January Is the Coldest Month of the Year

Key Grammar Points in Lesson Fourteen:
1. Comparative and Superlative Degrees of Adjectives
2. Ordinal Numbers and Months of the Year
3. Nominal Suffix Expressing "Something to + Verb"
4. Degree Adverbs: A Little / Not Enough / Too / Not at All
5. and a Summary of Adjectival Sentential Particles

14.1 Dialogue

CD-R DISC-2

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Sheep Crossing a Frozen River, Mangra, Hainan
Tom: Today is really hot. Aren’t you hot?
Wuchung: It’s a bit cooler inside the house. Let’s stay in the house.
Tom: Yes. Yes.
Wuchung: Are you thirsty? Will you drink some tea?
Tom: Tea is too hot. Is there something cold to drink?
Wuchung: There’s yogurt. Let’s have yogurt. It’s something that my mother made.
Mom’s yogurt is more delicious than the store’s.
Tom: Wow! The yogurt is so sour, but it's good.
Wuchung: It tastes better if you put some sugar in it.
Tom: OK. I will put some sugar in it.
Wuchung: Is it sweet enough now?
Tom: Yes. It is sweet enough now. I really like it. The yogurt your mom made is the best.
Wuchung: You are lucky. My mother only makes it in the summer.
Tom: I want to come to your house again in winter.
Wuchung: In this place, winter is too cold. It snows. It’s also windy.
Tom: What is the coldest month of the year?
Wuchung: It’s January.
Tom: What’s the hottest month of the year?
Wuchung: It’s right now.
Tom: So, when is the best season?
Wuchung: March, April, and May are the spring season. It often rains in March and in April. May is the best time. It's warm enough and not hot at all.
Tom: If I have enough money, I will come back to see you next year in May.

14.2 Vocabulary

14.2.1 Vocabulary from the Dialogue

1. 5 n. heat
2. @ adv. very much
3. $ adj. (pred.) hot
4. 3 n. house
5. % adj. (attr.) cool
6. 2 v. to be excessively…
7. 7 nominal suffix something to +V
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<th>Part of Speech</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>R.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>prep.</td>
<td>than, (lit. if compared to)</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>so</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>yogurtn.</td>
<td>adj. (attr.)</td>
<td>sour</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>adj. (pred.)</td>
<td>sour</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>y.</td>
<td>sent. part. (interj.)</td>
<td>expressing exclamation</td>
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<td>adv.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
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<td>n.</td>
<td>sugar</td>
</tr>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>v.</td>
<td>to put, to put in (past tense)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>v.</td>
<td>to put, to put in (present tense)</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>n. (A-A)</td>
<td>amount, quantity</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>fit, match</td>
</tr>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>very much, the most</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>nominal suffix</td>
<td>(see 14.3.5)</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>nominalized adj.</td>
<td>the tasty one</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>adj. (N-A)</td>
<td>lucky (lit. fortune-good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>summer</td>
</tr>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>winter</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>adj. (pred.)</td>
<td>cold</td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>v.</td>
<td>to fall (snow, rain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>interr.</td>
<td>which month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the first month, January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>nominalized adj.</td>
<td>the beautiful one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>right now (= 5०००)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>weather (= दस्तादुः)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>season</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>་བོས་པས།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the third month, March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>་བོས་པ།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the fourth month, April</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>་བོས།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the fifth month, May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>བཟོན་ལྡན་</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>ཞེས་གནས།</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>ངང་གཟི།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>ཆོས་ལྡན།</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>at that time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>དབྱེ་</td>
<td>adj.</td>
<td>warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>བཟོན་པ།</td>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>back (marked with Ladon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>གཙུམ་</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>next year</td>
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### 14.2.2 Additional Vocabulary

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<td>རྒག་པ།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the second month, February</td>
</tr>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>རྒག་པའོ།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the sixth month, June</td>
</tr>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་དང་།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the seventh month, July</td>
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<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་དང་།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the eighth month, August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the ninth month, September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the tenth month, October</td>
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<td>52.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་དང་།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the eleventh month, November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>རྒག་པ་དང་།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>the twelfth month, December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>བཟོན་</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>ཐབས་པ།</td>
<td>adj. (attr.)</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>མོང་</td>
<td>v.</td>
<td>to wear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>ཐབས་པ།</td>
<td>adj. (pred.)</td>
<td>easy, cheap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58.</td>
<td>ཐབས་པ།</td>
<td>adj. (attr.)</td>
<td>old (quality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>ཐབས་པ།</td>
<td>adj. (attr.)</td>
<td>new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>ཐབས་པ།</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>hot pepper</td>
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14.3 Grammar Notes

14.3.1 Overt and Implied Comparison of Adjectives

Classical or written Tibetan has formal declension of adjectives, but formal declension is not commonly used in spoken Amdo Tibetan. A comparison is made by inserting a phrase meaning *if compared to* into the sentence, without declining the adjective itself. The pattern is:

(1) Comparison: A + B (Obliq) + Adj. (A is more Adj. than B)

For example:

(2) This noodle is tasty.

(3) The noodle is tastier than the rice.

(Lit. The noodle, compared to the rice, is tasty.)

Note that the noun phrase that precedes is marked Oblique Case by . The "word" consists of the past tense of the verb (look at) plus the conjunction , so it literally means *if (one) looked at*. This immediately explains why the noun that is compared to (i.e. B, or the rice in (3)) is marked by , for is an Object-Ladon verb. The exact translation of the above comparison sentence is thus: *If one looked at the rice, the noodle is tasty.* The phrase is usually inserted right before the adjective, but it can also appear in other places: (phrase in brackets.)

(4) Tserang is older than Sonam.

(5) Tserang is older than Sonam.

(6) This computer is newer than Tserang's.

(7) In my hometown, autumn is more beautiful than summer.

(8) Tibetan is more difficult than English.

It is appropriate to note at this point, that, without the morphological distinction between base and comparative forms of the adjective, a regular sentence such as the *noodle is tasty* can potentially be a comparative sentence meaning the *noodle is more tasty* (compared to something that is not mentioned in the sentence but may be clear from the discourse context). This scenario is called "implied comparison." Compare the following English and Tibetan sentences.

(i) English: A: Between you and your brother, who is taller?
B: I am taller.
(ii) Tibetan: A: Between you and your brother, who is tall? (No declension)
B: I am tall. (implied comparison)

Implied comparison can be aided by a little phrase $\text{ཏིམུག་གི་མིང་།} \text{ a little}$. In the lesson, Tserang says $\text{བོད་ལྟེ་ཐུན་ལེགས་པ་ཐོས་ཐོས།} \text{ Inside the house is a little cool.}$ By using $\text{ཏིམུག་གི་མིང་།} \text{ a little}$, the intended meaning is obvious: It's a little cooler inside the house. More examples of implied comparison:

(9) $\text{དུས་རི་མིང་།} \text{ That book is a little better.}$
(10) $\text{གྲིང་མིང་།} \text{ American food is a little more expensive.}$

Naturally, $\text{ཏིམུག་གི་མིང་།} \text{ a little}$ is compatible with overt comparison with $\text{ལགས་ཐོས་} \text{ phrase}.$

(11) $\text{འབོད་མོ་སྲིང་གི་མིང་།} \text{ Tom's Tibetan is little better than John's.}$
(12) $\text{བོད་ལྟེ་ཐུན་ལེགས་པ་ཐོས་ཐོས།} \text{ The dumplings of this restaurant are a little more tasty than that one's.}$

14.3.2 Too Much, Not Too Much, Enough, Not Enough, and Not At All

Excessive degree of adjective is expressed in English by a single adverb $\text{too}$. It is more complicated than that in Amdo Tibetan. The pattern is shown as follows:

(1) Excessive Degree: Adj. + $\text{ཐོས་} + \text{ནོ།} / \text{ིེ} + \text{ཞིག་ཅིག་}$

The morpheme $\text{ཐོས་}$ is a nominalizer that turns the adjective into a noun; $\text{ནོ།}$ and $\text{ིེ}$ mean $\text{many/much}$ and $\text{big}$, respectively. So, literally, when expressing the idea $\text{too hot}$, Tibetan says $\text{the heat is (too) much or (too) big}$. This expression usually ends with the past tense auxiliary $\text{ཝོ་ཞིག་}$, which we just covered in Lesson 13. Examples:

(2) $\text{བོད་ལྟེ་ཐུན་ལེགས་པ་ཐོས་ཐོས།} \text{ The coffee is too hot.}$
(3) $\text{བོད་ལྟེ་ཐུན་ལེགས་པ་ཐོས་ཐོས།} \text{ The tea is too hot. Too little sugar was put (in there).}$
(4) $\text{བོད་ལྟེ་ཐུན་ལེགས་པ་ཐོས་ཐོས།} \text{ That restaurant is too far.}$

One peculiarity in Amdo Tibetan concerning the expression of excessiveness is that the statement almost has a sense of irrecoverability (thus the past tense) due to someone's doing. A situation that cannot be attributed to some man-made result, therefore, cannot be expressed by $\text{ལགས་ཐོས་}$. Direct translations of the English expressions such as $\text{it rains too hard, the weather is too cold, the mountain is too high, the wind is too strong,}$
One more important usage of “Adj. + Adjective” is the expression of negation. Examples:

Not Adj. at All:

- The pattern: a little bit Adj expression and can be translated as negative form. For the expression *too*, namely not too + Adj., is expressed by negating the word ོསར (i.e. ོས), often seen in a phrase such as སི་ཤིལ་མི་ལམ་པོག (negative form: not so much). Examples:

  - རོ་ང་གི་ལེགས་པོག སེར་འདུག (The computer is not too expensive.)
  - རོ་ང་བཀོད་ཤིང་མི་ལམ་པོག སེར་འདུག (My Tibetan is not good enough.)

  Intended meaning: Today the sun is too hot.
The negation of too, namely not too + Adj., is expressed by negating the word ོསར (i.e. ོས), often seen in a phrase such as སི་ཤིལ་མི་ལམ་པོག (negative form: not so much). Examples:

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  - རོ་ང་བཀོད་ཤིང་མི་ལམ་པོག སེར་འདུག (My Tibetan is not good enough.)

  Intended meaning: Today the sun is too hot.

The idea is expressed in a number of ways, depending on the context. For our purposes, སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + Adj. not too, not so is semantically close enough. Examples showing different ways of expressing "Adj. + enough":

  - བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། Is the restaurant near enough?
  - བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་ བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། (This Tibetan-English dictionary is big enough, but a little too expensive.)
  - བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། (My Tibetan is not good enough.)
  - བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། (That computer is not that expensive, so I bought it.)
  - བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ཞེན་ཞིང་། (Is the weather in March warm enough?)

  For the expression not Adj. at all, Amdo Tibetan uses སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + ོ་ + Adjective in its negative form. ོ་ is the same word as ོ also, still. Here it is an obligatory part of the expression and can be translated as even, rendering the phrase with the meaning not even a little bit Adj. The pattern:

  - Not Adj. at All: སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + ོ + Adj (Negative form: ོ + Adj.) Examples:

    - སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + ོ + Adj + Adjective (This lesson is not difficult at all.)
    - སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + ོ + Adj + Adjective (The milk tea is not hot at all.)
    - སི་ཤིལ་མི་ + ོ + Adj + Adjective (That girl is not pretty at all.)

  One more important usage of ོ: attaching ོ to the བཅས་ཤིལ་མི་ phrase of a comparative
sentence gives it the meaning of even. For example, If one puts some sugar (in it), it's even more delicious.

### 14.3.3 Ordinal Numbers and Months of the Year

The ordinal numbers are formed by attaching the suffix 今 or 堂 to the corresponding cardinal number, with the exception of the first, 第 first. Note that there are some irregularities in the colloquial pronunciation such as 第 first, 第 sixth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinal</th>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Ordinal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>第一</td>
<td>第一</td>
<td>第一</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>第二</td>
<td>第二</td>
<td>第二</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>第三</td>
<td>第三</td>
<td>第三</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>第四</td>
<td>第四</td>
<td>第四</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>第五</td>
<td>第五</td>
<td>第五</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>第六</td>
<td>第六</td>
<td>第六</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>第七</td>
<td>第七</td>
<td>第七</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>第八</td>
<td>第八</td>
<td>第八</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>第九</td>
<td>第九</td>
<td>第九</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>第十</td>
<td>第十</td>
<td>第十</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The months of the year in Tibetan are formed by the word 月 moon, month and an number, with January being the first month 第一 and December the twelfth 第 twelve.

To ask which month of the year it is, one replaces the ordinal number by 第, the interrogative word asking for ordinal number. Example:

1. 第一 "What month is it now?" (Cf. 第一 How many months?)

It is important to hear or say the ordinal suffix 今 or 堂 clearly, because it could be easy to confuse names of the month, e.g. 第三月份 March, with duration of time, e.g. 第三 第三 months. Finally, note that in casual speech 第 is often abbreviated to 第 第 第.
In Lesson 10, we learned that the expression at 2 o'clock can take either ༤ or ༦, depending on the static or dynamic nature of the verb. A common alternative to express the clock time adverbially (e.g. at 2 o'clock) is to use the ordinal number with བར་ and mark it with ག. For example:

(1) བར་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་བར་དེར། He will come today at 2 o'clock.

The noun winter is རྩུན་; the adverbial in winter is རྩུན་, marked by ཆ. To express in January, in February, etc., one needs to add the word ག inside after the month before ཆ, which always takes the form ག in this case. Examples:

(2) བར་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་བར་དེར། (temporal) བོད་ཀྱི་དེར། (directional) བོད་ཀྱི་དེར།
I want to come to Dondrup's place in winter.

(3) བར་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་བར་དེར། My elder sister will travel in Japan in summer.

(4) བར་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་བར་དེར། བོད་ཀྱི་དེར། Drolma Tso says that she wants to come to Xining in June.

(5) བར་ནི་བོད་ཀྱི་བར་དེར། བོད་ཀྱི་དེར། Because autumn is the best season in Ngaba, I plan to travel there in October.

### 14.3.5 Superlative

Like comparative sentences, the superlative degree is not reflected by declension on the adjective itself. The superlative degree is expressed by a fair amount of grammatical complication. Recall that an adjective comes in two forms: the attributive form (when it modifies a noun, e.g. བར་ big) and the predicative form (when it functions like a stative verb, e.g. བར big). As one can see from the following chart, the attributive form consists of the root and a suffix (not phonologically predictable, thus must be memorized), whereas the predicative form is simply the root of the adjective. (The sentential particle ག is extra and not considered part of the adjective).

1. **Attributive and Predicative Forms of Adjectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributive</th>
<th>Predicative</th>
<th>Sense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>བར</td>
<td>བར</td>
<td>big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>དུས་རི</td>
<td>དུས་རི</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>བཞིས་པོ</td>
<td>བཞིས་པོ</td>
<td>tasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both forms can be used to express the superlative degree, but both need to be nominalized first. This is achieved by attaching a morpheme - ِ to the attributive form or - ِ (ِ) to the predicative form of the adjective. The result is a nominal phrase meaning big one, small one, tasty one, etc. (N.B. ِ(ِ) lengthens the ِ as [no:] )

(2) Nominalizing the Adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributive + ِ</th>
<th>Predicative + ِ (ِ)</th>
<th>Nominal Form: Adj. + one</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>big one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>small one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>tasty one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>cold one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>long one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>expensive / difficult one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>pretty one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کچبَرَ</td>
<td>کچَر</td>
<td>beautiful one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*کچبَر* is ruled out probably because the repetition of - ِ does not sound natural to Tibetan ears, leaving کچَر as the only nominal form for big. After this step of nominalization, one can now express the superlative degree using the following pattern: (Either - ِ or - ِ form can be used to stand for "adj. one" in the following pattern.)

(3) Superlative: (Among A, B, C), A + ِ + Adj. one + ِ

The degree adverbs ِ and ِ both mean very and are translated as the most in
this particular pattern. Literally, the pattern means among A, B, and C, A is a/the very Adj one. This is how colloquial Amdo Tibetan delivers the sense of superlative degree: Among A, B, and C, A is the biggest. Examples:

(4) སྣེའི་ལྷན་གྱི་དེ་རེད། Today is the hottest.
(5) དོ་དཔོན་དང་ཤེས་ཉེན། January is the coldest.
(6) དཔེ་དགའ་འཇིགས་མེད་པར་ནི། This book is the most difficult.
(7) དདྨི་དྭེ་ཐོབས་བཞིན་པར་ནི། Degyi is the prettiest.
(8) ཕྱོད་དྭེ་ཞི་བོད་དུས་བཞིན་ལེན། Yogurt is sour indeed, but it tastes the most delicious.
(9) བཀྲ་ཤིས་སྣོན་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་ནི། The pictures you took are the prettiest.
(10) ཤུ་སྟུག་ཕྲུང༌། ཆུས་ཆེས་པས་བསྟེན་པོས་བཅུ་པས་མངོན་པར་ནི། Among apples, oranges, and peaches, peaches are the sweetest.
(11) བཀྲ་ཤིས་མེ་ཏོག་ཞི་བོད་དུས་མེད་པར་ནི། Your mother’s beef jiaozi is the most delicious.

The phrase among/in/of... is expressed by ...+ ལྷན་ or རྣམ་. Example: A, B, C ལྷན་ (among A, B, C, Degyi is the prettiest.

Adding the morpheme དྭེ་ to the base form of a verb (present/future) creates a noun that means something to V, e.g., དྭེ་ནུ། something to drink, དྭེ་ནུ། something to eat, དྭེ་ནུ། something for sale (lit. something to buy), དྭེ་ནུ། something to wear, etc. These phrases, by nature indefinite, are often attached with the indefinite marker འིན། a certain. Examples:

(1) བཀྲ་ཤིས་མེ་ཏོག་ཞི་བོད་དུས་མེད་པར་ནི། Dorje Jid brought you something to eat.
I don't have anything (lit. even one thing) to wear.

It is possible to modify this noun of V-অ. In the lesson, Tom asks Is there something cool to drink? The attributive form of the adjective অল্পতা cool is used to modify the noun কৌশল. More examples:

1. There is something beautiful to buy here.
2. There is something tasty to eat.
3. Do you have anything interesting to read?
4. It's so cold today. I need something hot to drink.

In the text, Tom uses অল্পতা in lieu of the expected objective perspective marker অল্প when he comments on the yogurt: The yogurt is so sour! The অল্প is a sentential particle that marks the statement as an exclamation. অল্প has no variant form. So basically, one can simply change the অল্প to অল্প and create an exclamatory expression.

Let's review some of the sentential particles that we have so far introduced:

1. The yogurt is good. (plain, objective perspective)
2. The yogurt is good, let me tell you. (subjective perspective)
3. Is the yogurt not good? (interrogative when the adjective is negated.)
4. The yogurt is so good! (exclamation)

The following chart is a summary for these four adjectival sentential particles. (Strictly speaking, অল্পতা is a conjunction, but here it functions like a sentential particle, thus its inclusion in the chart.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>function</th>
<th>base form</th>
<th>other variant forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L6 objective perspective</td>
<td>অল্পতা</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L11 subjective perspective</td>
<td>অল্পতা</td>
<td>অল্পতা (অল্প after open syllables)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L11 interrogative in a negative sentence</td>
<td>(অল্পতা)</td>
<td>(অল্প after open syllables)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L14 exclamation</td>
<td>অল্পতা</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14.4 Cultural Notes

14.4.1 Three Calendars

It is important to know that, except for towns and cities, in most agricultural and nomadic areas in Amdo, the lunar calendar (ཉི་ཤེས་ཤཱིི) and not the Gregorian (ལོ་གསེར་ནས) is used. Therefore, མོའ་བོད་ཞིི would normally mean the first lunar month of the year. Tibetan does not have another set of names for Gregorian months, so the names become ambiguous, with Gregorian terms such as January, February, etc. as secondary meanings. Events using Gregorian calendar need to be so stated. If one makes an appointment with a farmer or herdsman, without specification on either calendar, one should assume the lunar calendar. It is always a good idea to clarify.

There is yet a third system, the Tibetan calendar (ཐོ་ཤེས་ཤཱིི), which is widely used in Tibet (TAR) by farmers, nomads, and for traditional occasions, such as the Tibetan New Year. The Amdo region, closer to Han China, does not use the Tibetan Calendar. As a result, the Tibetan New Year in Amdo region coincides with the Chinese lunar New Year (Ch. Chunjie) and not with the Tibetan New Year (ཞེ་ཤིི) in Tibet.

The Tibetan calendar uses the five elements and the 12 zodiac animals to number the year. The five elements are: wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Each element is divided into a masculine year (ཉི་ཤེས་ཤཱིི) and a feminine year (ཉི་ཤེས་ཤཱིི). The following chart shows the system of year designation according to the Tibetan calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>м.</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>м.</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>м.</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>м.</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>м.</th>
<th>f.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td>སྦི།</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wood</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>earth</td>
<td>metal</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>wood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>པོ་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td>གྲོགས་</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rat</td>
<td>ox</td>
<td>tiger</td>
<td>hare</td>
<td>dragon</td>
<td>snake</td>
<td>horse</td>
<td>ram</td>
<td>monkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td>བྱིུ།</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rooster</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td>pig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This system repeats the "gender-element-animal" combination in 60-year cycles, which customarily starts with the year of the feminine fire hare. The year 2005, for example, is འེ་ཤིི་ཤིི year of the feminine wood rooster. (So, what year is 2006?)

Tibetan calendar differs from the Chinese lunar calendar in one way: it counts the full moon as the 15th of each month, as opposed to the Chinese method that counts the new moon as the first of the month. The two methods may generate a one-day difference in some years but identical dates in others. In years when Tibetan calendar adds a leap month, the difference can then become one full month (plus one day in some years). If
lucky, one can observe the Tibetan New Year celebration in Amdo (using Chinese lunar calendar) then observe the U-Tsang celebration all over again in a month.

14.4.2 Tibetan New Year in Shinaihai Village, Mangra

People get up early on the morning of the New Year's Eve to haul back home big chunks of ice from the frozen river just outside the village. Big pieces are broken down to pint-sized rugged-faced ice rocks. Men then decorate the adobe wall surrounding the house with these ice rocks. Under the winter sun, the ice reflects the sunshine and sparkles from all angles, making the otherwise dull-colored farm houses festive and lively.

Digging Ice on New Year's Eve
Preparing to Decorate the House

Winter Scene of a Farming Village, Shinaihai, Mangra, Hainan
There is a lot of food preparation for the biggest festival of the year. Sheep and goats are slaughtered, sausages stuffed and bread baked, in order to entertain well-wishers the next day. Candies are also prepared for the hordes of children who may brave the cold to go to every house at three o'clock in the morning doing the Amdo trick or treating.

Early in the morning, people in their finest clothes go to parents' or elder family relatives' houses to wish them a Happy New Year. Younger generations kotow to their family elders. This is the time of the year when visitors see an otherwise sleepy village come to life with a display of their best costumes.

**14.4.3 Summer Festivals**

In the summer months, each county holds celebrations known as Horseracing Festivals, which can be best described as a combination of sporting competitions (dancing, archery, horse-racing, weight lifting, running, etc.) and a Carnival-like fair. Some places such as Yulshul, Golok, Litang (ིབུ་ཐུལ), and Nagqu (དགེ་ཞུང) have established a reputation which attracts visitors from all over the world. Less known small farming towns have just as much to offer. For example, the traditional costumes of the local area are not easily seen elsewhere. Fewer people also means easier lodging and transportation arrangements. With fewer visitors around, one enjoys a more intimate bond to the locals and is likely to receive more hospitality than attending bigger celebrations.
Archery Contest, Shinaihai Village, Mangra

Dancing Contest, Shinaihai Village, Mangra
14.5 Key Sentence Patterns

14.5.1 Comparative Sentences

1. English is easier than Tibetan.
2. In winter, the weather here is warmer than Russia.
3. The Tibetan alphabet is more difficult than English.
4. Mom’s yogurt is better than the store’s.
5. This restaurant’s dumpling is better than that restaurant’s.
6. This professor’s class is more interesting than that professor's.

14.5.2 Too Much

1. Today is too cold.
2. The weather in spring is too windy.
3. The coffee is too hot, and the yogurt too sour.
4. This computer is too old. I want to buy a new one.
5. This dictionary is too small. I need a bigger one.

14.5.3 Not At All

1. Learning Amdo Tibetan is not difficult at all.
2. Degyi Drolm doesn't want to go at all.
3. This restaurant’s dumpling is better than that restaurant’s.
The movie theatre is not far from school at all.

In my opinion, that movie is not interesting at all.

I don't want to go to eat at that restaurant. Their food is not delicious at all.

There is something beautiful to buy here.

Is there something cold to drink?

There is something tasty to eat.

Is there any good book to read in the library?

I don't have anything to wear.

What do you want to do?

It's even colder if you come in winter.

It's even more tasty if you put some hot pepper in it.

It tastes better if you put some sugar in it.

If you speak Tibetan to my mother, she will be even happier.

If it is a little bit colder, it will snow.
(2) མཐེས་ནི་བདེ་བ་བཙོས་ནས་ཉིད་པར་བྱེད།
   What is the coldest month of the year?

(3) མཐེས་ནི་མཐོང་ཆེན་པོ་ང་བརྙན་པོ་དྲུག་པར་བྱེད།
   January is the coldest month of the year.

(4) མཐེས་ནི་གངས་ཤྱིོལ་ལྡན་དད་དཔལ་དབྱོང་པོ་དེ་བྱེད།
   Tibet is the most beautiful place in China.

(5) མཐེས་ནི་ཐོབ་ཞིང་གངས་ཤྱིོལ་ལྡན་དད་དཔལ་དེ་བྱེད།
   She is the best student in the class.

(6) མཐེས་ནི་གངས་ཤྱིོལ་ལྡན་དད་དཔལ་དེ་བྱེད།
   The yak meat in this restaurant is the most delicious.

(7) མཐེས་ནི་གངས་ཤྱིོལ་ལྡན་དད་དཔལ་དེ་བྱེད།
   Among English, Japanese, and Tibetan, Japanese is the most difficult.

14.5.7  Seasons and Months of the Year

(1) བདེ་བ་ལེན་ོན་དེར།
   What month is this month?

(2) བདེ་ལེན་ོན་དེར་ཞིག་ཡོངས་དབུས་བུར་དེར།
   This year February is even colder than January.

(3) རིམ་གྲོལ་ཡི་ཕྲུག་པ་བུར་དེར།
   I like to travel in the summer.

(4) རིམ་གྲོལ་ལྟ་རྩེ་བུར་དེར།
   Autumn is prettier than spring.

(5) ཚེ་རྒྱན་བཞིའི་ོན་དེར་ཞིག་ཡོངས་དབུས་བུར་དེར།
   Trerang and Dorje will come back home in November.

(6) བུད་པོའི་ཝུང་བུར་དེར།
   It rains a lot in April.

14.6  Exercises

14.6.1  Listening Comprehension: True or False

(1) Dondrup doesn’t like the weather in his hometown.
(2) The winter in Dondrup’s hometown is even colder than here.
(3) August is the best month of the year.
(4) May and June have good weather.
(5) Bai Li wants to go to Dondrup’s home this spring.
14.6.2 Fill in the Blanks

(1) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(2) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(3) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(4) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(5) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(6) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(7) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(8) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།

14.6.3 Image Description: Compare the photos and answer the questions

(1) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(2) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(3) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(4) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།
(5) གི་གཤེགས་བཞིན་བཞིན་ཞི་ཡིན་པ་བདེན།

14.6.4 Translation
A: Please put some sugar in my coffee. It’s not sweet enough.
B: Is this enough? Do you also need some milk?
(2) The pork is a bit too salty. I like sour and spicy pork.
(3) A: Come in. Come in.
B: Thank you. It’s so cold outside. It’s warmer in your house.
A: Drink some hot tea. My tea is the best in our village.
(4) A: Which month is the most beautiful month of the year?
B: April is the most beautiful month.
A: How is the weather in April?
B: It’s warm.
(5) A: Is there something hot to drink?
B: We have milk tea and butter tea. Which do you want to drink?
A: A large pot of milk tea please. Don’t put too much salt in it. Thank you.

14.6.5 Complete the Dialogues

(1) __________________________?
   འི་ཐོན་ལེན་བོད་ལྡན།
   གཞན་གཉིས་ེད།
   __________________________. (cold and windy)

(2) __________________________?
   འི་ཐོན་ལེན་བོད་ལྡན།
   གཞན་གཉིས་ེད།
   __________________________?
   གཞན་གཉིས་ེད།

(3) __________________________?
   འབུམ་གདུད་ཐོན་པར།
   གཞན་གཉིས་ེད།
   __________________________.

(4) __________________________
   འི་ཐོན་ལེན་བོད་ལྡན།
   __________________________

14.6.6 Answer the Questions: Answer the following questions according to the chart

(1) དབུ་བོད་ལྡན།
(2) དུ་གུས་བོད་དཔལ་ཉི་།
(3) ག་མཚོ་གཉི་དབང་བསྐྱེལ་བ་ཐབས་བུང་ངེས།
(4) ག་སྦྱང་དུག་དཔལ་ཉི་།
(5) དུ་གུས་བོད་དཔལ་ཉི་།

14.6.7 Guided Composition: ང་འཕོག་བོད་དཔལ་ཉི་གཞུང་བོད་དཔལ་ཉི་

Write an essay by answering the following questions:
(1) Is it hot in the summer in your home town compared to where you are now?
(2) Which month is the hottest in the summer?
(3) Is winter rainy or windy?
(4) Which month is cooler than other months?