

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 *naṅ* 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, celḷḷ, for example is on its way to obsolescence and is being replaced by cyaa ṇḷḷ. The form māḷḷ ṇḷḷ now occurs alongside the ergative, māṃḷḷ. 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	māḷḷ	ji	wa
Ergative	macḷḷ	cyaa ṇḷḷ	māṃḷḷ	ji	wḷḷ
Dative	macā yāta	cyaa yāta	māḷḷ jāta	jitaa	waita
Comitative	macā yāke	cyaa yāke	māḷḷ yāke	jike	waike
Locative	---	---	---	---	---
Genitive	macā yā	cyaa yā	māḷḷ yā	ji	wayā
	<i>shop</i>	<i>book</i>	<i>water</i>	<i>shoe</i>	<i>insect</i>
Nominative	pasaa	saphuu	laa	lākḷḷ	kii
Ergative	pasalḷḷ	saphu	lakḷḷ	lākāṃḷḷ	kilḷḷ
Dative	pasaa yāta	saphuu yāta	laa yāta	lākḷḷ yāta	kii yāta
Comitative	---	---	---	---	kii yāke
Locative	pasalae	saphu	lakhae	lākāmae	---
Genitive	pasaa yā	saphuu yā	laa yā	lākḷḷ 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) wāq jā nala *He ate rice.*
 (4) wāq jītaa saphuu bila *He gave me a book.*

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

- (5) wāq lhāāt nala *He ate with (his) hands.*
 (6) wāq tut cula *He stood on (his) legs.*
 (7) wāq mikhā 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) j wa khā sila *I came to know that fact.*
 (9) j saa tāla *I heard the sound.*
 (10) j 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) wāq 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) wāq jā nala Hē atē rice.
 wayā māmaq walta jā Hīs mother fed him with rice (caused
 nakala him to eat rice).
- (15) wāq nagu khana He saw the star.
 walta j||| nagu khankā I made him see the star.
- (16) wāq jigu khā sila Hē came to know my secret.
 j||| walta jigu khā silkā I made my secret known to him.

In Example 14, *walta* 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.

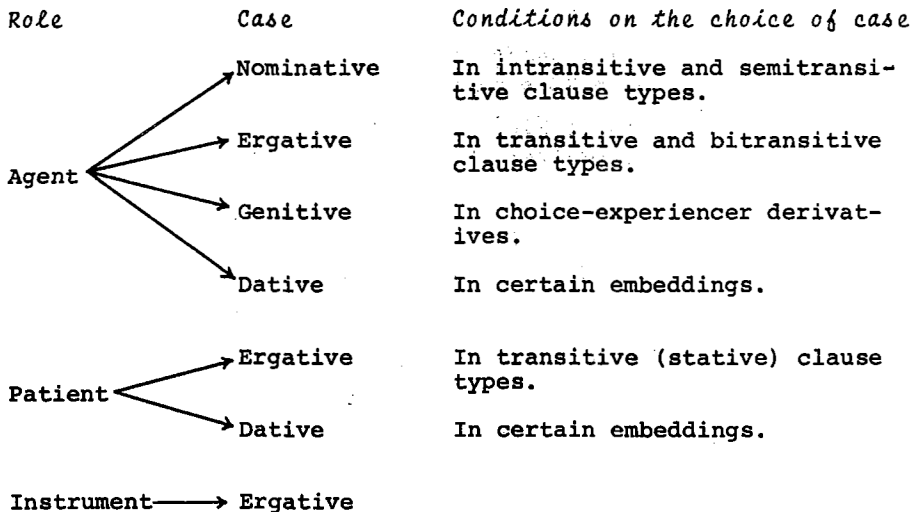


Figure 2. PAIRINGS OF ROLES AND CASES WITHIN THE NEWARI ACTOR COMPLEX

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