Concordance Fragment

Form Classes

In these listings I assume that Navajo has only four form classes: verbs, nouns, post positions, and other. The fourth category consists of numerals, particles of various sorts, and whatever else doesn't fit one of categories 1-3.

Verbs

For verbs I isolate the stem and the theme (stem classifier plus stem). Below this I list actually occurring words and the references where they can be found. The only change to the words listed is that I remove any suffixes. Leaving suffixes would greatly increase the number of categories and all of this added complexity would not generate any useful information.

The genius of the Navajo verb is that it builds leftward. By this I mean the stem comes last. Along with this, and inseparable from it, is the stem classifier (*0, D, l, ł*) in prefix position 9. Next are the conjunct prefixes in positions 4 through 8. Then we have the disjunction prefixes in positions 1 through 3. Beyond any relationships must be described in terms of syntax. That, after all, is how the disjunct and conjunct prefixes became part of the verb, and presumably the stem classifier joined the stem through syntax as well. But this was a long time ago.

Nouns

For nouns also I strip away any suffixes. This is the citation form. Prefixes remain, even if these are not part of the base noun. Some nouns cannot appear without a possessive prefix. This is called obligatory possession. An example would be *shimá* "my mother." Other nouns can take such a prefix, but need not. An example of this would be *nichidí* "your car." The word *chidí* "car" can stand alone or take a possessive prefix. Still other nouns can't be possessed. An example here would be *yas* "snow." Snow belongs to no one, and to everyone. It is not grammatically possessible.

Entries that are possessed appear with a preceding hyphen in section headings. Entries that are unpossessed appear without a hyphen in section headings.

Post positions

Post positions are cited in section headings with preceding hyphen (-), or with preceding equals sign (=). The latter indicates that whatever prefix comes immediately before the stem in question must carry high tone. Although the prefix carries the tone, it does not derive from the prefix. It derives from the stem. What the equals sign is supposed to look like is a hyphen with a tone mark over it. I don't have that composite character available. Making it would be easier in a Microsoft Word environment, but here the tool I'm using is Microsoft Access. Databases don't have as many formatting capabilities as word processors.

Particles

Particles generally don't take affixes, so I generally cite particles in unaltered form. The section headings in this fourth form class are not stems or base forms, because particles don't have stems or base forms. So here we use the first letter as a section heading.

Relationships Among Form Classes

Crossover categories

There are cases where a member of one form class functions as a member of one of the other form classes. Morphologically the word *bidziil* is a noun (*bi* ["his/her"] + *dziil* ["strength"]), but it functions as a verb. One can say, *Bidziil* "He/She is strong," as a complete thought or sentence. Morphologically the word *naanish* is a verb, but it functions as a noun, taking possessive prefixes as needed (*shinaanish* "my work"). These examples show functional similarities.

A form like *bikáá'* ("on it") might look superficially like a noun (cf. *bikee'* "his/her foot/feet"), but admittedly rare and unusual post positions such as *anishtah* "I am among" function as verbs and resemble them morphologically (cf. *ánísht'é* "I am"). These examples show morphological similarities.

I have pointed out that nouns can function as verbs, that verbs can function as nouns, and that post positions can function as verbs. It is also the case that verbs can function as particles. An example of this is the word *t'áá ałtso* "all." Why is this a verb? For one thing, because it has a stem classifier (*ł*). And how can we be sure this particular ã is a stem classifier? In *t'áá ałtso* this is not clearly the case, but in *t'áá ádzíłtso* "all of them (fourth person)" it is unmistakable. Words that take fourth person subject pronouns (or any other subject marker) and stem classifiers are not morphologically particles. They are verbs. But a word that simply means "all" is not functioning as a verb. It's function as a particle. And so there are at least four cases where forms cross the line and function as something they are not.

There is a thin line separating the various form classes. Things look like A but act like B. In such cases the form invites one understanding while the function invites another. What I do with such examples is store them as what they are morphologically, but let them appear in the listings with the form class whose function they imitate.

Interesting exceptions

Notice what crossovers we have found and which ones are not attested. We said that form class 1 (verbs) can function as 2 (nouns), 1 (verbs) can function as 4 (particles), 2 (nouns) can function as 1 (verbs), and 3 (post positions) can function as 1. Thus, what we have is 1, 1, 2, and 3 as donor form classes and 1, 1, 2, and 4 as receptor form classes. What we don't have is any example of a particle (4) acting like anything other than a particle, nor do we have anything other than a post position acting like a post position (3). So classes 1, 2, and 3 can be donors (4 cannot) and classes 1, 2, and 4 can be receptors (3 cannot).

Multiword Combinations

Sometimes words are supposed to be understood together. An example is (given above) is *t'áá ałtso*. These two words form a semantic unit that together means "all." I am not equipped at this time to represent multiword combinations like this. The unit of analysis is the word, here defined as any string of letters with a space before and after it. Either that or a final punctuation. Thus, all examples of *t'áá*, from whatever source will appear as separate particles in the listing of forms beginning with *t'*.

Prefixes and Suffixes

Certain nouns require a prefix and cannot pronounced without one (*shimá*). These have already been mentioned. All post positions normally require a prefix, although there are some exceptions to this rule, but this is what one comes to expect. A large number of nouns can be pronounced without a prefix, but almost no post position stems can be treated in this way. The expectation is that, if it's a post position stem, there must be a prefix. The opposite counterpart of this is a small handful of post position forms require a suffix. Examples are *-lą́ą(jį')* "first (in sequence)," as in *alą́ąjį'* ("first," i.e., "before anyone"); *-tsi(jį')* "ahead of, before," as in *bitsijį'* ("ahead of him/her").

What Sounds Are Represented in Listings?

Glottal stop is one of the most commonly occurring letters in the Navajo language, and yet it is not represented in the table of available listings. This is because glottal stop, in word- or stem-initial position, is always followed by a vowel. So I have included glottal-initial stems along with vowel-initial stems under the respective vowel entries (*a, e, i, o*).

Similarly, there is a letter combination that occurs rarely, but I do include it in the table of available listings. This is pre-glottalized *n* (*'n*). There is a question whether this is phonological phenomenon or a morphological phenomenon. By this I mean there is a question whether, when it occurs, we are seeing a unit sound /*'n*/ or a combination of sounds /*'*/ + /*n*/. The matter is treated ambivalently in Young and Morgan 1992. Personally, I lean toward the position that pre-glottalized is phonological, i.e., that it is a unit sound of the language. Words like *ayóó'ánihóósh'nínii* "beloved, you whom I love (collectively)" gives no evidence of containing a *D* classifier and the subject in this case is first person singular, so there is no *D* effect from the subject marker.

In some preliminary fieldwork conducted while I was still on campus at the University of New Mexico, I picked up a small number of examples of pre-glottalized /*n*/ in Jicarilla Apache as well. This whole topic requires further study, but for now I treat /*'n*/ as a sound of Navajo and offer a separate listing of forms suspected of containing it.

Mistakes

In the text

There are a very small number of obvious typos in the 2000 Diyin God Bizaad. I have corrected these in the listings where absolutely necessary. There aren't many examples I can bring forward, but one is *Jerusałemdóó* ("from Jerusalem," John 11:18). This is a slip, and a very obvious one. I do not pass this form through with the mistake intact. No useful purpose would be served by doing that. I make simple corrections in the listings where necessary. But there are not many of these.

My own

For my part, I know I have introduced errors of both analysis and execution, and I know where some of them are – but not all. What we have now is a proof of concept. There has to be a starting point.

Scripture References

For each form in the listings, the verses where they occur are given with the book abbreviation, chapter, and verse. For example, Rom 0101 is equivalent to Romans 01:01, which in turn is equivalent to Romans 1:1. If a word occurs twice in the same verse, the book, chapter, and verse designation described above appears twice.