

Case Markers in Tona Rukai Revisited:

The Distinction between *ko* and *na*

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This paper aims at reexamining the distinction between the two case markers for common nouns, *ko* and *na*, in Tona Rukai, a Formosan language. By studying the corpus established by Zeitoun et al. (2003), this paper argues against the distinction in case and proximity proposed in the literature. Instead, discourse information leads us to propose an anaphoric vs. non-anaphoric distinction.¹

Key words: Tona Rukai, Formosan languages, case marker, anaphoric definiteness, discourse, corpus analysis

1. Introduction

Rukai is one of the Austronesian languages of Taiwan, commonly referred to as the “Formosan languages”. The Rukai language is distributed in a rather small area in southeastern Taiwan and is spoken by a total population of approximately 10,000².

The language investigated in this paper, Tona, constitutes one of the six major Rukai dialects. It is spoken in the Tona Village (Maolin County, Kaohsiung Prefecture) with a population of about 600.

This study is a part of my MA thesis (see Wang 2003). When I started to investigate the usage of NPs in Tona Rukai, the first challenge I encountered was to account for the use and functions of pre-nominal particles, conventionally called “case markers” among Formosanists. Although many studies have focused on case markers from a language-specific or typological perspective (see Zeitoun 1995, 2003, Li 1997a, 1997b and Huang et al. 1998), the distinction that had earlier been reported regarding the two case markers for common nouns, *ko* and *na* in Tona Rukai did not completely match my data and was very puzzling. The present study aims at exploring the criteria that should be used to distinguish between these two case markers by examining data drawn from a collected corpus of stories (including

¹ This paper owes a lot to Dr. Elizabeth Zeitoun, Dr. Lillian M. Huang, Dr. Paul Jen-kuei Li, Dr. Malcolm Ross and Dr. Li-mei Sung. I would like to thank them for their instruction, detailed comments, helpful suggestions and encouragement. I am also grateful to two referees for their insightful remarks. I would like to thank my consultants, Mr. Tian Hsiu-jiao, Ms. Ke A-xiang and Mr. Teng Wu-lai for sharing their linguistic intuition with me patiently and their warm reception during fieldwork.

² This statistic figure comes from a recent announcement by the Council of Indigenous Peoples, Executive Yuan (<http://others.apc.gov.tw/popu/9406/aprp5803.htm>, 2003-12).

folktales and narratives).

In section 2, I will introduce the theoretical framework on which this study is based, provide further information regarding the linguistic data on which the present analysis is drawn and offer an overview of the prominent linguistic features of Tona Rukai. In section 3, I will review and reassess previous studies. In section 4, I will present an alternative analysis regarding the distinction between *ko* and *na*. Section 5 summarizes these findings.

2. Method

Inspired by Huang (1993, 1995), the framework adopted in the present study is basically semantic/functional; i.e., this analysis aims at accounting for the mapping between form and meaning. Linguistic definitions regarding the semantic properties and syntactic functions of noun phrases provide us with a theoretical basis. In other words, while this study is intended to be descriptive in nature, theories on definiteness, such as those proposed by Givón (1993) and Löbner (1985), will also be referred to.

2.1 Source of the linguistic data

The linguistic data used in the present study are mainly from the upcoming Tona dictionary and the Tona texts compiled by Elizabeth Zeitoun³. The Tona dictionary⁴ contains about 1000 entries and over 2000 derived lexical items. The Tona texts⁵ contain nearly 500 pages of 16 long stories with Mandarin and English glosses and translations for each word and sentence, now available on the web (<http://formosan.sinica.edu.tw>) (cf. Zeitoun et al. 2003). The texts were expected to provide rich pragmatic and discourse clues. All the illustrative examples were reconfirmed or revised, corrected for slips of the tongue, during my own fieldwork from June 2002 to August 2003⁶. Additional sets of data were also elicited as a supplement. With regard to the glosses and translations of the illustrative examples, I agree with Zeitoun's original data but certain corrections and rephrasing were done

³ The data was first collected as part of a project entrusted by the Council of Indigenous Peoples, Executive Yuan, R.O.C. from May to December of 2001, but was later revised, corrected and reedited for the purpose of the Academia Sinica Formosan Language Archive.

⁴ The sentences in the Tona dictionary are not glossed. The glosses of the adopted sentences are given by me.

⁵ In the Tona texts, the case markers *ki*, *na*, *ko* and the ligature *ka* are left unglossed, which is part of the main concern in the current study.

⁶ The transcription of the Tona texts in the Formosan Language Archive aims to correspond to every utterance in the tapes of story recording. No matter how well the speakers have prepared for story telling in their minds, slip of the tongue, change of word selection and pause fillers are inevitable in their speech. In order to avoid confusion, the discourse factors mentioned above have been eliminated in the illustrative examples.

when mistakes were detected in fieldwork or when the translation was no longer appropriate when a sentence was extracted from a text.

2.2 Prominent linguistic features

In order to help readers understand illustrative examples better, some prominent linguistic features of Rukai are introduced here. Like most Formosan languages, Rukai is a predicate-initial language. Predicates may be nouns or verbs. Linguistically speaking, Rukai is characterized by the fact that (i) it is an accusative language⁷ unlike most Formosan languages, which are ergative⁸ (cf. Starosta 1988, Li 1997a) and (ii) it lacks the complex focus system, found in the other Formosan languages and in Philippine languages. Instead, it has developed an active/passive dichotomy (cf. Li 1973, Zeitoun 1997a, 1997b). A passive sentence is yielded by prefixing *ki-* to the verb root (see appendix 1, for a more complete description of verb classification and verb conjugation). It involves also a change in the case-marking of nominal arguments.

In the present study, all the illustrative examples are transcribed phonemically with IPA symbols (see Li 1992 and 1997a).

3. Case markers in Tona Rukai

Like most Formosan languages, nouns in Tona Rukai are usually preceded by formatives referred to as case markers by many Formosan linguists such as Li (1997b), Huang et al. (1998), and Zeitoun (1995, 1997a). These formatives are called “relation markers” by Tsuchida (1976), “construction markers” by Ferrell (1979) and “determiners” by Starosta (1988). This study adopts the term “case markers” because these formatives function as the morphosyntactic device to designate the case/grammatical roles of noun phrases in sentences. Case markers generally fulfill two functions: (i) they provide information regarding the semantic properties of nouns, and (ii) they indicate the syntactic roles of the nouns/noun phrases they precede. In the literature, we find that four such case markers are found in Tona Rukai, namely, *ki* and *-anə* for personal proper nouns⁹, and *ko* and *na* for common nouns¹⁰.

⁷ An accusative language is ‘a language in which subjects of intransitive verbs and subjects of transitive verbs are usually treated identically for grammatical purposes, while direct objects of transitive verbs are treated differently’ (Trask 1993:4).

⁸ An ergative language is ‘a language in which ergative morphology or syntax is prominent or predominant’, while “ergative” means ‘denoting a grammatical pattern in which subjects of intransitive verbs and direct objects of transitive verbs are treated identically for grammatical purposes, while subjects of transitive verbs are treated differently’ (Trask 1993:92-93).

⁹ Personal proper nouns in Tona Rukai include personal names and kinship terms. Such kinship terms found in the corpus include *titina* ‘mother, aunt, middle-aged woman’, *tatava* ‘father, uncle,

Study	Zeitoun	Li	Li	Huang et al.	Zeitoun
Criterion	(1995)	(1997a)	(1997b)	(1998)	(2003)
Nom ¹² vs. Acc/Obl	Yes ¹³	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal/Proper vs. Non-personal/Common	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Distal vs. Proximal (common nouns only)	No	No	No	Yes	No
Case distinction for common nouns	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

As can be seen from Table 1, these five studies report the following distinctions: nominative vs. accusative/oblique and personal/proper vs. non-personal/common. These observations are confirmed by the data presented above. Variation lies in the analysis of the two case markers preceding common nouns, *ko* and *na*. Huang et al. (1998) differentiate common nouns in terms of proximity while the other four studies do not report such a distinction. A case distinction for common nouns is reported in Zeitoun (1995) and Li (1997a, 1997b) but not in Huang et al. (1998) or Zeitoun (2003). Specifically, the case markers *ko* and *na* are analyzed as nominative and accusative/oblique respectively in Li (1997a, 1997b), while Huang et al. (1998) consider that they exhibit a distal-proximal distinction in terms of a spatial and

¹² Abbreviations employed in the tables and examples are as follows: Acc: accusative, Act: active, AgtNmz: agentive nominalization, Caus: causative, CM: case markers, Cntrfct: counterfactual, Dem: demonstrative, Dep: dependent, Dist: distal, Dyn: dynamic, E/excl: exclusive, Emph: emphasis, Excl: exclamation, Fin: finite, Fut: future, Gen: genitive, I/incl: inclusive, Imp: imperative, Impr: impersonal, Ind: independent, InstrNmz: instrumental nominalization, inv: invisible, Irr: irrealis, Lig: ligature, LocNmz: locative nominalization, Neg: negation, Neg.Imp: Imperative negation, NFin: non-finite, Nom: nominative, Obl: oblique, Pass: passive, P/plur: plural, Prox: proximal, Q: question word, Real: realis, Red: reduplication, S: singular, Stat: stative, Subj: subjunctive, Sup: superlative, Top: topic, Vd: voiced, vis: visible, VI: voiceless, a dot . indicates portmanteau morpheme, a colon : indicates a (divisible) affix, a hyphen - indicates morpheme boundary, a parenthesis () indicates deleted (sound), a question mark ? indicates that the example is acceptable but rare or not really correct, an asterisk * indicates the examples is unacceptable/ungrammatical.

¹³ 'Yes' means there is such a criterion for distinction while 'No' means the opposite.

temporal recent-remote contrast. In Zeitoun (1995), *ko* designates oblique nouns but it is excluded from the case markers in Zeitoun (2003).

None of these analyses satisfactorily explain the data examined in the present study. Because the investigation in these studies is merely at the sentence level, this study intends to examine these case markers from another angle, the discourse. In order to clarify the distinction between *ko* and *na*, these analyses will be discussed in the following sections first.

3.2 Case marking

Li (1997a, 1997b) categorizes *ko* as the nominative case and *na* as the accusative/oblique case as shown in (3a-b).

- | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----|
| (3) a. | w-a-salaaʔa | na | valavalakə | ko | aθo |
| | Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-chase | Obl | child | Nom | dog |
| | ‘The dog chased the child.’ | | | | |
| b. | w-a-salaaʔa | ko | valavalakə | na | aθo |
| | Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-chase | Nom | child | Obl | dog |
| | ‘The child chased the dog.’ | | | | |

The nouns preceded by *ko* in both (3a) and (3b) serve as agents in active sentences; they are subjects and thus are marked by the nominative case. Those preceded by *na* serve as patients; as objects, they are marked by the oblique case.

However, it should be noted that opposite syntactic functions can be found in texts. Both the Tona texts and the Tona dictionary provide examples showing that *ko* and *na* can designate both subject and non-subject roles in sentences, as indicated in Huang et al. (1998). Consider the following examples.

- (4) a. w-a-icibi na boaθi **na** maodaŋə
 Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-bake NA sweet potato NA old man
 ‘The old man is baking/baked sweet potatoes.’ (Tona Dictionary, <icibi>, p.27)
- a’. i-okono mosoa **ko** palaŋ-iso
 Neg-Dyn.NFin:find 2S.Obl KO spouse-2S.Gen
 ‘Your husband didn’t find you.’ (Tona Dictionary, <kiləpəŋə>, p.36)
- b. la ʔaokay ʔasaobo **ko** maʔaka-kwapiri-ŋa, ...
 then Dyn.NFin:come Dyn.Subj:gather KO all-soldier-Sup
 ‘All the soldiers came and assembled...’ (Tona Texts, 11-007-c)
- b’. ... tobii **na** θakoŋadavanə maəsala
 Dyn.Subj:cry NA people of Tona Stat.Subj:all
 ‘... all the people of Tona (said) crying.’ (Tona Texts, 01-003-a)
- c. la **ko** saka-too ka la cəŋələ-la ki
 then KO ordinal-three Top then Dyn.NFin:see-still Nom
 soa-ni “tiʔicanə-la kini”...
 companion-3S.Gen small-still that
 ‘The third (young man) saw (this stone) and this friend of his (thought) “That is still too small”...’ (Tona Texts, 12-009-a, revised)
- c’. a-**na** aθo ka w-a-salaaʔa na valavalakə
 Top-NA dog Top Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-chase NA child
 ‘Dogs would chase children.’

Examples (4a-c’) show that the nouns preceded by *ko* and *na* are subjects. In (4a), the second noun preceded by *na* is the agent of the transitive verb and so is the noun preceded by *ko* in (4a’). The nouns in (4b-b’) are the agents of intransitive verbs. Those in (4c-c’) serve as topics, which are also the experiencer of the sensation verb in (4c) and the agent of the motion verb in (4c’). Since they are prototypical agents or topics in active sentences, they are treated as the subject and are thus in the nominative case.

On the other hand, examples (5a-c’) show that nouns preceded by *ko* and *na* can also serve in non-subject roles.

- (5) a. la maʔəmaʔəcəə **ko** baan-ini ki gili
 then Dyn.NFin:press KO belly-3S.Gen Gen younger sibling
 nianə...
 3S.Obl
 ‘Then (he) pressed his sister’s belly.’ (Tona Texts, 05-015-b)
- a’. w-a-lapo kakə **na** taokoko
 Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-raise 1S.Nom NA chicken
 ‘I raise chicken.’ (Tona Dictionary, <lapo¹⁴>, p.4)
- b. ... a-no mwa-imo-ŋa **ko**
 Top-when.Fut Dyn.Subj:go-2P.Gen-already KO
 ta-ʔiyobo-anə ka no-cəŋələ
 LocNmz-Dyn.NFin:gather-LocNmz Top will-Dyn.NFin:see
 mo-komo ta-ʔinono-an-ini ki tatava
 will-2P.Nom LocNmz-Dyn.NFin:sit-LocNmz-3S.Gen Gen father
 ‘... when you go to the resting area, you will see (your) father’s seat...’
 (Tona Texts, 04-010-c)
- b’. la wa motokoso **na** taananə
 then Dyn.NFin:go Dyn.Subj:reach NA stream
 ‘Then, they reached a stream.’ (Tona Texts, 11-011-c)
- c. si la ʔi-kay-ŋa na ənəgə ʔi-pa-owa
 and then at-this-already NA stone at-Caus-Dyn.NFin:go
 ʔəbəkə **na** toanə
 Dyn.Subj:tie up NA red cloth
 ‘And then there was a stone tied up with a red cloth.’
 (Tona Texts, 03-003-d, revised)
- c’. i-igoʔo kakə ʔapo-baka **ko**
 Neg-Dyn.NFin:know 1S.Nom come out-word KO
 sa-ʔakoloq-ili
 InstrNmz-frighten-1S.Gen
 ‘I don’t know how to speak because of fear.’

In (5a) and (5a’), the head nouns are the patients of the transitive verbs and thus serve as objects. In (5b) and (5b’), the head nouns serve as destination/location. In (5c), the head noun serves as an instrument. In (5c’), the head noun indicates a cause/reason with an instrument nominalization prefix *sa-* in the non-argument

¹⁴ In the Tona Dictionary, this entry is originally written as *alapo* but in the present analysis, the verb root is regarded as *lapo*.

position. These non-agent nouns are marked by the same case markers, so they are treated as oblique. From examples in (4a-c') and (5a-c'), nouns preceded by *ko* and *na* appear in both argument and non-argument positions and are marked either in the nominative or in the oblique cases. In reviewing these examples, it can be observed that there is a case neutralization in common nouns, i.e. *ko* and *na* can both designate nominative and oblique cases.

In addition, compare sentences (6a-c). The nominative case marker for personal proper nouns, *ki*, shows that the case markers before possessor noun phrases are in the same form as nominative case markers. Both *ko* and *na* can serve for genitive case marking as well.

- (6) a. a-ko ma[ʌ-ɖa koɖay saobilan-**ini** **ki**
 Top-when.Past Dyn.Subj:take-3S.Gen that bag-3S.Gen Gen
 gili ɖianə,...
 younger sibling 3S.Obl
 'When he took the bag of his younger sister, ...'
 (Tona Texts, 05-013-c, revised)
- b. aθo-**ini** **na** ʔasa-alo-alop-anə
 dog-3S.Gen NA AgtNmz-Red-Dyn.NFin:hunt-AgtNmz
 'the dog of a hunter'
- c. la wa koɖay tialaanə taŋaɖan-**ini** **ko** acilay
 then Dyn.NFin:go that source of water source-3S.Gen KO water
 'Then (she) went to that source of the water.'
 (Tona Texts, 04-016-d)

To sum up, both *ko* and *na* can designate nominative, oblique and genitive arguments. They do not make any case distinction, thus contradicting the reports in Li (1997a, 1997b).

3.3 Distal vs. proximal

In Huang et al. (1998), the marker *ko* designates distal common nouns while *na* designates proximal ones. This contrast refers to temporal distance as in (7a-b) and spatial distance as in (8a-b):

- (7) a. w-a-stiti **ko** aθo¹⁵
 Act-Real-beat Obl dog
 ‘(He **once**) beat a dog.’ (a temporally remote event)
 (Huang et al. 1998:42, TR1b)
- b. w-a-stiti **na** aθo
 Act-Real-beat Obl dog
 ‘(He) **is beating/beat** a dog.’ (a temporally recent event)
 (Huang et al. 1998:42, TR1a)
- (8) a. w-a-laŋjai kakə **ko** daʔanə
 Act-Real-buy 1S.Nom Obl house
 ‘I **sold** a house.’ (spatially away from the speaker)¹⁶
 (Huang et al. 1998:43, TR2b)
- b. w-a-laŋjai kakə **na** daʔanə
 Act-Real-buy 1S.Nom Obl house
 ‘I **bought** a house.’ (spatially close to the speaker)
 (Huang et al. 1998:42, TR2a)

In (7a-b), although only *na*, and not *ko*, can be used in an ongoing event (temporally proximal), both *ko* and *na* can be used in past events (temporally distal). They are not used in complementary distribution. The following example provides another temporally distal instance, expressing an experience in the past.

- (9) w-a-kanə-ŋa kakə **na/*ko** avaʔa koboanə
 Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-eat-already 1S.Nom NA/KO flying squirrel before
 ‘I have already eaten flying squirrels before.’

Example (9) shows that *na*, not *ko*, is used in a temporally remote event, talking about an experience, which contradicts the proximity hypothesis in Huang et al. (1998).

The second pair of the examples in Huang et al. (1998), (8a-b), illustrates a spatial proximity distinction, which shows that *ko* designates a spatially remote entity as in (8a) and *na* designates those spatially close to the speaker as in (8b). However, a

¹⁵ The glosses and translation in examples (7a-b) and (8a-b) are based on Huang *et al.* (1998).

¹⁶ When I tried to reconfirm (8a) with my consultants, somehow they didn’t accept this sentence. Instead, this sentence was changed into the one as follows.

- (i) w-a-laŋjai kakə daʔan-ili
 Act.Dyn.Fin-Real-buy 1S.Nom house-1S.Gen
 ‘I sold my house.’

house is stationary; the distance between the house and the speaker doesn't change whether it is bought or sold. There are also sentences where this criterion of spatial proximity is difficult to apply, as in (10a-b) and (11a-b).

- (10) a. mapəʔasə-ŋa **ko/na** paosiam-ili **tabakaanə**
 Stat.Fin:ripe-already KO/NA rice-1S.Gen Tabakaane
 'My rice in Tabakaane is already ripe.' (tabakaanə: place name, close to the Tona Village, visible)
- b. mapəʔasə-ŋa **ko/na** paosiam-ili **lomosə**
 Stat.Fin:ripe-already KO/NA rice-1S.Gen Lomoso
 'My rice in Lomoso is already ripe.' (lomosə: place name, away from the Tona Village, close to the Maolin Village)
- (11) a. **maʔadavili** **ko/na** taomoma-ini
 Stat.Fin:far KO/NA field-3S.Gen
 'His farm is far away.'
- b. **maʔadadiali** **ko/na** taomoma-ini
 Stat.Fin:near KO/NA field-3S.Gen
 'His farm is nearby.'

From (10a-b) and (11a-b) above, it is clear that both *ko* and *na* can be used to designate entities which are either nearby or remote. The problem is that the consultants cannot tell the difference between the use of *na* and that of *ko* in these sentences. But in any case, these examples provide counterevidence against spatial distance as a criterion for the distinction between *ko* and *na*.

In the foregoing discussion neither temporal nor spatial proximity has been viewed as sufficient to account for the distribution of the markers *ko* and *na*.

4. The distinction between *ko* and *na* in the current study

In this section, another criterion, definiteness, is examined in order to account for the data at hand.

4.1 Definite (anaphoric) vs. indefinite

Following Givón's definition (1993:232), a referent (NP) is coded as definite if the speaker assumes that it is mentally accessible or identifiable to the hearer. Otherwise, it is coded as indefinite. There are three sources for definiteness: (1) the

culturally-shared universe, (2) the shared current discourse (anaphoric), and (3) the shared current speech situation (deictic). Interestingly, (i) the contrast between locative and existential constructions and (ii) their discourse distribution can account for the distinction between *ko* and *na* in terms of the first two sources of definiteness. I develop these two points in turn below.

As Clark (1978:91) reports, the main function of existential constructions is to introduce new information. Therefore, such constructions usually contain indefinite nominals. On the other hand, locative constructions are used to specify the location of the entity whose referent has already been identified, and thus definite nominals are used in such constructions. Thus, the contrast between existential and locative constructions lies, in that particular respect, in the definiteness of their participants. Now, consider the following existential sentence (12a) and the locative one (12b).

- (12) a. ʔy-a-kay talaməə **na** bələbələ
 at-Real-this bamboo-weaved dish NA banana
 ‘There are bananas in the bamboo-weaved dish.’
- b. ʔy-a-kay talaməə **ko** bələbələ
 at-Real-this bamboo-weaved dish KO banana
 ‘The bananas are in the bamboo-weaved dish.’

As shown in (12a-b), these two constructions in Tona Rukai are similar in their structures just like other extant Formosan languages studied in Zeitoun et al. (1999). They employ the same existential verb *ʔyakay*¹⁷. The difference lies in the use of the different markers, *ko* in the locative sentence but *na* in the existential one. Since definiteness may distinguish locative constructions from existential ones and the main difference between sentences (12a-b) lies in the use of markers, it suggests that these two markers make a distinction in definiteness.

The Tona texts exhibit such a definiteness distinction as well. For example, *na* is usually used in existential sentences to introduce the main characters at the beginning of a story, as exemplified in (13a-c) below.

- (13) a. la ʔi-kay **na** la-maʔa-tina

¹⁷ According to Zeitoun et al. (1999), the word *ʔyakay* can be analyzed as *ʔy-a-kay* ‘at-Real-this’ though in their paper, their demonstration regarding *yakai* is drawn from the dialect Labuan of Rukai for example: “*i-* is a locational prefix that transforms a noun into a verb”; “*-a-* is a temporal/aspectual infix indicating that an event is on-going or has already taken place at speech time”; “*kai* means ‘this’.” (Zeitoun et al. 1999:19) The same analysis applies to *ʔyakay* in Tona Rukai.

then at-this NA plur-Rec-middle-aged woman

‘Then there were a mother and her daughter.’ (Tona Texts, 07-002-b)

- b. a-nakay no ti-maloloay yan-ili ka ?y-a-kay
 Top-this when.Fut make-Red:story so-1S.Gen Top at-Real-this

na la-ma?a-taka nii

NA plur-Rec-elder sibling Excl

‘The story that I am going to tell goes like this: there was a couple.’

(Tona Texts, 05-001-a, revised)

- c. ?y-a-kay **na** θaba-θabaθ **na** la-ma?-osa-?osay nii
 at-Real-this NA Red-young man NA plur-Rec-Red-male friend Excl

‘There were (three) young men, who were friends.’ (Tona Texts, 10-002-a)

On the other hand, *ko* precedes reoccurring participants in discourse after their identities have been established. See the following examples.

- (14) a. ... la tivalakə kiða palaŋ-ini **na** ?abayano...
 then give birth that spouse-3S.Gen NA female

‘...then his wife gave birth to a girl...’ (Tona Texts, 04-004-c)

- b. la cə-cəŋələ djanə **ko** **valak-ini** koɖay
 then Dyn.NFin:Red-see 3S.Obl KO child-3S.Gen that

?wa-kaagi?i ka vala-valakə...

so-Stat.NFin:beautiful Lig Red-child

‘Then she saw her child, who is a very beautiful and good child...’

(Tona Texts, 04-004-d, revised)

- c. ... la ?opipipi-i tako-?opipipi-i
 then Dyn.NFin:tidy up:Red-Emph while-tidy up:Red-Emph

pakiɖəɖəmə **koɖay** **valak-iða**

Caus:Dyn.NFin:think that child-3S.Gen

‘And as she was tidying up (her stuff), she was thinking about her child.’

(Tona Texts, 04-007-d)

- d. la davacə ki mwakələlə kəbə
 then Dyn.NFin:leave Nom Mwakelele Dyn.Subj:embrace

valak-ini toobi si...

child-3S.Gen Dyn.Subj:cry and

‘And Mwakelele went to embrace his child, crying.’ (Tona Texts, 04-014-c)

As shown in (14a-d) above, after the child participant is introduced with *na* in (14a), it is often preceded by *ko* as in (14b) or a demonstrative as in (14c) in the following

4.2 *na* designates unique entities

Besides indefinite nouns, our corpus shows that *na* can designate unique entities in the universe such as God in Christianity and celestial bodies. See the following examples.

- (18) a. la cə-cəŋələ-əə **na** **pələŋə** kikay saakay-ni kiɬa
 then Dyn.NFin:Red-see-Emph NA God this way-3S.Gen that
 saka-ba-anə
 external-village-external
 ‘God watched the villagers’ way of doing.’ (Tona Texts, 11-004-a, revised)
- b. ʔaboalə-ŋa **na/?ko** **koliʔi**
 Dyn.Fin:come out-already NA/KO Sun
 ‘The sun has already come out.’

In (18a), *na pələŋə* ‘God’ refers to the Christian God, unique in the universe. In the same story, *pələŋə* ‘God’ is mentioned many times. Whenever it is mentioned, it is preceded by *na* or a demonstrative, but not *ko*¹⁸. In (18b), *na koliʔi* ‘the sun’ is a celestial body, which is unique and always definite according to one’s general knowledge of the world. It is preceded by *na*. *ko* is also acceptable but rarely used in that context.

In English, such unique entities are marked as definite. Givón (1993) classifies them as generically-based definites, a sub-class of the culturally-based definites. If we apply his definition, *na* can also designate certain definite entities.

4.3 *na* designates non-anaphoric definites

Besides indefinite and unique entities, *na* can designate definite entities whose identities are so obvious that the hearer need not resort to the previous discourse. Consider the following examples.

- (19) a. ni-sapalaŋanə-ŋa **na** **valak-ili** la ya kaki

¹⁸ Although the case marker before *pələŋə* ‘God’ was sometimes omitted in the texts, *na* is still preferred when the sentences were rechecked with the consultants.

Cntrfct-marry-already NA child-1S.Gen then Dyn.NFin:so 1S.Nom
 mosoa
 2S.Obl

‘(I mean) I will let (you) my child get married.’ (Tona Texts, 10-005-b)

- b. ... ko-wa togotogo **na** **ao-ili**
 1S.Nom-go Dyn.Subj:bump NA head-1S.Gen
 ‘...I am going to bump my head.’ (Tona Texts, 10-013-h)

Sentence (19a) was uttered by a father to his daughter. The noun phrase *na valakili* ‘my child’ refers to the addressee, who is right in front of the speaker. In (19b), the NP *na aoili* ‘my head’ is a body part, which is certainly close to the speaker. This usage of *na* agrees with Huang et al. (1998), in which *na* designates spatially proximal entities. Moreover, such nouns can be treated as “semantically definite” (Löbner 1985), and will be discussed later.

However, there exists a troublesome instance where this definite usage of *na* is not completely excluded from anaphoric reference. Consider the following examples.

- (20) a. a-nosiʔa ka ʔaokay-a waməcə **na**
 Top-tomorrow Top Dyn.Subj:come-Imp Dyn.Subj:bring NA
caŋacaŋə **na**¹⁹ **bəkəʔə**,...
 black and white Lig pig
 ‘Tomorrow, come and bring a black flecked with white pig, ...’
 (Tona Texts, 01-003-c)
- b. komiasiʔanə la silapə **na** **bəkəʔə** θakoŋadavanə
 day after then Dyn.NFin:look for NA pig people of Tona
 la okono
 then Dyn.NFin:find
 ‘The next day, the people of Tona went to look for a (white and black) pig and they found one.’ (Tona Texts, 01-004-a, revised)
- c. la wa waməcə **na** **bəkəʔə** **na**
 then Dyn.NFin:go Dyn.Subj:bring NA pig Lig
caŋacaŋə la paowa po-ʔadɿi...
 black and white then Caus:Dyn.NFin:go Caus:to-inside
 ‘They brought a black flecked with white pig and made (it) enter (the hole)...’
 (Tona Texts, 01-004-b)

The boldfaced noun phrases in (20a-b) have a non-specific reading, referring to any

¹⁹ Only *na* can appear between a modifier and its head noun; *ko* is not allowed in this position. This type of *na* is analyzed as a ligature. (Wang 2003:58)

member of this kind of pig. However, the NP in (20c) refers to the pig they found in the previous example (20b). It is still preceded by *na* although it refers to the entity mentioned in the previous discourse, indicating an anaphoric usage. A possible explanation is that the speaker still focuses on the membership of black-and-white pigs rather than any particular one. In other words, the speaker chooses *na* to emphasize the generic reading since it is this kind of pig that matters in the story.

We see that both *ko* and *na* can precede definite nouns. The distinction between them in this aspect roughly corresponds to Löbner's (1985) classification of definites: semantic and pragmatic definiteness. In his theory, the referent of the semantic definite is "established independently of the immediate situation or context of utterance." (Löbner 1985:298) The nouns preceded by *na* exhibit such semantic definiteness when they are used as a generic like "food", unique in the universe, like "the sun", or unique in the world shared by the speaker and the hearer, like "my child." On the other hand, "pragmatically definite NPs are essentially dependent on special situations and contexts for the non-ambiguity (and existence) of a referent," including deictic, anaphoric, and cataphoric uses (Löbner 1985:298). The nouns preceded by *ko* exhibit this pragmatic definiteness in its anaphoric use. However, the associative anaphoric use, marked by *ko* in Tona Rukai, is classified as semantic definiteness by Löbner (1985:300-301). Therefore, this theory cannot fully explain the distinction between *ko* and *na*, either.

4.4 Related issues: demonstratives

Interestingly, the demonstratives in Tona Rukai contain the same forms as the case markers *ki* (nominative case for personal proper nouns), *ko* and *na*. Table 2 presents the demonstrative system in Tona Rukai in the current study.

Table 2. Demonstratives of Tona Rukai.

		Pronoun /Demonstrative		Location	Time	
Prox.		kikay nakay		nakay	nakay-la ‘now’ na-kikay-la ‘lately’	
Dist.	Vis.	Nom.	kini kiɔay (far)		naɔay	koɔay-la ‘before’
		Obl.	naɔay			
	Inv.	Nom.	kiɔa	koɔay	koɔay	
		Obl.	--	(far)		

The demonstratives in Tona Rukai are differentiated in terms of distance, visibility and case. It is observed that the case distinction for proximal demonstratives is, however, just a tendency in the Tona texts. Those beginning with *ki-* tend to designate nominative nouns; those with *na-* tend to denote oblique nouns; those with *ko-* are not restricted in case. See the following examples for the case designation of the demonstratives.

the case distinction but *kikay* denoting nominative case still enjoys a much higher frequency in the corpus. On the other hand, *nakay* can appear in the topic position in (23). From the case marker for personal proper nouns, *ki* as in (1d), and personal pronouns (Wang 2003), the NPs in the topic position carry the nominative case. Thus, *nakay* here precedes a nominative noun although it appears before oblique nouns most often. On the whole, the case distinction is not very clear-cut for the three groups of demonstratives beginning with *ki*, *ko* and *na*.

Now if we examine the *ko*-group and *na*-group demonstratives more carefully, we find that the *ko*-group designates distal and invisible entities/location and distal time, while the *na*-group designates proximal entities/location/time, and distal but visible entities/location. This differentiation actually corresponds to the current analysis of the distinction between the two markers *ko* and *na*. In the case of the *ko*-group demonstratives, distal and invisible entities/location/time require the hearer's efforts to locate their referents in the previous discourse or related extra-linguistic contexts, which resembles the anaphoric use of *ko*. As for the *na*-group, proximal entities/location/time or distal but visible entities/location are just in front of the speaker/hearer and thus easy to identify their referents, which resembles the non-anaphoric definite use of *na*. However, because the current study of the demonstratives is just a preliminary one, further research needs to be conducted to confirm this correspondence. The relation between the markers *ko/na* and demonstratives is worth investigating as well.

5. Conclusion

From the discussion above, we know that the markers for common nouns, *ko* and *na*, do not designate case. Although the proximity distinction proposed in Huang et al. (1998) can be partially confirmed, it is still not sufficient to account for the whole picture of their usage. In order to provide a wider generalization, this study proposes that the distinction between *ko* and *na* lies in the requirement to identify referents from the previous discourse or from related extra-linguistic contexts. While *ko* designates anaphoric definites, *na* designates a range of noun phrase types, including indefinite (non-specific and specific) entities and definite entities whose identities are obvious because their referents are independent of the context or they are unique objects belonging to the general knowledge of the world. Therefore *ko* is labeled anaphoric while *na* is referred to as non-anaphoric. Part of this distinction also appears in the morphology of the demonstratives in Tona Rukai.

Analyzing *ko* as anaphoric provides explanations for two phenomena. First, subjects in elicited sentences tend to be preceded by *ko*. In discourse, subjects are

most likely to be old, given information. The anaphoric usage of *ko* can designate a noun which has been previously mentioned in the discourse. In previous studies, most of the data corresponded to elicited sentences. That might be the reason why Li (1997a & 1997b) reports that *ko* marks the nominative case. Second, *ko* is reported to designate spatial/temporal distal nouns in Huang et al. (1998). A discourse remote entity is likely to be a temporally remote one since discourse develops with time. Language resides in speakers' minds and is used for communication, and always in a certain context. Even an elicited sentence without an explicit context may reflect the actual usage in discourse in the speaker's mind. Therefore, discourse information may not be discovered in a single elicited sentence until an examination of the real discourse is conducted. In addition to uncovering the distinction between *ko* and *na*, this study also illustrates the importance of examining the discourse context.

Appendix 1

According to morphosyntactic behavior and semantic properties, verbs in Tona can be classified into two major types: dynamic and stative. Typical dynamic verbs include verbs denoting motion such as *wa* ‘go’, action such as *θiawbo* ‘dance’, action-process such as *qooqoo* ‘push’, utterance such as *kibooboo* ‘ask’ and so on. Typical stative verbs include verbs denoting states such as *maagiʔi* ‘good’, cognition such as *maimoo* ‘forget’, emotion such as *madalamə* ‘like’, and involuntary processes such as *mamodo* ‘die’. Besides semantic senses, these two types of verbs can be distinguished mainly by their different morphosyntactic manifestation as Table 1 shows.

Table 1. Verb conjugation of Tona.

Syntactic Semantic		Finite	Non-finite	Subjunctive
Dynamic	‘eat’	w-a-kanə	kanə	kwanə ¹
	‘look for’	w-a-silapə	silapə	silapə
	‘accept’	ky- a-baka	kibaka	kibaka
	‘come’	ʔaokay	ʔaokay	ʔaokay
Stative	‘good’	ma-agiʔi	ka-agiʔi	ma-agiʔi
	‘tired’	ʔabaili	ʔabaili	ʔabaili

Following Zeitoun’s analysis in Tona Texts, a verb may have three forms in different syntactic environment; namely, finite, non-finite and subjunctive forms. Finite forms serve as the main predicate in an affirmative active sentence in the present or past time frame. (See Examples 1a-b) Non-finite forms are used when a verb follows the words *si* ‘and’, *la* ‘then’ and *so* ‘just’ or when it is attached to by an affix denoting various meanings such as future tense (*no-*), negation (*i-*), passivization (*ki-*), causation (*pa-*), irrealis modality (*ni-*), nominalization (*sa-*, *ta-...-anə*, *a-...-anə*), agent’s volition (bound nominative pronouns), and other verbal affixes (See Examples 2a-b). Subjunctive forms occur in imperative sentences, subordinate clauses like temporal or conditional ones, and also appear after the main predicate in serial verb constructions (See Examples 3a-b).

- (1) a. **w-a-kanə** kakə na doʔo
 Act.Dyn.**Fin**:Real-eat 1S.Nom NA cooked food
 ‘I ate (rice).’ (Tona Dictionary, <kanə>, p.32)
- b. “**maidə** koa no-ʔoŋolo mi-kakə na
 Stat.**Fin**:thirsty 1S.Obl will-Dyn.Nfin:drink will-1S.Nom NA
 acilay” ...
 water
 ‘I am thirsty; I am going to drink water...’ (Tona Texts, 04-015-b)
- (2) a. **pa-kanə** ki titina na valavalakə
 Caus-Dyn.**NFin**:eat Nom middle-aged woman NA child
 ‘The mother fed the child.’ (Tona Dictionary, <kanə>, p.32)
- b. si **la kabəabə** kiɖa vala-vala-valakə ...
 and then Stat.**NFin**:happy that Red-Red-child
 ‘And then the children were (very) happy...’ (Tona Texts, 05-004-b)
- (3) a. **w-a-ibogo** **kwanə** na doʔo
 Act.Dyn.**Fin**:Real-fast Dyn.**Subj**:eat NA cooked food
 ‘He ate quickly.’ (Tona Dictionary, <kanə>, p.32)
- b. ʔii, **no mwa-li togotogo** naɖoo
 Excl when.Fut Dyn.**Subj**:go-1S.Gen Dyn.**Subj**:bump that
 ta-ʔaəd-anə, kapapa-ia-ŋa
 LocNmz-Dyn.NFin:pile up stones-LocNmz Stat.NFin:crush-Neg-already
 nia-ni ao-ili?
 Q-3S.Gen head-1S.Gen
 ‘Eh, if I bump (my head) against that stone wall, won’t my head be crushed?’
 (Tona Texts, 10-017-b, revised)

Appendix 2

Table 1. Case markers in Tona Rukai after Zeitoun (1995)

	Nominative	Oblique
Personal	ki	-anə
Non-personal	na, ∅	na, ko, ∅

Table 2. Case markers in Tona Rukai after Li (1997a)

Case \ Semantic property	Nominative	Accusative
Personal name	ki	-anə
Common	ko/ku (variants)	na

Table 3. Case markers in Tona Rukai after Li (1997b)

Case \ Semantic property	Nominative	Oblique (Acc., Loc, Gen.)
Personal	ki	
Common	ko	na

Table 4. Case markers in Tona Rukai after Huang et al. (1998:36), which is based on Zeitoun (1995)

Case \ Nouns		Nominative	Oblique
Proper		ki	∅...-anə
Common	proximal	na	
	distal	ko	

Table 5. Case markers in Tona Rukai after Zeitoun (2003)

	Nominative	Oblique
Personal	ki	-anə
Non-personal	na, ∅	

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魯凱語多納方言格位標記再論：*ko* 和 *na* 的區分

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本研究依據齊莉莎等著作（2003）所建立的語料庫重新探究魯凱語多納方言中兩個普通名詞的格位標記：*ko* 和 *na*。在文獻中，齊莉莎（1995）和李壬癸（1997a&b）指出這兩個標記的區別在於格位的不同(主格/賓格)。而黃美金等（1998）主張兩者的區分在於時間或距離上的遠近。然而在檢視了由齊莉莎等（2003）的語料庫後，發現前述的兩種區分方法皆無法完全解釋語料所呈現的現象。因此本研究開始檢視其他要素，包括名詞的語意屬性、定指與不定指（參考 Givón 1993 和 Löbner 1985 之理論）、語境中的訊息等等。進而提出 *ko* 和 *na* 的區別在於「前指」與「非前指」。 *ko* 出現在指涉到言談中前面提及的名詞之前； *na* 出現在不定名詞或非前指的限定名詞之前。文中亦檢視了指示詞的詞形結構來支持這項分析並嘗試解釋之前文獻分析不符的因素。

關鍵詞：魯凱語多納方言、台灣南島語言、格位標記、前指、定指、言談語境、語料分析