switch between two speakers in a narrated conversation:

A ŋgazlaya zlam ga mbolo gayak a. *"(It will say) 'Show me what's in your bag.'*
 oh show-out thing AS bag AS-2s SEP
 A nak ti ni kəhi, *But you say to it*
 oh 2s TOP DEF 2s-say-IO
 ŋgazlaya huwa gayak a bilegeni day do ti ahəmam. *'Show me how you run first.'*
 show-out run AS-2s SEP also first NEG TOP how (Tak 073-5)

In the following case Coucal is caught in his own tree, and attention switches back to him from his family who hear the noise and come out to catch him – another switch reference to a previous participant.

Ndam ga govogo ticibiya a ahay ba: Coucal's folk in the house heard the noise.
 people AS coucal 3p-hear-hither-PFVE at house out
 A ndam akal ndam akal do ti ahəmam, "It's thieves! It's thieves" (they shouted).
 oh people theft people theft NEG TOP how
 pras t̄ahəraya a ahay ba. They came out of the house in all directions.
 everywhere 3p-go-out-PF at house out
 Govogo ti ni A naggaya. At this point Coucal (said) "I'd better come down."
 coucal TOP DEF oh 1s-return-out (S+C 048-51)

It is clear that *ni* in this usage is not functioning simply as a discourse reference marker, because *ti ni* also follows *nakəy*, which does not normally co-occur with *ni*. (Typically the two examples in the data both occur at points of separation).

Tata nahəy ni ndam gani t̄əmbəkibiya ma, Then the people turned away
 then other DEF people As-DEF 3p-turn-on-homewards-PFVE face
 zlam ga tay a fəwa. and went home all together.
 thing AS 3p PFVE together
 Tata Takwaca nakəy ti ni təkda-təkda əsləka. Then as for Takwatsa, he walked off home.
 then Takwatsa REFMK TOP DEF walking 3s-leave-PF (Tak 453-5)

Nahkəkay, mək zləba gani nakəy filir, So then his friend went off
 so then friend AS-DEF REFMK setting-out
 əmbəkibiya ma ana tuway a, and turned home weeping,
 3s-turn-on-hither-PFVE face with weeping PFVE
 tuway tuway əbiyu a divi bu. weeping as he went.
 weeping weeping 3s-put-into-PF at road in
 Yaw wur nakəy ti ni suwwa əndəhadoro ahər e gili. Then the boy went off into the bush.
 OK child REFMK TOP DEF forthwith 3s-swallow-earth-CONT-PF head in bush (PC 282-4)

3.5.2 Clause level

A slightly different use of *ti ni* occurs clause-finally, indeed often utterance-finally, in direct quoted speech. It introduces a qualification or new aspect to a statement, changing the thrust of the utterance. This is parallel to the switch reference that occurs with *ti ni* at noun-phrase level: it marks a dislocation of thought, switching attention to what precedes it – in this case a limiting or qualifying remark. *Ti* normally throws the attention forwards to what follows, and as the only thing that follows is *ni*, which throws the attention back to the whole clause, it is the clause itself that is deictically marked – “that’s the point.”⁴²

Ahəluk ahər ba. agray arəy do. "Don't worry, it's not important."
 3s-take-2sIO head NEG 3s-do thing NEG
 leli ata nu ti ni. You're with me, you see." (PC 279-81)
 1p with 1s TOP DEF

Àhi ana wal gani dəgiya nu ti, He said to his wife, "As for me,
 3s-say-IO-PF to woman AS-DEF TOP 1s TOP
 nawayay ti akal nakoro nəmənjiyu kəsa goro I'd like to go and visit my own village
 1s-want TOP COND 1s-go 1s-visit-into village AS-1s
 do ti ahəmam, you know
 NEG TOP how
 tamal ti kəgəskaba ti ni. - if you agree, that is." (PC 649-51)
 COND TOP 2s-accept-PFVE TOP DEF

Kədəm nak ti kawayay nu ti, məsləka. "Since you say you love me, let's go.
 2s-say 2s TOP 2s-love 1s TOP 1p-leave
 Makoro agam afa goro do ti ahəmam, We'll go home to my place
 1p-go home with AS-1s NEG TOP how
 amal dabari aməngətvu ti ni. - if we can find a way, that is." (Tak 363-5)
 COND means POT-3s-find-REFL TOP DEF

Àhi mili hini nahəma, ru kəvi ana mmawa He said "Go and give this ring to my mother
 3s-say-IO-PF ring here TOPIC go 2s-give-SUBJ to my-mother

⁴² The Fulfulde emphatic *nii* 'thus' occurs finally, but there is no necessary reason to assume its adoption here. The Muyang deictic *ni* can provide sufficient explanation without resorting to borrowings – especially as the Fulfulde *nii* does not appear in Muyang in other contexts.

ti māmənjaki kadu nu.
 TOP 3s-look-on-SUBJ instead-of 1s
 Do ti, nu ti, anangoro agam do,
 NEG TOP 1s TOP POT-1s-return-CONT home NEG
 nengget pilis goro ni do ti ni.
 1s-find horse AS-1s DEF NEG TOP DEF

so that she can look at it in my stead.

Because as for me, I'm not coming home again

- unless I find my horse, that is." (Tak 314-6)

3.6 An emphatic topicaliser: nahəma

It has already been noted that the Muyang describe themselves as the people who say *nahəma*. The word is always uttered emphatically, clause-finally before a slight pause, and it stands out in an overheard conversation. The use of *nahəma* (which is entirely at the speaker's discretion) gives stronger highlighting to what follows than is the case with *ti*, and marks a thematically important development, either in narrative text or within speech. In an ongoing narrative *nahəma* often occurs at a pivotal developmental point that typically (but incidentally) involves temporal or local discontinuity, which is less often the case with clauses marked with *ti*. In speech, an important new point or issue is being presented by the speaker. In both cases such a usage grabs attention, and signals that the highlighted passage that follows is of great importance ("So-and-so went to a place: now when they got there (and here's what is important)"...). As with *ti*, *nahəma* is used in various contexts without any fundamental difference of function: the sections that follow illustrate some of these contexts.

3.6.1 Highlighting at a pivotal point involving temporal or spatial discontinuity

There follow some examples illustrating the use of *nahəma* at a point of discontinuity. In each case we can see *nahəma* applying at a higher discourse level than *ti*, with pivotal reference to the whole of the following episode, and thus its location at the point of discontinuity is incidental but not accidental. In the following extract we have just been told that the animals are having a wrestling contest. Hyena's wife goes out for her wood, but the point is, and this is where the hearers need to really pay attention, that she met the wrestlers on the way home.

Wal ge dirleŋgi ti ni àro ka biyem gayəŋ bilegeni, *But hyena's wife went out as well, for wood;*
 wife AS hyena TOP DEF 3s-go-PF for wood AS-3s also
 àra àra àkelkaba biyem gayəŋ na,
 3s-come-PF 3s-come-PF 3s-cut-in-on-PFVE wood AS-3s DEF-PFVE
 asləkabiya nahəma,
 3s-return-home-SEP TOPIC
 àdi ahar ana mis ni takadvu afa ga bay.
 3s-put-IO head to people DEF 3p-kill-REC at AS chief
so she went and cut her wood
and when she was on her way home,
that's when she came upon the folk wrestling
at the chief's. (WC 008-11)

In the following extract squirrel has bought meat at the market and loaded it on his cow: it is when he gets home that the significant action starts.

Àsləkabiya ana naŋ a suwwa àra agam a.
 3s-return-home-SEP with 3s SEP ID-straight 3s-come home SEP
 Àra ènjiya ana naŋ agam a nahəma,
 3s-come-PF 3s-arrive-PFVE with 3s home PFVE TOPIC
 èpicehki aslu na...
 3s-detach-on meat DEF-SEP
He went home with it - straight home.
When he'd got home with it,
he untied the meat... (SC 008-10)

Similarly, he later sets off again with hyena, and again the important action follows their arrival.

Tàdəgoro a gosko ni vu.
 3p-go-cont at market DEF into
 Tàra tinjaya nahəma,
 3p-come 3p-arrive-into-PFVE TOPIC
 eyeŋ àhəriyu àza sisi gayəŋ a keti...
 squirrel 3s-go-in 3s-take-out 5-francs AS-3s SEP again
So off they went to the market.
When they had arrived there,
squirrel went and got out his money again... (SC 023-5)

Here again there is discontinuity, of time and place. In one case, indeed, the impersonal phrase

àra àhəraya nahəma...
 3s-come 3s-go-out TOPIC
So it came out that... (SC 058)

was simply glossed by an informant as "Later,...", but the pause that follows is significant.

Another sequence involves two consecutive uses of *nahəma*, again incidentally at points of discontinuity: these instances reinforce each other and throw the attention forward to the point where spider notices fly's face. That particular action has its own string of three topicalised phrases using *ti*, each in direct sequence. The use of both *nahəma* and *ti* here seems clear: *nahəma* underlines the significance of the following episode as a whole, while *ti* pushes attention forward locally to the highlighted climax.

| | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| Nday təbu təbu akada eḏiliŋ ana tay nahəma, 3p 3p-be 3p-be like 3-digest to 3p TOPIC | <i>So there they stayed to digest their food</i> | |
| aŋgioro ana tay a haḏ gəziti nahəma, 3s-return-IO-CONT to 3p at ground little TOPIC | <i>and then when they had settled a little,</i> | |
| etime əzay eri bəc ti, spider 3s-take eye brief TOP | <i>spider glanced up</i> | |
| əmənjaləŋ ana ezəwi a eri vu ti, 3s-look-back to fly at face into TOP | <i>and looked at fly in the face</i> | |
| əmənjacki ti 3s-look-on TOP | <i>and saw that</i> | |
| humbo ni kwayaya ka pakama. flour DEF everywhere on mouth | <i>he had flour all over his mouth.</i> | (FH 019-23) |

In an earlier sequence from the same text, *nahəma* points to another temporal dislocation after a continuing activity, moving the story on. In a short text such as this is⁴³, such heavy use of *nahəma* might seem inappropriate when it is seen simply as a discourse structural marker, and can be justified only because these are genuine points of discontinuity.

| | | |
|---|---|------------|
| Təhəraya ti fat əra aɡurva əhkay nahəma, 3p-go-out TOP sun 3s-come 3s-rule-in-out thus TOPIC | <i>They continued until the sun was directly overhead</i> | |
| məva gatay ni suwwa əru aɡam. sweetheart AS-3p DEF straight 3s-go home | <i>and then their sweetheart went off home.</i> | (FH 007-8) |

In the following example from the toad text, the protagonist summons his family to cheat in the race with antelope. The first use of *nahəma* is presentational, a strong equivalent of *hi ti*, (see section 3.6.2), calling attention to what follows. Then the instructions are given in a series of clauses linked by *ti*, pushing attention forward to the main point in the explanation, which is again highlighted by a preceding *nahəma*.

| | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| Əhi ana tay hi nahəma, 3s-say-IO to 3p here TOPIC | <i>He said to them "Now here,</i> | |
| məhəndərum vu ke dəŋ-dəŋ ni 1p-align-2p REFL on bank DEF | <i>let's line ourselves up on the riverbank</i> | |
| jiliba cəkwi ezi cəkwi avəla, aligned from down from up | <i>all along from downstream to upstream</i> | |
| ay ti but TOP | <i>but,</i> | |
| mara macuhwakaba leli ata hədagər ti, 1p-come 1p-run-distinct 1p with antelope TOP | <i>we're going to run along with the antelope</i> | |
| tamal kəpəm ti COND 2-see-2p TOP | <i>and if you see that</i> | |
| azəlay faŋ nahəma, 3s-call actually TOPIC | <i>he is actually calling, then</i> | |
| bay ya ti naŋ azəlay naŋ ni ti, person REL TOP 3s 3s-call 3s DEF TOP | <i>the one that he is calling to</i> | |
| awuli eslini huya. 3s-reply there EMPH | <i>let him reply in that place."</i> | (TBH A.26-28) |

In this extract again *nahəma* occurs at a pivotal point: in the first case it is used by toad to present his speech (see section 3.6.2), and in the second the toads are in position waiting for the antelope to call them. Each major development

⁴³ "Story: fly, wasp, spider went to help fly (in his field). They go. When they got to the field *nahəma*, they showed them the field, they cultivated it. When the sun got overhead *nahəma*, their fiancée went home and went to get them some flour. There they were cultivating. When their fiancée got back with the flour *nahəma*, she mixed it for them and called them for it. As it was time to rest, they rested in the shade, drinking flour-water. When they had drunk the flour-water, they took and ate up the remaining flour. There they were digesting it *nahəma*, when it had gone down a bit *nahəma*, spider looks a little *ti*, he looks in fly's eye *ti*, and sees *ti* flour all over his mouth. He said "What have you done to yourself, fly? When you've eaten *ti* don't you wipe your mouth? It's everywhere *ti*, when you're out you don't know *ti*, what is this that you've done to yourself?" Fly thus *ti* "I'll wipe myself, I'll wipe myself" *ti* he-knocked his head off. Spider *nəkəŋ* then *ti* "That's funny about fly." *ti* he-burst. Only wasp was left: there he was. "I think I'll go home." Waddle-waddle-waddle. When he got to the water he was thirsty: "I'll just have a drink." He bent down and drank. When he'd drunk, "I think I'll go home." Off he went waddle waddle waddle, a little way along he broke. End."

presented by *nahəma* has a sequence of minor clauses connected by *ti*, highlighting the next idea. In this explanatory text there is little or no real discontinuity, save incidentally in that the toads must wait for the antelope. However when the race starts, at intervals antelope calls out, and a different toad answers, there is discontinuity of place and time, while the force of *nahəma* here (not used consistently, see the expanded translation in the Appendix ⁴⁴) is to underline the repeated theme:

Ènji bak keti nahəma,
3s-arrive little again TOPIC
kɪnji eley kraŋ?
2s-arrive where toad

So when he got on a little further, [he called]

"Where have you got to, toad?" (TBH A.40)

... acuhwabiya acuhwabiya
3s-run-home 3s-run-home

...he kept running on:

ènji bak nahəma,
2s-arrive little TOPIC
kɪnji eley?
2s-arrive where

when he got on a little further, [he called]

"Where have you got to?" (TBH A.46-7)

A rarer example is thematic or locational discontinuity: hyena has escaped home, but is pursued, and his wife overhears the pursuers. What is to follow – the wife's machinations at this point – is again an important new episode in the story.

Cepa ti
moment TOP
Məlaŋ ga asak gani naŋ hi.
place AS foot AS-3s 3s here
Wal gani abay slimī nahəma,
wife AS-3s 3s-put ear TOPIC
ðria do.
3s-come-IO NEG

Next instant [someone said]

"Here are his tracks!"

His wife heard it, but

that didn't suit her.

(HW 168-9)

3.6.2 Highlighting in presentational speech

A slightly different use of *nahəma* (with the same discourse function) is at the beginning of speech, to underline the point about to be made. Conversationally,

Nəðəm nahəma...
1s-say TOPIC

What I'm saying is...

is a frequent introduction to a clarification of a misunderstood point (as the language learner soon discovers!). In the following extract there are two pivotal points: squirrel is in a quandary and suddenly sees the solution, and as a result he bursts suddenly into speech. Each of these points introduces a thematically prominent development. The second *nahəma* is part of the quoted speech and finds its natural place as an introducer after a pause, calling attention to what is about to be said:

Àjalakabaya, àjalakabaya,
3s-think-on-in-out 3s-think-on-in-out
àmənjoŋo ka həma nahəma,
3s-look-CONT on mountain TOPIC
àmənjoŋo ti
3s-look-CONT TOP
mazlahko manjəhadani digusa,
lion NOM-sit-DEF sitting
eri nduza-nduza.
eye red
Àhi hi nahəma,
3s-say-IO here TOPIC
Ru kədibiya aku ana leli a
go 2s-prepare-home-SEP fire for 1p SEP
mara meviyek...
1p-come 1p-roast

He thought it out, and he thought it out,

then he looked at the mountain

and saw that

a lion was sitting up there

with bright red eyes.

So he said to [hyena] "Look here,

go and get us some fire

we're going to roast [the meat]...

(SC 095-9)

⁴⁴ *Nahəma* is used at the first episode in each leg of the race, except for the first leg of the second race. Arguably in the second episode there is less need to underline, except when approaching the climax.

Another example, from the indiscreet wife text, shows a topicalised clause at the beginning of presentational speech: it is not the horn that is thematically significant in the woman's words, but what it does.

| | |
|---|---|
| Àdəm Zal goro àngətbiya edrəm nahəŋ a nahəma, | <i>She said "My husband has found</i> |
| 3s-say man AS-1s 3s-find-home-PFVE hom other PFVE TOPIC | <i>a horn, and you know,</i> |
| ba kəhi ma ahkaya ti, | <i>you only have to say the word to it</i> |
| only 2s-say-IO word thus TOP | |
| dūwa ha kəmbərəŋ. | <i>and you get milk till you want no more."</i> |
| mild until 2s-leave | (IW B.40-44) |

Another presentational example: the tree is presented, and the suggestion about it that is to follow is thematically central to the story as well as being underlined in the speech itself.

| | |
|---|--|
| Àhi ana govogo Kilerə, | <i>He said to coucal "Friend,</i> |
| 3s-say-IO to coucal friend | |
| meni azəga ga masləŋ nahəŋ abu nahəma, | <i>someone else has got an azega tree, you know,</i> |
| FILL [tree] AS someone other 3s-exist TOPIC | |
| akada gayak ni hwək-hwəka həya ti | <i>just exactly like yours:</i> |
| like AS-2s DEF exactly just TOP | |
| afəŋ dal-dal ti, | <i>there's lots of fruit on it –</i> |
| 3s-close much TOP | |
| mawayay makoro məpaləbiyu akal. | <i>Let's go and steal it all!"</i> |
| 1p-want 1p-go 1p-pick-home theft | (S+C 007-10) |

3.6.3 Highlighting at a point of consequential discontinuity in speech

In another text *nahəma* marks off an improbable consequence from its premise: an improbable consequence naturally has a greater thematic prominence: hence its use to topicalise conditional clauses. In these examples quirel speaks to two parallel opponents in a tug-of-war:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Àhi awak goro nəŋ hi, | <i>He said "This is my goat</i> |
| 3s-day-IO goat AS -1s 3s here | |
| tamal kağəjaha nu a nahəma, | <i>if you succeed in pulling me, then look,</i> |
| COND 2s-pull-PFVE 1s PFVE TOPIC | |
| kazay awak ni. | <i>you take it."</i> |
| 2s-take goat DEF | (SEH 014-6) |

| | |
|---|--|
| Awak goro ni hi nahəma, | <i>"Here's my goat, look,</i> |
| goat AS -1s DEF here TOPIC | |
| tamal kağəjaha nu a kam | <i>if you succeed in pulling me then</i> |
| COND 2s-pull-PFVE 1s PFVE TOP(Fulfulde) | |
| kazay. | <i>you take it."</i> |
| 2s-take | (SEH 036-7) |

Compare the preceding two extracts with those cited in section 3.2.2 above: in the first of those the condition is open and general, and the protasis is topicalised by *tí*. In the last, parallel to these examples, the condition is improbable, indeed a specific challenge: thus the conditional marker is obligatory and the protasis is topicalised by *nahəma*.

A similar idea involving a consequential discontinuity is present when elephant does a double-take after squirrel says that elephant can't pull him:

| | |
|---|---|
| ...kağəjah nu koksah. | <i>"... you can't pull me."</i> |
| 2s-pull 1s NEG | |
| Mbeli aməŋjaləŋ nahəma, | <i>Elephant looked at him:</i> |
| elephant 3s-look TOPIC | |
| àhi Gayak nəŋ ni kədəm ma mam? | <i>"What was that you said?" he said.</i> |
| 3s-say-IO AS-2s 3s DEF 2s-say word what | (SEH 006-8) |

3.6.4 Procedural development

In one procedural text *nahəma* points out the next stage with monotonous regularity, even in tail-head constructions that mark off new sections and which might normally be marked by *tí* (section 3.1). This underlies its use at episodic level in discourse, and especially here its optional nature: its thematic currency is however rather devalued:

Ka sarta ya mēfuday zlam geli nahəma,
at time REL 1p-start pot AS-1p TOPIC
mēfuday ana fevirye...
1p-start with February
*So the time when we begin our pots -
 is in February...* (Pot 001-2)

Andəhadvu hundum edi.
3s-sleep-into overnight 3s-soak
Yaw mək ədiya nahəma,
OK then 3s-soak-PFVE TOPIC
mileda njemdi muku keti,
morning hour six again
mazay ndizeni məzləθ məzləθ...
1p-take red 1p-beat 1p-beat
*It sits overnight in the water and gets soaked.
 So then when it's properly soaked -
 in the morning, again at six,
 we take the red clay and we pound it...* (Pot 008-11)

Əhiva, mazay mebedəkabu tay.
3s-crush-REFL-PFVE 1p-take 1p-mix-on-in 3p
Way zat way zat kalkal.
who full who full equal
Məbedəkaba zla nahəma,
1p-mix-on-in-PFVE then TOPIC
məsək mazay nahəq mefəni zla...
then 1p-take another NOM-soak-DEF then
*When it's crushed, we take it mix them.
 Equal portions of each.
 So then when we've mixed them -
 then we take the other that has been soaked...* (Pot 014-6)

Kədəsikiya mazlara gani kasaba viti na.
2s-hit-on-PFVE now AS-DEF 2s-hollow out ash DEF-PFVE
Kəsakkaba viti na nahəma,
2s-sieve-distinct ash SEP TOPIC
mək kəzəkiya ka zlam na coruk...
then 2s-take-on-SEP on pot DEF-PFVE separating
*When you've knocked it you make a hollow in the ash.
 When you've finished sieving the ash -
 then you take (some clay) off the pot...* (Pot 025-7)

Agray sak məhkər,
3s-do time three
tamal bi zlam gəzəkəni nahəma,
COND perhaps pot small-DEF TOPIC
agray sak məhkər ti,
3s-do time three TOP
əndava...
3s-end-PFVE
*You do it three times,
 if it's a small pot -
 doing it three times
 is enough...* (Pot 037-8)

Nahəq ni kihicaba ti
another DEF 2s-smooth-out TOP
kəzikiya ma həya.
2s-take-IO-on-SEP face actually
Kəziki ma zla nahəma,
2s-take-IO-on face then TOPIC
kəzay mbər-mbər gayak.
2s-take roller AS-2s
Kədi mbər-mbər ni.
2s-put-IO roller DEF
Kədia mbər-mbər a əndava nahəma,
2s-put-IO-PFVE roller PFVE 3s-end-PFVE TOPIC
kəzay hetelefkir gayak.
2s-take potsherd AS-2s
Kəsifək.
2s-smooth
Kəsifəka nahəma,
2s-smooth-PFVE TOPIC
əndava zla.
3s-end-PFVE then
*Next you smooth it out
 and give it its final shape.
 So when you've given it its final shape -
 you take your decorating roller.
 You apply the decorating roller.
 When you've finished decorating -
 then you take your potsherd.
 You smooth it.
 When you've smoothed it -
 then that'll do.* (Pot 039-45)

3.7 Loan words and topicalisation

Muyang borrows many words from languages of wider communication, topicalisers or quasi-topicalisers included. Those cited here are commonly used: others, like the Fulfulde *du*, are rarer but do occur (see the example in section 2.3.4.2 above).

3.6.1 kam

Kam is a loan-word from Fulfulde, a topicaliser in that language. In Muyang its use is indistinguishable from that of *tí*.

A kihindəmfij ma gana kam si ke mindəwid: "You'll have to ask the ants that one:
 oh 2-ask-2p-close word AS-DEF-SEP TOP except by ant
 mindəwid gani ara əhəliya bəzani ana fat a ti kamam? why did those ants take their
 ant AS-DEF 3s-come 3s-take-into-PF children-DEF to sun PFVE TOP why eggs out into the sun?" (Zil 092-3)

Awak goro nihi nahəma, "Here's my goat:
 goat AS-1s now TOPIC
 tamal kəgəjaha nu a kam, kazay. if you pull me, you take it." (SEH 036-7)
 COND 2s-pull-PFVE 1s PFVE TOP 2s-take

Àhi A nahkay nəj ni abəlay, He said, "That's good, then:
 3s-say-IO oh thus 3s DEF 3s-good
 təpəla kur a kam, abəlay. if they've avenged you, that's good."
 3p-pay-PFVE 2s PFVE TOP 3s-good (S+C 083)

3.6.2 dəgiya

This is a loan word from Mandara whose basic meaning is "truly". It retains much of that sense in Muyang, in a rather weakened form as an emphatic particle with much the same sense as the English 'indeed'. In this sense it also functions very like a topicaliser, typically, given its origin, finding its place at or near the opening of direct or reported speech. It is thus not found in narrative texts except in direct quotations, and it is not found other than at the beginning of speech. When preceded by a noun phrase, like *tí ni*, it marks contrastive focus. *Dəgiya* acts most like a topicaliser when it follows a personal pronoun, a usage parallel to *nu tí* (section 3.4.1).

Cepa ti In a moment
 moment TOP
 edij nakəj ahkay ti, the bird said
 bird REFMK thus TOP
 Nu dəgiya "Look, I,
 2s indeed
 edij ciliq do I'm not just a bird, you know." (IW A.7-8)
 bird only NEG

Nu dəgiya nəkumay wur, I really need a child
 1s indeed 1s-need (Mandara) child
 nədəm mēgi ti wur mbolo goro. to be my companion. (Tet 109)
 1s-say-PF 3s-become-SUBJ TOP child bag AS-1s

However, the sense of this is often weak.

Àhi Dəgiya kilera, nu dəgiya, He said "You know, friend, in my case,
 3s-say-IO-PF indeed friend 1s indeed
 ndaməja tisəkkaba fat gani geli na.. someone was keeping a good eye on us..
 somone 3p-watch-distinct sun AS-DEF AS-1p DEF-PERF (S+C 078-9)

Very often *dəgiya* merely emphasises speech.

Ay dəgiya dawali, "But look, my friend,
 but indeed friend
 goro ni ti, as for mine [my cow],
 AS-1s DEF TOP
 amasləka ana asak a cə kwa he'll have to get home on two legs, (SC 046-7)
 POT-3s-return with leg SEP two OBLIG
 do ti ahmamam. won't he?"
 NEG TOP how

Unlike a true topicaliser, *dəgiya* can open an utterance, but effectively there seems to be a reluctance to put it first: it normally follows another word, even a dummy.

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Wal ndahaṅ ni t̄əhi
 women others DEF 3p-say-IO
 Kagray malfada.
 2s-do lie
 Dəgiya malfada do.
 indeed lie NEG
 Malfada!
 lie

The other women said

"You're telling lies."

"Indeed I'm not."

"Oh yes you are."

(IW C.46-8)

Àhi : Wal gayak dəgiya garay,
 3s-say-IO-PF wife AS-2s indeed chase
 do ti, abazl mis, do ti ahəmam.
 NEG TOP 3s-kill people NEG TOP how

He said "You must get rid of your wife:

if you don't - she's murdering people, you know."

(WM 152)

A dəgiya n̄asləkabiya do ti ahəmam.
 oh indeed 1s-return-hither-PFVE NEG TOP how

Well, I've come back.

(PC 689)

Dəgiya can even be reinforced by *t̄i*, or in other words topicalised in its own right:

Asər ti
 3s-know TOP
 nu dəgiya ti
 1s indeed TOP
 wal goro ni abu away nu.
 wife AS -1s DEF 3s-be 3s-love 1s

He knows that

as for himself,

his wife really loves him.

(Mar 102)

Dəgiya ti
 indeed TOP
 ata baba goro ti,
 with father AS -1s TOP
 tanjəhad ti
 3s-live TOP
 zlam hi ni ahkay hi,
 thing here DEF thus here
 dey ti
 first TOP
 maslamalavani ni.
 NOM-repair-REC-DEF DEF

Indeed

my parents' generation,

they lived

just this way,

so that there should be

domestic peace.

(Mar 128-30)

Appendix. Texts

1. The text corpus

| Ref. | Title | Date | Speaker | Lines | Genre and comments |
|------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-------|------------------------------------|
| Ch | Chief | 9 Aug 00 | Ngirwedey | 243 | Narrative. |
| Db | Dəbala | 28 Jun 00 | Djeved François | 63 | Narrative. |
| FH | Fly's Help (Aide de la mouche) | 29 Oct 99 | Aiwai Philippe | 41 | Folk story. |
| FJ | Fly's Journey | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 90 | Folk story. Variant of Zil. |
| HW | Hyena's Wife | 17 Sep 01 | Milawele Joseph | 207 | Folk story. Variant of WC. |
| IW | Indiscreet Wife | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 119 | Folk story. See section 2.1 below. |
| Mar | Mari (Pleasing a husband) | 4 Nov 99 | Maita | 189 | Expository text. |
| Mon | Monitor lizard | 14 Mar 01 | Tukovo | 283 | Folk story. |
| PC | Pénis coupé | 12 Nov 99 | Aiwai Philippe | 730 | Folk story. |
| Pot | Pottery | 11 Oct 99 | Tahtaki | 139 | Procedural text. |
| SC | Squirrel's Cow | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 79 | Folk story. |
| S+C | Squirrel and Coucal | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 86 | Folk story. |
| SEH | Squirrel, Elephant and Hippo | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 159 | Folk story. |
| Tak | Takwatsa | 29 Oct 99 | Aiwai Philippe | 528 | Folk story. See section 2.3 below. |
| TBH | Toad, Buck and Hare | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 115 | Folk story. See section 2.2 below. |
| Tet | Tétu (Stubborn child) | 1 Nov 99 | Aiwai Philippe | 157 | Folk story. |
| Tin | Tindu (Harp) | 4 Oct 00 | Djeved François | 95 | Procedural text. |
| WC | Wrestling at the Chief's | 6 Jun 01 | Aiwai Philippe | 90 | Folk story. Variant of HW. |
| WM | Wai Matak (Sorceress) | 27 Oct 01 | Aziyu Emmanuel | 300 | Account of a horror film. |
| Zil | Zilim (Stork) | 17 Sep 01 | Daldava Martin | 152 | Folk story. Variant of FJ. |

2. Cyclic texts highlighting participant reference

1. 'The indiscreet wife'

| | A. Cycle one: bird | B. Cycle two: horn | C. Cycle three: stick |
|----|--|---|--|
| 1 | Story: Man <i>nakəŋ</i> he had nothing. 001 | | |
| 2 | He-walked in his fields wandering about. 002 | He-walked again. 066 | he-went-out to fields <i>guyəŋ ni</i> again. He-walked he-walked his thing. 117b-118 |
| 3 | Then it-happened he-found bird 003 | On another day he-found horn. 067-8 | He-found stick, he found stick lying there. 119 |
| 4 | He-said "I've-found me bird here." 004 | He-said "I've-found me horn here 069 | He-said "I've found me stick here, 120 |
| 5 | | I'll-put-in my tobacco NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 070 | perhaps I-gather my <i>jujube</i> with- <i>nəŋ</i> NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 121 |
| 6 | | He-took horn <i>ni ti</i> 071 | |
| 7 | In a moment bird <i>nakəŋ</i> thus <i>ti</i> 005 | Horn <i>ni</i> 072a | Thus <i>ti</i> 123a |
| 8 | "I <i>dagya</i> bird only NEG" 006 | "Oh, I <i>dagya</i> horn only NEG 072b | "Oh, I <i>dagya</i> stick only NEG 123b |
| 9 | "Oh, you what?" 007 | | |
| 10 | "Oh, I bird only NEG 008 | | |
| 11 | I-give thing as-well, NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 009 | I-give thing NOM-drink- <i>ni</i> also." 073 | I stick of beating NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 124 |
| 12 | He-said "You-give thing how?" 010 | "You-give thing NOM-drink- <i>ni</i> how?" 074a | He-said "Beating stick, 125a |
| 13 | Show-out thing <i>gana</i> ." 011 | Show-out." 074b | show-out thing <i>gana</i> ." 125b |
| 14 | So bird <i>nakəŋ</i> moved tail and wings <i>ti</i> - 013 | Then horn <i>nakəŋ</i> moved thus <i>ti</i> 075 | Stick <i>ni ti</i> beat man <i>ni</i> hitting 126 |
| 15 | millet pours-out pouring 014 | he-sees <i>ti</i> just milk only flows-out. 076 | it-beat-up man <i>na</i> completely in bush, 127 |
| 16 | it-filled-to-the-brim into sack for man <i>na</i> . 015 | Till man <i>ni</i> drink milk till he-want NEG he-filled. 077 | man <i>ni</i> weeping weeping. 128 |
| 17 | Man <i>ni</i> thus <i>ti</i> "I've-found me thing truly" 016 | | He-said "I've-found thing NOM-punish my wife <i>nakəŋ</i> then." 129 |
| 18 | Snatching he-snatched up bird <i>nakəŋ</i> . 017 | So man <i>ni</i> stuffing put [it] into his bag. 078 | He-took stick <i>ni</i> 130a |
| 19 | The he-went with- <i>nəŋ</i> home. 018 | | and went home with- <i>nəŋ</i> . 130b |
| 20 | Thus he-arrived with- <i>nəŋ</i> home <i>nakəma</i> , 019 | He-arrived with- <i>nəŋ</i> home 079 | |
| 21 | he-recounted to woman <i>gani</i> 020 | he-said to his woman <i>ni</i> again 080 | |
| 22 | he-said-to "My woman, <i>dagya</i> I've found our thing here." 021 | "My woman, we-have-found thing here, NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 081 | He-said "My woman, I've found something here" 131 |
| 23 | She-said-to "What?" 022 | She-said-to "How? Thing <i>gani</i> how?" 082 | She-said-to "What?" 132 |

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| | | | | | | |
|----|---|------|--|------|--|-------------|
| 24 | "Oh, thing <i>gani niki</i> " | 023 | "Oh, thing <i>gani niki</i> " | 083 | "Oh, thing <i>gani</i> | 133a |
| 25 | Oh you say-to 'Show-out thing REL you-bring <i>na' ti</i> | 024 | | | you-say-to <i>ti</i> 'Show-out your work REL you-do <i>na' ti</i> | 133b |
| 26 | it-will-do-it-for-you". | 025 | | | <i>naŋ</i> do-for-you at-once" | 134 |
| 27 | So then woman <i>nakəŋ</i> said to bird <i>nakəŋ ti</i> | 026 | Then woman <i>ni</i> said-to thus | 084 | Woman <i>nakəŋ</i> went said-to stick <i>nakəŋ</i> | 135 |
| 28 | | | | | "Show-out your work REL you-do <i>na</i> ." | 136 |
| 29 | just bird <i>nakəŋ</i> moved thus moving <i>ti</i> | 027 | | | Stick <i>ni</i> beat, wailing in house, it-beat full. | 137 |
| 30 | just millet poured out, just millet poured out. | 028 | | | | |
| 31 | thus millet <i>ni</i> until it-filled all their granaries brim-full with all jars. | 029 | milk <i>ni</i> till filled up all their containers in house. | 085 | | |
| 32 | So then there bird <i>ni</i> was. | 032 | | | Lying, stick <i>ni</i> rested its thing. | 138 |
| 33 | Just whenever they needed millet <i>ti</i> | 033 | | | | |
| 34 | just they-spoke-to bird <i>ni</i> like that, just they-spoke-to bird <i>ni</i> like that. | 034 | They-drink every day just they-drink milk <i>ni</i> | 086 | | |
| 35 | Another day <i>ti</i> | 035 | | | | |
| 36 | woman <i>gayaŋ ni</i> went for water <i>ti</i> | 036 | Woman <i>nakəŋ</i> arrived at water another day also | 087 | So she-went out for water <i>ni</i> again | 139 |
| 37 | she-entered she-found other women <i>ni</i> | 037 | she-recited to women <i>ni</i> again. | 088 | she-recited to other women <i>ni</i> | 140 |
| 38 | they-draw water with them <i>ti</i> | 038 | | | | |
| 39 | she-said "We <i>ni</i> | 039 | She-said | 089a | | |
| 40 | my man has found something <i>nakəŋ</i> in the bush NEG <i>ti</i> how? | 040 | "My man has-found horn <i>nakəŋ nakəma</i> | 089b | | |
| 41 | They-said-to "What?" | 041 | | | | |
| 42 | "Oh thing <i>gani</i> bird <i>ti</i> | 042 | | | | |
| 43 | just you-say-to 'Give-me thing' NEG <i>ti</i> how surely <i>ti</i> | 043 | just you-say-to word thus <i>ti</i> | 090a | | |
| 44 | just it-give-you-out thing thus pouring. | 044 | milk till you-leave." | 090b | | |
| 45 | We <i>ni</i> , it's-happened we've found for us." | 045 | | | | |
| 46 | They-said-to "Yes?" | 046a | They-said "You're telling lie" | 091a | Other women <i>ni</i> said "You're lying" | 141 |
| 47 | | | "Oh, lie NEG" | 091b | " <i>Dəŋiya</i> lie NEG." | 142 |
| 48 | Show-hither tomorrow!" | 046b | | | "Lie. Then bring-hither to us." | 143 |
| 49 | She-said "OK." | 047 | | | | |
| 50 | Next-day she-went-out she-went to water <i>ti</i> | 048 | Next morning she-went again | 092 | She-went out in the morning another day | 144 |
| 51 | snatching she-took bird <i>nakəŋ</i> in her jar. | 049 | taking she-took horn <i>ni</i> to women <i>ni</i> | 093 | she-took stick <i>nakəŋ</i> | 145a |
| 52 | She-went with- <i>naŋ</i> to water. | 050 | | | and she-went with- <i>naŋ</i> for water. | 145b |
| 53 | She-arrived <i>ti</i> | 051 | So they-were there. | | So she-arrived, | 146 |
| 54 | | | | 094 | women <i>ni</i> were drawing water. | 147 |
| 55 | | | | | They'd drawn their water, | 148 |
| 56 | women <i>nakəŋ</i> then they-said-to | 052 | They-said | 095a | then they-said to stick <i>nakəŋ</i> | 149 |
| 57 | "Show-out your thing REL you-do <i>na</i> NEG <i>ti</i> how?" | 053 | "Show-out thing <i>gama</i> ." | 095b | "Show-out your work REL you-do <i>na</i> ." | 150 |
| 58 | Bird <i>ni</i> moved moving <i>ti</i> | 054 | Then horn <i>nakəŋ</i> moved like this <i>ti</i> | 096 | Stick <i>nakəŋ</i> getting-up thus <i>ti</i> | 151 |
| 59 | | | just milk flows-out only, just milk flows-out only. | 097 | it-beat them, | 152 |
| 60 | their jars <i>ni</i> all millet brim-full. | 055 | their jars <i>ni</i> all milk brim-full | 098 | women <i>ni</i> crying at water loudly | 153 |
| 61 | So then bird also a moment, they did this <i>ti</i> | 056 | so <i>ti</i> women <i>ni</i> drank their fill. | 099 | NOM-smash-up jars <i>na</i> | 154 |
| 62 | bird <i>ni</i> also was-there no-more | 057 | Then horn <i>ni</i> fell into the water. | 100 | it-hit jars <i>ni</i> bursting, with calabashes all it-smashed-up. | 155 -156 |
| 63 | | | Horn <i>ni</i> fell into the water <i>ni ti</i> | 101 | | |
| 64 | millet <i>ni</i> also in their jars <i>ni</i> was-there no-more. | 058 | milk <i>ni</i> was in their jars <i>ni</i> no-more. | 102 | | |
| 65 | | | Now horn <i>nakəŋ</i> also was-there no-more. | 103 | | |
| 66 | | | So woman <i>nakəŋ</i> started to tremble then | 104 | | |
| 67 | So then women <i>ni</i> went home. | 059 | then she-went home again. | 105 | Women <i>ni</i> went home weeping together | 157 |
| 68 | | | When she-arrived <i>nakəma</i> | 106 | They-went home with- <i>naŋ</i> , nothing with them. End. | 158 -159 |
| 69 | The man <i>ni</i> arrived <i>nakəma</i> | 060 | man <i>gani</i> came back from bush <i>gayaŋ na</i> again. | 107 | | |

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| | | | | |
|----|---|-----|--|------------|
| 71 | he-came-home from bush gayag na again. | 061 | | |
| 71 | He-saw bird gayag ni was-there no-more. | 062 | He-saw horn ni was-not-there, he-saw horn ni was-not-there | 108 |
| 72 | | | He-asked woman gani na | 109 |
| 73 | | | he-said-to "You've-put ti where?" | 110 |
| 74 | | | his wife ni, naq quiet. | 111 |
| 75 | | | She-know thing REL ti she-do ni more NEG. | 112 |
| 76 | He-said "Woman ni here ti | 063 | So man ni said "Wife ni ti | 113a |
| 77 | has told women at the well NEG ti how?." | 064 | is very stupid: every day you-tell-her thing she-understand NEG ti , I-do what with wife ni ?" | 113b - 116 |
| 78 | So there naq was. | 065 | He-was there | 117a |

2. 'Toad, buck and hare'

| | A. Cycle 1: buck | | B. Cycle 2: hare | |
|-----|---|---------|---|--------|
| 1. | Story. Toad went again | 001 | Toad nakəy naq is-there, he-walks with his goat ni his thing again. | 063-4 |
| 2. | he-found buck with his goat in his hand also. | 002-003 | he-found hare. | 065 |
| 3. | "Greetings buck" "Greetings too" | 004 | "Greetings hare" "Greetings too" | 066-7 |
| 4. | "Where are you going with goat?" | 005 | "Where are you going with goat?" | 068 |
| 5. | "Oh I-see people of race with- naq NEG ti how?" | 006 | "Oh I-see people of race with- naq NEG ti how?" | 069 |
| 6. | He-said "You-see people of race with- naq ?" | 007 | | |
| 7. | Oh, I ni want." | 008 | "Then I here" | 070 |
| 8. | He-said-to "Come." | 009 | | |
| 9. | He-said-to "How we-run ti how?" | 010 | "Can-you-beat-me?" "Oh I-can-beat-you" | 071-2 |
| 10. | He-said-to "I-want ti we-run we with person gani | 011 | "Oh you-beat-me NEG: naq ni you-say what again toad?" | 073-4 |
| 11. | we-run we-go | 012 | I-beat-you NEG, you-know hare NEG?" | 075 |
| 12. | we've-arrived, we-return we-turn face ti | 013 | They-call hare, you know naq NEG how?" | 076 |
| 13. | if person gani has-beat me at run kam , he-take goat ni " | 014 | You-heard never they-recount?" | 077 |
| 14. | He-said "Oh?" "Oh, yes!" | 015 | "Oh I've-understood however. But even-so perhaps we-try first." | 078-9 |
| 15. | So then they-tied goat. | 016 | | |
| 16. | He-said-to "Here ti ti my running ti must in water. | 017 | But naq here nahəma , I ti , I-run in water" | 080-1 |
| 17. | I run on ground NEG." | 018 | I run on ground NEG." | 082 |
| 18. | He-said-to "OK I-accept." | 019 | "OK I-accept." | 083 |
| 19. | He-said-to "I will run in water in water, you run on earth. | 020-21 | "OK here ti you you'll run on bank nahəma , I run in water" | 084-5 |
| 20. | You-arrive a-little you-call me ti , I-reply-to-you ti | 022 | You-arrived a-little ti , you-call me." | 086 |
| 21. | you-know ti if I in-front, if behind even ti | 023 | | |
| 22. | you-know then, NEG ti I on ground ti I-run NEG." | 024 | | |
| 23. | He-said-to "OK I-accept." | 025 | | |
| 24. | Toad nakəy descending goes down into water. | 026 | Toad nakəy | 087a |
| 25. | He-went-in he-called-together people gani | 027 | went-down to people gani again. | 087b |
| 26. | He-said to tay "Here nahəma , we-align-self on bank ni in-a-line up-to low up-to high | 028-9 | | |
| 27. | but ti we-go we-race we with buck ti | 030 | | |
| 28. | if-you-see ti he-call yet nahəma | 031 | | |
| 29. | person REL ti naq call naq ni ti , he-reply then at-once. | 032 | | |
| 30. | Now if ti he-runs-on in-front again he-arrives a-little he-calls ti just you-reply-to this." They-say-to "OK" | 033-4 | | |
| 31. | Then toad ni lines-up people gani beside bank ni in-a-line up-to low up-to high. | 035-6 | He-lines-up tay again. | 088 |
| 32. | They-arrive at place NOM-run- ni , he-jumped-in, | 037 | | |
| 33. | he-said-to "Buck are-you-ready?" | 038 | | |
| 34. | "Oh I-am-ready NEG ti how?" | 039 | | |
| 35. | "Then let-us-start running" | 040 | | |
| 36. | So buck he-start running jump jump, he-arrived a-little | 041-2a | So they-started race na , hare starts to run run run upright | 089-90 |
| 37. | he-said-to "You where toad?" | 042b | he-calls "You where toad?" | 091 |

Muyang Narrative Discourse Markers

| | | | | |
|-----|---|-------|--|----------|
| 38. | "I here" toad nahay he-say-to-hither word in-front. | 043 | "I here" toad replies-hither in-front. | 092 |
| 39. | He-turns face to running again running he-jump high. | 044 | He-turns face again, he-runs, he-runs, | 093-4 |
| 40. | He-arrived a-little again nahoma , "You-arrived where toad?" | 045 | he-arrived a-little again "You-arrived where toad?" | 095 |
| 41. | "I here" nahay replies-hither again. | 046 | "Oh I here, NEG ti how?" nahay replies again. | 096 |
| 42. | He-runs he-runs he-arrived almost, "You where toad?" | 047-8 | | |
| 43. | "I here" toad nahay replied-hither on finish gani | 049 | Up-to he-arrived at finish gani , toad ni replies-hither in font of him again. | 097-8 |
| 44. | He-arrived. | 050 | | |
| 45. | "We-return face NEG ti how?" They-return-hither again. | 051-2 | So they return-hither face to race again. | 099 |
| 46. | He-runs-hither he-runs-hither he-arrived a-little nahoma | 053 | He-starts to run hard run run, he-arrived a-little nahoma , he-stops | 100-1 |
| 47. | "You-arrived where?" | 054 | "You-arrived where toad?" | 102 |
| 48. | "I here" toad nahay return face in-front of him again. | 055 | Toad nahay replies in-front of him. | 103 |
| 49. | Just he-runs-hither he-runs-hither, | 056 | He-runs-hither, he-runs-hither, he-arrived almost, he-stopped, | 104-5a |
| 50. | he-arrived a-little just he-calls, toad replies in-front. | 057 | he-calls again "Toad you where?" "I here" toad replies in-front. | 105b-106 |
| 51. | Until he-arrived a-little on finish gana almost | 058 | So until they-arrived on finish gana almost, | 107 |
| 52. | he-calls, toad replies-to in-front nay in-front of him. | 059 | "You-arrived where toad?" Toad replied in-front gani | 108-9 |
| 53. | He-came-out, he-said-to "How?" | 060 | So toad came-out. He said-to "How?" | 110-1 |
| 54. | "Oh you 've-beaten me truly" | 061 | "Oh you 've-beaten me truly, NEG ti how?" | 112 |
| 55. | | | " Nay here ti you-beat more NEG go-home your thing" | 113 |
| 56. | | | So then toad left with his goat. | 114 |
| 57. | So then buck left. | 062 | Hare also left. End. | 115 |

3. Takwatsa (beginning)

| | A. Cycle one: donkeys and cock | | B. Cycle two: horses and donkey | |
|-----|--|--------|--|--------|
| 1. | Woman nahay , woman not-loved, whatever ni they-brought they-gave to- nay NEG. Child-of-her is, they-call nay Takwatsa. | 001-3 | | |
| 2. | So they-went, children other ni all of women other ni | 004 | They-went nahoma . | 026a |
| 3. | they-went they-bought donkeys for tay . | 005 | they-bought horses for children nday nay ni again. | 026b |
| 4. | They-travel with- nay , they-travel with- nay . | 006 | | |
| 5. | For Takwatsa nahay zla nahoma they-bought cock. | 007 | for Takwatsa nahay they-bought donkey. | 027 |
| 6. | He-follows tay with- nay waddling. | 008 | | |
| 7. | It-happened sun rose a-bit nahoma , they-say "Sun is-enough, we-give water to our donkeys NEG ti how?" | 009-11 | Now gani "Sun is-enough, we-give water to horses NEG ti how?" | 028-9 |
| 8. | They-went-out children nday ni they run with donkeys ni walking. | 012 | They-gallop with horses ni to water again galloping. | 030 |
| 9. | They-arrived at water na nahoma , they found water nahoma , they-drink they-drink. | 013-4 | They-arrived at water na , they-jumped-off horses na , they-gave water to their-horses ni , they-drink, they-drink, they-drink. | 031-2 |
| 10. | Their donkeys ni drank-up water na ti , remaining gani other ni they-trample disturbing. They-disturb-over for Takwatsa. | 015-7 | They-drank-up ti , remaining gani other ni they-trample again trampling, they-disturb water ni . | 033-4 |
| 11. | So ti brother nahay is ti , his friend. | 018 | So child REL ta friend of Takwatsa nahay | 035 |
| 12. | He-drew-out water na in a calabash, he-hid-for in leaves. | 019-20 | draws-for-out water na in calabash again, he-hides-for-out in leaves in shade well. | 036-7 |
| 13. | Takwatsa arrived with his cock na waddling ti . | 021 | Takwatsa comes, he comes with his donkey ni walking. | 038 |
| 14. | | | he-arrives scarcely ti nday drank-up water finished, they-disturbed other na . | 039-40 |
| 15. | then his-brother nay ni took-for water na out of leaves, he-drinks. | 022-3 | So his-brother friend gani takes-out-for water na in calabash from shade, then he-gives to his donkey ni it-drinks. | 041-3 |
| 16. | So water other ni NOM-disturbed. | 024 | | |
| 17. | Next-day ni thus, next-day ni thus, nday are. | 025 | Next-day ni thus, next-day ni thus. | 044 |

Finally Takwatsa complains to his mother, who consults a fetishist as to how to obtain a horse for her son, before following his advice through three parallel episodes:

| | A. Episode one: buck | B. Episode two: rabbit | C. Episode three : horse |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 18. | So then woman <i>nakəŋ</i> went-out 080 | | |
| 19. | directly to honey <i>nakəŋ</i> in bush 081 | (the honey is mentioned in the advice) | |
| 20. | She-took her honey, big gourd-full. 082 | | |
| 21. | She-went early morning another day 083 | | |
| 22. | directly she-went with- <i>naŋ</i> on path in bush. 084 | Directly she-goes on she-goes, she-goes. 099 | Directly she-goes on again. 118 |
| 23. | She-found buck. 085 | She-found hare. 100 | She-came she-found animal whatever <i>ni</i> thus. She-came then she-found horse <i>zla</i> , shiring it-bore its child, it-be it-licked. 119-21 |
| 24. | "Greetings." 086a | "Hello" 101a | She-came "Oh hello" 122a |
| 25. | "Greetings ... Where are you going?" 086b - 087 | "Greetings ... Where are you going?" 101b-2 | "Greetings ... Where are you going?" 122b-123 |
| 26. | "I seek four-legged animal for my child, NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 088-9 | "I seek four-legged animal for my child, NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 103-4 | "Oh I seek four-legged animal, NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 124 |
| 27. | "Oh I here <i>ni</i> four-legged- <i>ani</i> NEG?" 090 | "Oh I here <i>ni</i> four-legged- <i>ani</i> NEG?" 105 | "Oh I here <i>ni</i> four-legged- <i>ani</i> NEG?" 125 |
| 28. | "Oh show me your running" 091 | "Oh show your running first NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 106 | "Oh show your running first NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 126 |
| 29. | "Oh show me what is in your bag first" 092 | "Oh show what is in your bag." 107 | "Oh show what is in your bag first." 127 |
| 30. | Then she-gave-to honey <i>nakəŋ</i> . 093 | Giving she-gave-out honey <i>na</i> again. 108 | Then giving she-gave-out honey <i>na</i> . 128 |
| 31. | He-tasted <i>nahəma</i> sweet it-tasted good. 094 | Then it-tasted <i>nahəma</i> , yes, sweet, it-tasted like what? "OK <i>naŋ</i> here <i>ti</i> show your running also <i>zla</i> ." 109-11 | Horse <i>ni</i> tasted <i>nahəma</i> , yes very-sweet. It-said "Well, here <i>ni</i> real thing." Thus horse <i>nakəŋ</i> then licked child <i>gani na</i> . Then she-said "Here <i>ti</i> show-me your running also NEG <i>ti</i> how?" 129-32 |
| 32. | Then buck <i>nakəŋ</i> started running run 095 | Hare <i>nakəŋ</i> started running run run <i>nahəma</i> , it-put-on shoes thus <i>ti</i> , start rushing, thornbush first it-passes crossing. 112-4 | Horse <i>nakəŋ</i> started <i>zla</i> . It-started to NOM-gallop galloping it-return again. 133-4 |
| 33. | "No you-will-throw-off my child. 096-7 | "No here <i>ni</i> you-will-cut my child with thornbush. Here <i>ni</i> I-want NEG, you-will-cut child NEG <i>ti</i> how. 115-6 | |
| 34. | "I'm-going on." 098 | "I'm-moving on." 117 | |
| 35. | | | It-said-to "How?" 135 "Oh, try again NEG <i>ti</i> how." 136 |
| 36. | | | Giving she-gave-again hand to honey <i>ni</i> again. 136 |
| 37. | | | Horse <i>nakəŋ</i> started quickly galloping <i>nahəma</i> , it-thought head it-returns again. 137-8 |
| 38. | | | It-said-to "It's-enough NEG wholly?" 139 |
| 39. | | | "Oh, you-start <i>ti</i> , I-want <i>ti</i> REL you-start quickly <i>ti</i> , they-call you even, you-hear NEG- <i>ani</i> , NEG <i>ti</i> how?" Then cutting she-adds hand to honey <i>nakəŋ</i> again. 140-3 |
| 40. | | | It-came-out horse <i>ni</i> quick to running <i>zla</i> , dust cloudy. 144 |
| 41. | | | <i>Naŋ</i> come-out suddenly she-take-up child of horse <i>na</i> , then putting her honey <i>ni</i> in hollow <i>gani</i> 145-6 |
| 42. | | | Then tearing with- <i>naŋ</i> she-starts on running quickly she-returns home with- <i>naŋ</i> ... 147 |

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