

Transmission of the Naxi language and Dongba culture textbook series

1. The Pictographic Naxi Dongba script



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www.sinoglot.com/naxi**

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Lesson 1


Syllables in Naxi (1)

(While Naxi pinyin is used in conjunction with the International Phonetic Alphabet throughout the book I personally find it to be overly confusing and have only used IPA in the translation. Go [here](#) for a useful IPA soundboard)

Tones

Naxi, being a tonal language, has four main tones.

- 1) the mid level tone – [pa33](#)

e.g. ə33 ɲi33  = yesterday

- 2) the high level tone (similar to the first tone in mandarin) – [pa55](#)

e.g. ʂə55  = speak

- 3) the low rising tone (similar to the second tone in mandarin) – [pa24](#)

e.g. bər24 bər24  = piglet

- 4) the falling tone (similar to the fourth tone in mandarin) – [pa21](#)

e.g. do21  = see

Pronunciation

vowels (1)

a	e	æ
ə	ər	o

initials (1)

p	p'	b
t	t'	d
k	k'	g

Pronunciation practice

Vowels

a: a21 meet, come together a55 duck



æ: æ21 chicken



ə: ə33 (sentence particle)



ər: ər33 copper ər21 rope



o: o33 bone o55 empty, turn upside down



p: pa33 frog Initials
pa21 wide



pər55 write

pər21 pull out



p': p'ər21 white p'ər21 untie



b: ba21 flower



ba21 howl



be33 do, make



be33 snow



t: tər55 close



to33 board



to55 slope



t': t'e33 flag



t'a55 can, be able to (pagoda)



d: do21 see




k': k'a33 bitter





g: gə21 on top





New Characters


ə33  = particle used in transliteration or as a prefix; like noise coming out of a mouth

p'ər21  = white, originally meaning 'untie'; like a rope being untied

be33  = do, make; like a tool and a piece of material

to33  = wooden board

t'e33  = flag, often used as t'e21, 'here'

gə21  = on top of, often used as gə33, 'of' (possessive particle)

Writing practice

