

CASE AND ROLE IN NEWARI¹

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This brief paper represents an attempt to answer just one question: What are the major pairings of semantic role and morphological case in the clause structure of Newari? The same question could be asked differently. What deep structure relationships are signalled by each of the various case endings and in which contexts do these occur? How are the roles of deep or conceptual structure mapped onto the morphological cases of surface structure in Newari?

In Section 1 we introduce the six morphological cases which are of primary importance in the study of semantic role. In Section 2 we examine the pairings of case and role that occur within the actor complex. In Section 3 we consider those of the site complex and in Section 4 we look at those pairings which belong to the undergoer complex. We presuppose an acquaintance with the system of roles presented in Chapter 8 of Grimes (1975) and with the system of role complexes presented in Hale, 1973.

1. Any analysis of clause structure in Newari must deal in one way or another with six morphological cases. We use the term, case, to refer to the morphological forms of noun phrases.² Following Grimes (1975) we reserve the term, role, for the deeper semantic relations which Fillmore and others refer to as case relations.

The cases of Newari which are central to the description of the clause are the following: the *nominative* (consisting of the uninflected stem), the *ergative* (consisting either of the uninflected stem followed by *nəṅ* or of the oblique stem followed by or ending in a long nasal vowel), the *dative* (consisting of the uninflected stem followed by

yāta), the *comitative* (consisting of the uninflected stem followed by yāke), the *locative* (consisting of the oblique stem followed by -e or of the oblique stem with a lengthened final i), and the *genitive* (consisting of the uninflected stem followed by yā). These case names will be used exclusively with reference to specific morphological forms. A sample of the morphological forms to which these labels refer is given in Figure 1.

The ergative and locative forms often preserve stem final consonants which have been lost in the nominative form, though even these consonants may soon be lost. The ergative form, *ceḷḷḷ*, for example is on its way to obsolescence and is being replaced by *cyaa ṇḷḷ*. The form *mḷḷḷ ṇḷḷ* now occurs alongside the ergative, *māmḷḷḷ*. The all-purpose ergative, *ṇḷḷ*, is paralleled by the locative, *lae* (or *khae* in Bhaktapur) for those speakers who have lost the oblique stem forms of various nouns. For further details on noun morphology see Hale, 1971.

	<i>child</i>	<i>slave</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>he</i>
Nominative	macā	cyaa	mḷḷḷ	ji	wa
Ergative	macḷḷḷ	cyaa ṇḷḷ	māmḷḷḷ	ji	wḷḷḷ
Dative	macā yāta	cyaa yāta	mḷḷḷ jāta	jitaa	waita
Comitative	macā yāke	cyaa yāke	mḷḷḷ yāke	jike	waike
Locative	---	---	---	---	---
Genitive	macā yā	cyaa yā	mḷḷḷ yā	ji	wayā
	<i>shop</i>	<i>book</i>	<i>water</i>	<i>shoe</i>	<i>insect</i>
Nominative	pasaa	saphuu	laa	lākḷḷḷ	kii
Ergative	pasalḷḷḷ	saphuḷḷḷ	lakḷḷḷ	lākāmḷḷḷ	kilḷḷḷ
Dative	pasaa yāta	saphuu yāta	laa yāta	lākḷḷḷ yāta	kii yāta
Comitative	---	---	---	---	kii yāke
Locative	pasalae	saphuḷḷḷ	lakḷḷḷ	lākāmae	---
Genitive	pasaa yā	saphuu yā	laa yā	lākḷḷḷ yā	kii yā

Figure 1. SAMPLES OF MORPHOLOGICAL CASE FORMS IN NEWARI

2. These six case forms operate within three functional complexes in surface structure. We distinguish an *actor* complex, a *site* complex, and an *undergoer* complex. Consider first the actor complex.

Within the actor complex we distinguish three distinct roles, *agent*, *instrument*, and *patient* (experiencer). The only roles in Newari that have agreement patterns with the verb are the agent and patient roles of the actor complex.³

The form of the agent is determined not only by its underlying role but also by the clause type in which it occurs. Agents are nominative in intransitive and semitransitive clauses.⁴

- (1) wa dana *He got up.*
 (2) wa thana wala *He came here.*

But are ergative in transitive and bitransitive clauses:

- (3) wā jā nala *He ate rice.*
 (4) wā jītaa saphuu bila *He gave me a book.*

Instruments are relatively limited in their occurrence but are ergative wherever they do occur.⁵

- (5) wā lhāātjī nala *He ate with (his) hands.*
 (6) wā tutjī cula *He stood on (his) legs.*
 (7) wā mikhāā khana *He saw with (his) eyes.*

Patients within the actor complex are even more limited than instruments, occurring only with a relatively small number of verbs of sense or cognition in which the actor is an experiencer. Such patients are also ergative. A number of these verbs are impersonal.

- (8) jījī wa khā sila *I came to know that fact.*
 (9) jījī saa tāla *I heard the sound.*
 (10) jījī karma khana *I underwent the rituals incumbent upon a man during his lifetime.*

Where an actor is simultaneously cast as an experiencer or as one who chooses to have the experience of performing a given act, the genitive form replaces the nominative or ergative form.

- (11) wā jītaa khicā kena *He showed me the dog.*
wayā jītaa khicā kena *He was quite happy to show me the dog.*
 (12) wa khwala *He wept.*
wayā khwala *He chose to weep.*
 (13) wa simāe gala *He sat up in the tree.*
wayā simāe gala *He chose to have the experience of sitting in a tree.*

Agents differ from both patient and instruments within the actor complex in that agents can be cast as genitive experiencers but patients and instruments cannot.

Agents and patients of the actor complex, but not instruments, can appear in the dative form when they occur in embedded structures which induce double function.

- (14) wəə jā nala *He ate rice.*
 wayā māməə waita jā *His mother fed him with rice (caused*
 nakala *him to eat rice).*
- (15) wəə nagu khana *He saw the star.*
waita j||| nagu khankā *I made him see the star.*
- (16) wəə jigu khə sila *He came to know my secret.*
 j||| waita jigu khə siikā *I made my secret known to him.*

In Example 14, *waita* is a dative form in double function. It is both a site with respect to the causative construction and an actor with respect to the verb, *nala* 'eat'.

The choice of case forms within the actor complex may be summarised as in Figure 2.

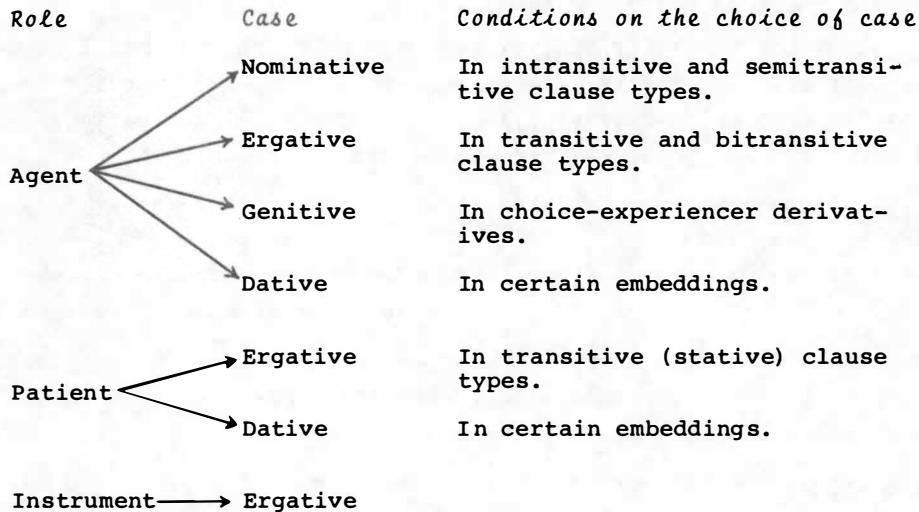


Figure 2. PAIRINGS OF ROLES AND CASES WITHIN THE NEWARI ACTOR COMPLEX

3. Consider now the site complex. The site complex consists of constituents which in other languages have been called indirect objects and inner locatives.⁶ We consider here only those sites which are marked by the six primary morphological cases listed above. Though many other forms occur, the major kinds of site are represented by the primary morphological cases.

Within the site complex we distinguish three kinds of roles. There are sources to which we assign the role, *former*. There are goals to

which we assign the role, *latter*. There are locations or limits of extent to which we assign the role, *range*. Each of these roles is realised in terms of two morphological cases, one for sentient beings and the other for insentient beings. The site complex differs from the actor complex in that the choice of case forms is dictated mostly in terms of clause function and only to a limited extent in terms of constructional constraints which stem from a choice of clause types.

Sentient latters (goals) appear in the dative case in Newari.

- (17) waa jitaa saphuu bila *He gave a book to me.*
 (18) waa jitaa cithi cwala *He wrote a letter to me.*
 (19) waita jwar wala *He got a high fever (a high fever came to him).*

Sentient ranges (limit of extent, effect) likewise appear in the dative.

- (20) jitaa laa gāā *The water is sufficient for me.*
 (21) waita jyā du *There is work for him.*
 (22) waita thwa saphuu jyu *The book is suitable for him.*
 (23) waita thwa saphuu jhyātu *The book is heavy for him.*

Sentient latters (goals) and ranges (limit of extent, effect) appear in the genitive case when they double as experiencers or possessors, but only in clause types which lack actors.

- (24) wayā iaa gāā *He has enough water.*
 (25) wayā jyā du *He has work.*
 (26) wayā thwa saphuu jyu hā *He says the book is suitable.*
 (27) wayā thwa saphuu jhyatu *He says the book is heavy.*
 hā
 (28) wayā jwar waia *He suffered an attack of fever.*

With certain verbs there are sentient ranges (limit of effect) which appear in the genitive (and not in the dative) due to their inherent experiencer or possessor relationship with the verb.

- (29) Mirā yā jyā thāku hā *Mira says the work is difficult.*
 (30) Mirā yā tyānhuia *Mira became tired.*
 (31) wayā kāe chamha du *He has a son.*

Ranges which are sentient locations and formers which are sentient sources are both marked by the comitative case.

- (32) wāṣ jike saphuu nyāta *He bought a book from me.*
 (33) wāṣ jike thwa khā nena *He asked me about this matter.*
 (34) wāṣ jike dhebā phwana *He begged money from me.*
 (35) wāṣ jike dhebā kāla *He took money from me.*

- (36) jike saphuu du *I possess some books.*
 (37) wəʔ jike dhebā khana *He saw money in my possession.*

Formers which are insentient sources are marked by ergative case forms.

- (38) wəʔ dhampəʔ laa thila *He got water from the jar.*
 (39) wəʔ jitaa cheʔ pitina *He chased me out of the house.*
 (40) wa siməʔ kwa beāta *He jumped down from the tree.*
 (41) wayā mikhəʔ khwabi wala *Tears came from his eyes.*

Ranges which are insentient locations and latters which are insentient goals are both marked by the locative case form.

- (42) wayā mikhəʔ picaa wala *A secretion came into his eye.*
 (43) wəʔ jitaa lhāātae dāla *He struck me on the arm.*
 (44) wəʔ darəʔ saphuu tala *He put the book on the shelf.*
 (45) kebae khicā chamha du *There is a dog in the garden.*

With certain verbs, ranges which are insentient locations and latters which are insentient goals are expressed by the locative when physical location is to be made prominent and by the nominative where the action as a whole is more prominent than the physical location involved.

- (46) wa cheʔ wana *He went home (locative).*
 wa che wana *He went home (nominative).*

Benefactives which appear as sentient goal sites with the benefactive auxiliary, *bila*, are marked by the dative case form.

- (47) wəʔ jitaa paenəʔ biyā *He did me the service of financing*
bila. *my wedding.*

The choice of case forms within the site complex is summarised in Figure 3. An alternative representation in matrix form in which the columns are headed by role names and the rows by the features, sentient effect, sentient location, and insentient location is given in Figure 4.

4. Consider finally the undergoer complex. The undergoer complex consists of constituents which have been grouped together in other languages under the heading of direct object. The undergoer complex includes nominative patients which are physically affected such as the following:

- (48) wəʔ jike macā kāla *He took the child from me.*
 (49) wəʔ jitaa saphuu bila *He gave me the book.*
 (50) wəʔ jigu jhirkā dāʔ pula *He paid me my ten rupees.*

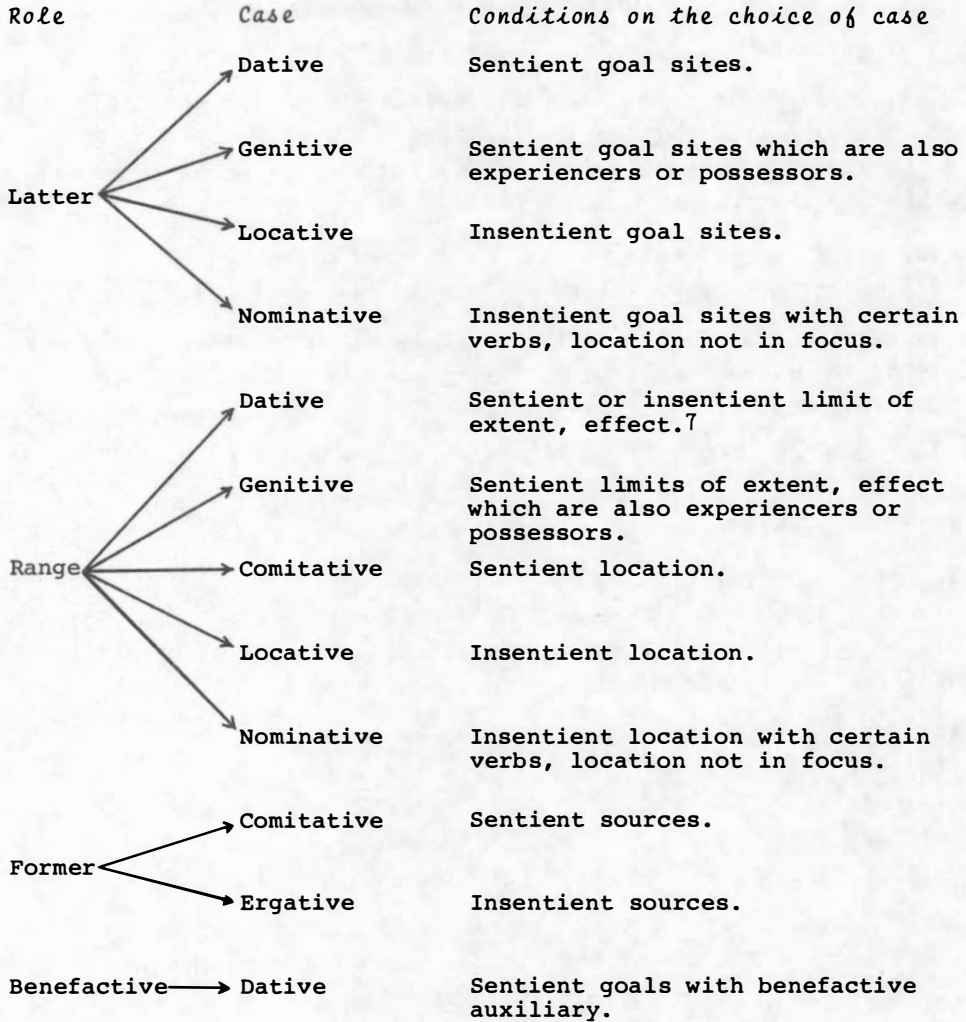


Figure 3. PAIRINGS OF ROLES AND CASES WITHIN THE NEWARI SITE COMPLEX

	Latter	Range	Former
Sentient effect	Genitive		
Sentient location	Dative	Comitative	
Insentient location	Locative / Nominative		Ergative

Figure 4. MATRIX REPRESENTATION OF THE RELATION BETWEEN CASE AND ROLE WITHIN THE NEWARI SITE COMPLEX

- (51) wəʔ jɪtaa jā thula *She cooked me some rice.*
 (52) wəʔ jɪtaa cithi cwala *He wrote me a letter.*

The undergoer complex also includes patients which are abnormal, and which thus cannot be physically affected, but rather are brought into force, or into existence in some sense, and are therefore abstractly or metaphorically affected.

- (53) wəʔ jɪtaa bəʔ tala *He imposed a fine on me.*
 (54) wəʔ jɪtaa chaguu khə kana *He told me something.*

The undergoer complex also includes ranges which contrast with the ranges of the site complex in not being locational and which contrast with the patients of the undergoer complex in that they are neither physically nor metaphorically affected.

- (55) wəʔ jike dhebā khana *He saw some money in my possession.*
 (56) wəʔ bākhəʔ nena *He listened to the story.*

There is a contrast in surface form between patient and range of the undergoer complex which relates to personal pronouns. In the absence of dative sites, personal pronouns which are patients of transitive set clauses can occur only in the dative.

- (57) wəʔ jɪtaa dāla *He beat me.*
 (58) wəʔ jɪtaa bwaa bila *He scolded me.*
 (59) wəʔ jɪtaa heekala *He deceived me / humoured me.*
 (60) wəʔ jɪtaa thwana *He cheated me.*
 (61) wəʔ jɪtaa sena *He instructed me.*

Personal pronouns which are ranges can occur in either the dative or the nominative. The use of the dative serves to bring the pronoun into focal prominence within the clause. The nominative form is nonfocal.

- (62) wəʔ jɪtaa lumankala *He remembered me (focal).*
 (63) wəʔ ji lumankala *He remembered me (nonfocal).*
 (64) wəʔ jɪtaa lwaamankala *He forgot me (focal).*
 (65) wəʔ ji lwaamankala *He forgot me (nonfocal).*
 (66) wəʔ jɪtaa khana *He saw me (focal).*
 (67) wəʔ ji khana *He caught sight of me (nonfocal).*

The choice of case forms for patients within the undergoer complex which are not personal pronouns may be described as follows. If there is no dative site, if the undergoer is sentient and focal, and if it occurs in a clause type of the transitive or stative set, then the undergoer is dative. Otherwise it is nominative.

For a patient to occur in the dative case it must be sentient, focal, and an undergoer of a bitransitive, transitive, or stative clause type

which has no dative goal-site. In the following clauses, the choice of the dative or the nominative form for the patient depends upon the degree to which the subjugation of a patient to an action or state is prominent or focal.

- (68) wəḡ sala gala *He rode the horse (neutral focus upon the act as a whole).*
- (69) wəḡ sala yāta gala *He rode the horse (subjected him to being ridden, patient relation is focal).*
- (70) khā khyā! *Scare the hens away (focus is upon the act as a whole or perhaps even upon some grain that the hens are not to eat)!*
- (71) khā yāta khyā! *Scare the hens away (patient relation is focal)!*

Patients which occur in receptive, bireceptive, attributive, or bi-attributive clause types can be nominative but not dative.

- (72) wa sita *He died.*
- (73) wayā macā bula *She delivered a child.*

(Example 73 is ambiguous. It could also be glossed, 'His (or her) child was born.')

Patients which are insentient can be nominative but not dative. It is not possible to make the patient relation of insentient undergoers prominent by use of the dative.

- (74) wəḡ lāsā dāla *He beat the mattress.*

Insentient objects appear in the dative only within the range role of the site complex (limit of extent, effect).

- (75) thuki yāta j|| dhebā *I have already paid money for this.*
bii dhuna
- (76) thuki yāta chu yāe tenā? *What are you going to do about this matter?*

With certain verbs a certain amount of prominence can be gained by substituting a locative range of the site complex for a nominative insentient patient of the undergoer complex.

- (77) wəḡ lāsāe dāla *He beat upon the mattress.*

The choice of case forms within the undergoer complex is summarised in Figure 5.

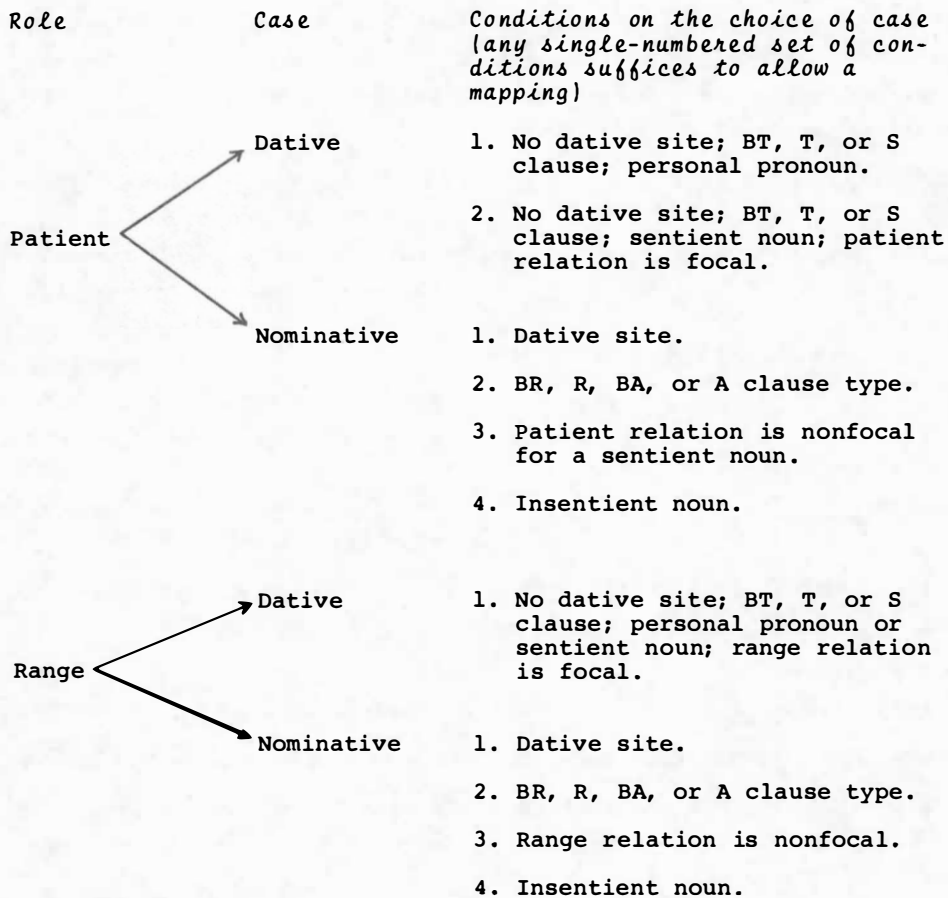


Figure 5. PAIRINGS OF ROLES AND CASES WITHIN THE NEWARI UNDERGOER COMPLEX

In Figure 6 we summarise the relationships of semantic role to surface case in Newari. Figure 6 has the names of the various cases as the headings of its columns, the names of the semantic roles as the headings of its rows, and an indication of the sememic complex and function in the cells. Empty cells represent pairings which have not been found and which presumably do not belong to the system. The relevance of the three functional complexes, actor, undergoer, and site, should not be difficult to see, given the rather complex mapping relations between role and case in Newari that are pictured here.

	<i>Nominative</i>	<i>Ergative</i>	<i>Genitive</i>	<i>Dative</i>	<i>Comi- tative</i>	<i>Locative</i>
<i>Agent</i>	Actor ST, I (1, 2)	Actor BT, T (3, 4)	Actor- Experiencer T-Set (11, 12, 13)	Actor- embedded Site (14)		
<i>Instru- ment</i>		Actor peripheral (5, 6, 7)				
<i>Patient</i>	Undergoer non-focal (48-54)	Statant S (8-10)		Patient- embedded Site (15, 16) Undergoer focal (57-61)		
<i>Former</i>		Site insentient Source (38-41)			Site sentient Source (32-35)	
<i>Range</i>	Site non-focal Location (46) Undergoer non-focal (55,56,63, 65, 67, 68, 70)		Site- Experiencer (24-27, 29-31)	Site Goal unaffected/ limit (20-23) Undergoer unaffected (62, 64, 66, 69, 71, 75, 76)	Site sentient Location (36, 37)	Site insentient Location (45, 46, 77)
<i>Latter</i>	Site Goal insentient/ non-focal (74)		Site- Experiencer (28)	Site Goal sentient (17, 18, 19)		Site Goal insentient focal (42-44)
<i>Benefactive</i>				Site Goal benefactive auxiliary (47)		

Figure 6. PAIRINGS OF SEMANTIC ROLE WITH MORPHOLOGICAL CASE WITH-
IN THE CLAUSE IN NEWARI.
Numbers in the cells refer to examples given in the
text above.

NOTES

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1. Newari is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken by approximately 400,000, over half of whom live in Kathmandu Valley. The theoretical framework of this paper incorporates both the deep structure roles of Grimes 1975 and the role complexes of Hale 1973. The transcription scheme for Newari consonants here employed uses the stops, p, ph, b, bh, t, th, d, dh, k, kh, g, gh; the affricates, c, ch, j, jh; the nasals, m, mh, n, nh, ñ [ŋ]; the liquids, l, lh, r, rh; the fricatives, s, h; and the glides w, and y. The vocalic nuclei of Newari include the short vowels, i, e, ā, a, and u; the long vowels, ii, ee, āā, aa, and uu; the complex nuclei ae [e] and āe [ə]; and the diphthongs, āi, āu, ai, au, and ui. For each of the oral nuclei listed here there is a corresponding nasal nucleus. Nasality is indicated by a subscript hook: ǀ, ǃ, etc.

We wish to thank Mr David Watters, Professor Kenneth L. Pike, and Dr Joseph E. Grimes for stimulating discussions on grammar in general and Mrs U. Kolver for discussions of Newari in particular that have proved helpful and enlightening. The stimulation we enjoyed from Pike came in a workshop conducted pursuant to contract No. OEC-0-9-097721-2778(014) with the Institute of International Studies, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Our contact with Grimes was made possible by NSF grant GS-3180A 1. We wish to express our deep appreciation to both of these agencies. None of those who have helped us is to be blamed for any defects of presentation or fact that may be found herein. It is quite unlikely that any of them would have put things together quite the way that we have.

2. The case marker constitutes the last element of the noun phrase in Newari. It may follow the noun directly as in *saphuu* 'book', *saphulii* 'in the book', *saphulii* 'from the book'. If a quantifier follows the noun, the case marker will follow the quantifier as in *saphuu cha-guu* 'one book' *saphuu cha-gulii* 'in one book' *saphuu cha-gulii* 'from one book'. The case marker will attach to a pronoun, a determiner, or even an adjective provided only that the element in question occurs at the end of the noun phrase. For this reason we refer to case as a morphological form of a noun phrase rather than as the morphological form of a noun or pronoun. The case labels, nominative, ergative, dative, comitative, locative, and genitive used in this paper correspond respectively to the terms, unmarked, agent-marked, goal-marked, associative, locative, and genitive used in Hale 1973.

3. There are two possible agreement patterns, a conjunct pattern in which the actor is inflectionally identified in the verb as the speaker in indicative sentences:

ji ana wanā *I went there.*

or as the hearer in the interrogative:

cha gana wanā *Where did you go?*

and a disjunct pattern in which the actor is viewed as distinct from the speaker in indicative sentences:

wa ana wana *He went there.*

wa gana wana? *Where did he go?*

Where the actor is not viewed as identical with either the first person of the indicative or with the second person of the interrogative, only the disjunct inflection can occur in the finite verb of a simple clause. With first person actors in the indicative, however, either a conjunct or a disjunct form can occur depending upon whether the speaker wishes to identify himself as the conscious actor as he would in

ji ana wanā *I went there.*

or as an unconscious or involuntary actor viewed by the speaker temporarily as having the status of a third person as in

ji ana wana *I went there (inadvertently or as a third person).*

In questions, this kind of shift in agreement pattern is used to mark a rhetorical question.

ji ana wanā lā? *Ma wanā rae!* *Did I go there? Certainly not!*

It should also be mentioned that there are impersonal verbs which can occur only in the disjunct form as the finite verb of a simple clause.

4. The names for the various clause types are taken from Hale 1973. In that work, clause types are defined in terms of the predicate categories, state and event, and in terms of the role complexes, actor, undergoer, and site. Bitransitive (BT) clauses have actors, undergoers, and sites and are events. Transitive clauses (T) have actors and undergoers and are events. Semitransitive (ST) clauses have actors and sites and are events. Intransitive (I) clauses have actors and are events. These four clause types constitute the *transitive set* (T-set) of clause types. Parallel to this are three other sets of clause types, the *receptive set* (R-set) consisting of the types, bireceptive (BR) (undergoer, site, event), receptive (R) (undergoer, event), semireceptive (SR) (site, event), and eventive (E) (event); the *stative set* (S-set) consisting of the types, bistative (BS) (statant, undergoer, site, state), stative (S) (statant, undergoer, state), semistative (SS) (statant, site, state); and descriptive (D) (statant, state); and the *attributive set* (A-set) consisting of the types, biattributive (BA) (undergoer, site, state), attributive (A) (undergoer, state), semi-attributive (SA) (site, state), and circumstantial (state).

5. The instrumental role is somewhat marginal in Newari. It is certainly by no means the case that instruments can be used naturally wherever an agent can occur. There seem to be relatively few instances in which an instrument surfaces as an ergative noun phrase within an independent clause. We do have examples such as those given here but the more general pattern for the expression of the instrumental is that of the conjunctive clause.

wəʃ	<u>bepāār</u>	<u>yānāā</u>	dhebā	muna	<i>He accumulated money by <u>doing</u></i>
					<i>business.</i>
jhangaa	<u>papu</u>	<u>sankāā</u>	bwala		<i>The bird flew by <u>moving its wings.</u></i>

6. The terms, indirect object and inner locative, are here viewed as names of grammatical functions in contrast to the term, site, which is viewed as the name of a sememic function. Similarly, the terms, subject and object, are grammatical functions in contrast to the terms, actor and undergoer, which are sememic functions. Languages differ according to whether grammatical function or sememic function is more accessible to beginning analysis. In Newari, sememic function is much easier to work with than grammatical function at early stages of the analysis.

7. For an illustration of an insentient range (limit of extent, effect) which is dative, see Examples 75 and 76 below.

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