

PERSON MARKERS:
FINITE CONJUNCT AND DISJUNCT VERB FORMS IN NEWARI¹

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1. THE PROBLEM

Anyone who attempts to learn Newari soon becomes aware that in certain declarative clauses there is one form of the verb (the conjunct form) that normally occurs with first person actors and that there is another form of the verb (the disjunct form) that normally occurs with non-first person actors.² Thus, with the verb, wane 'to go', we get the following forms in the past tense:

1. Ji ana wanā. *I went there (conjunct).*
2. Cha ana wana. *You went there (disjunct).*
3. Wa ana wana. *He went there (disjunct).*

One might be tempted simply to consider wanā to be the first person form except for the fact that in questions this is the normal second person form,

4. Cha ana wanā lā? *Did you go there (conjunct)?*

and for the fact that the conjunct form can be a normal third person form in certain embeddings, as, for example, in Sentence 5:

5. Wāḡ wa ana wanā dhakāā *He said that he went there (him-*
dhāla. *self).*³

In this context the disjunct form also occurs but with a different meaning:

6. Wāḡ wa ana wana dhakāā *He said that he (someone else) went*
dhāla. *there.*

Sentence 6 could in fact be an example of direct quotation where Sentence 5 could only be an indirect quotation.⁴ As a direct quotation Sentence 5 would have to be recast as follows:

7. Waa "Ji ana wanā," dhakāā *He said, "I went there."*
dhāla.

To complicate matters still further, one soon discovers that there are impersonal verbs which have no finite conjunct forms at all.⁵

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| 8. J wa khā sila. | <i>I came to know that fact (disjunct).</i> |
| Chāḡ wa khā sila. | <i>You came to know that fact (disjunct).</i> |
| Wāḡ wa khā sila. | <i>He came to know that fact (disjunct).</i> |
| 9. J wa saa tāla. | <i>I heard that noise (disjunct).</i> |
| Chāḡ wa saa tāla. | <i>You heard that noise (disjunct).</i> |
| Wāḡ wa saa tāla. | <i>He heard that noise (disjunct).</i> |

The problem to which this paper is addressed, then, is that of determining what it is that controls the use of finite conjunct and disjunct forms of the verb.

2. CONJUNCT, DISJUNCT, AND THE TRUE INSTIGATOR

The problem regarding impersonal verbs points up a very central fact about the conjunct-disjunct pattern in Newari. Finite conjunct forms are appropriate only where the actor of the clause is portrayed as a true instigator, one responsible for an intentional act. Even with personal verbs disjunct forms replace conjunct forms where the actor is not portrayed as true instigator. Thus the verb *palā* in Example 10 is conjunct,

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| 10. J lā palā. | <i>I cut the meat (intentionally).</i> |
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whereas in Example 11 *pala* is disjunct:

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| 11. J lā pala — cha khana makhu lā? | <i>I cut the meat (quite by accident) — you saw me didn't you?</i> |
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The same distinction is made in questions. As shown in Example 4 a conjunct form will normally accompany a second person question which has a personal verb. Thus Sentence 12 has a conjunct verb as one would normally expect:

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| 12. Cha danā lā? | <i>Did you get up (voluntarily)?</i> |
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Thakurlal Manandhar has pointed out, however, that where the action is portrayed as involuntary and the actor for this reason does not figure as a true instigator, the disjunct form will occur, as it does in Example 13:

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| 13. Cha dana lā? | <i>Did you get up (involuntarily)?</i> |
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The reason that impersonal verbs have no finite conjunct forms is thus quite clear. They have no actors that qualify as true instigators. So, while *tāye* 'to hear' is impersonal and has no finite conjunct form, *nene* 'to listen' does have a finite conjunct form since it also can have a true instigator. Similarly, *dune* 'to collapse' is impersonal but *thune* 'to raze to the ground' is personal. Significantly, those

verbs which lack personal conjunct forms also lack normal imperatives. The few impersonal verbs, such as *siye* 'to die' that do occasionally occur in the imperative have rather special semantic interpretations in this usage.⁶ They are not thought of as commands in the ordinary sense.

3. QUOTES, QUOTE FRAMES, AND CO-REFERENTIAL ACTORS⁷

Consider again the following sentences:

1. *Ji ana wanā. I went there.*
5. *Wəq wa ana wanā dhakāā dhāla. He said that he went there (himself).*
7. *Wəq "Ji ana wanā" dhakāā dhāla. He said "I went there."*

Let us refer to the underlined clauses in Sentences 5 and 7 as *quotes* and to the non-underlined portions as *quote frames*. In 5 the actor of the quote frame, *wəq* 'he (agentive form)' refers to the same individual as the actor of the quote, *wa* 'he'. In Example 7 the actors *wəq* 'he' and *Ji* 'I' both refer to the same person. In both 5 and 7 the verb of the quote, *wanā* 'went', is conjunct in form. This correlation suggests that the use of conjunct forms is not related to the person of the actor as such but is related rather to co-reference of actors. If the actor of the quote refers to the same individual as the actor of the quote frame, then the verb of the quote is conjunct in form.

Can this observation be extended to account for the conjunct forms in unembedded clauses such as Sentence 1? If we follow Saddock, 1974, in positing an abstract performative for all such sentences then there appears to be quite a natural extension of this observation which accounts for the conjunct form of *wanā* 'went' in Sentence 1 as well as for the disjunct form of *dhāla* 'said' in Sentences 5 and 7. From this general point of view we can look at Sentence 1 as a quote within a quote frame where the quote frame is a verbalisation of the speech act. For a declarative sentence such as Example 1 the quote frame could be supplied as follows:

- 1a. [*J*] [*chita*] "*Ji ana wanā*" [*I say to you*] "*I went there.*"
[*dhayā*].

An implicit quote frame of this sort constitutes an abstract performative in Saddock's view. Once such a quote frame is supplied it is easy to see how the account of conjunct and disjunct forms that has been suggested above for the verbs of embedded quotes can be naturally extended to account for unembedded clauses as well. Sentence 1 has the conjunct form, *wanā* 'went', because its actor, *Ji* 'I', refers to the actor of the implicit quote frame. Sentences 5 and 7 have the disjunct

form, *dhāla* 'said', because in each case the actor, *wāq* 'he', does not refer to the same individual as the actor of the implicit quote frame, namely the speaker. This also explains why the conjunct form is associated with first person actors in independent declarative clauses.

Direct quotes involve the same pattern of verb forms as unembedded clauses. Where the quote has a first person actor it also has a conjunct main verb regardless of the form of the quote frame subject.

14. J|| *"Ji ana wanā" dhakāā* *I said "I went there."*
dhayā.
15. Chāq *"Ji ana wanā" dhakāā* *You said "I went there."*
dhāla.
16. Wāq *"Ji ana wanā" dhakāā* *He said "I went there."*
dhāla.
17. J|| *"Cha ana wana" dhakāā* *I said "You went there."*
dhayā.
18. Chāq *"Cha ana wana" dhakāā* *You said "You went there."*
dhāla.
19. Wāq *"Cha ana wana" dhakāā* *He said "You went there."*
dhāla.
20. J|| *"Wa ana wana" dhakāā* *I said "He went there."*
dhayā.
21. Chāq *"Wa ana wana" dhakāā* *You said "He went there."*
dhāla.
22. Wāq *"Wa ana wana" dhakāā* *He said "He went there."*
dhāla.

In Sentences 14 through 22 the conjunct forms are underlined. For every conjunct form there is a first person actor. In 14, 15, and 16 the actor of the quote refers to the same individual as the actor of the quote frame. In 14, 17, and 20 the actor of the quote frame refers to the same individual as the actor of the implicit quote frame, namely the speaker.

4. QUESTIONS AND THE CO-REFERENCE RULE

Consider now Examples 2 and 4.

2. *Cha ana wana. You went there (disjunct).*

4. *Cha ana wanā lā? Did you go there (conjunct)?*

To this point we have seen that the disjunct form in Example 2 can be explained on the basis of the fact that even though *cha* 'you' is portrayed as true instigator it does not refer to the same individual as the actor of the implicit quote frame, namely the speaker. What explanation, then, can be offered for the fact that the verb in