

Grammaticalization of verbs in Classical and Modern Newari*

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper will examine the various grammaticalized uses of certain verb forms in both Classical and Modern Newari, a Tibeto-Burman language of Nepal. Grammaticalization as a historical process will be discussed in terms of verb serialization, auxiliarization and morphologization, with lexical and syntactic data drawn from Classical Newari texts dating back as far as the early 12th century, as well as from modern uses of the language.

2. MAJOR SYNTACTIC DEVICES IN NEWARI

Historically, Newari seems to have diverged considerably from the other cognate languages in the Bodic subdivision, especially the complex pronominalized group of Kiranti languages in Eastern Nepal. The language has undergone significant changes in its phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax ever since it came in contact with the Indo-Aryan spoken languages. The influx of Indian immigrants and the assimilation of Prakrit and Sanskrit speakers into the matrix of Newari society in the early centuries A.D. brought steady if not rapid changes in the structure of the language. Newari however has retained some of the basic characteristics of a T-B language, where such primary grammatical categories as case markings in nouns or pronouns, comparative forms of adjectives, and verb inflections for tense, number, mood, voice and aspect are very limited. The verbs simply indicate past and non-past, and apart from the nominal ergative other case-markers like the gerundive have not developed; gender and sex have no direct relationship, and both animate and inanimate nouns do not always have plural suffixes. As the T-B languages are basically isolating in structure, syntactic constructions are normally expressed by specific word-orders. The basic syntactic word order consists of the agent, patient and the verb which is always placed at the end of the sentence, while modifiers precede the noun phrase or the verb phrase.

* I would like to express my gratitude to Scott DeLancey for his valuable advice and comments on the first draft of this paper. The errors and inconsistencies that remain are my own.

2.1. Finite and non-finite verb morphology

A final verb or auxiliary inflected for tense is a finite verb in Newari, and any other verb in such a string is considered non-finite. The finite verbs normally indicate past and non-past, which actually is a contrast between perfective and future. A verb can be both past and perfective, while the non-past category is limited to the future use, as can be seen in the following examples:¹

- (1) huhū simdhavo lApam lAt-om/-am
over there lion meet happen-PST
'(I) happened to meet a lion over there.'
- (2) avani chi-ji mvA-ya ma-dat-o thva kisi-na
from now you-I live-INF NEG-be-FUT this elephant-AGT
- nho-yA si-yu
trample-PST die-FUT
'From now we will not live, (we) will die by being trampled by this elephant.'

The conjunct-disjunct person marking system as it operates in Classical and Modern Newari has the following forms which can be summarized as a four-vowel contrast with morphophonemic alternatives:

	<i>Conjunct</i>	<i>Disjunct</i>
<i>Past</i>	-A	-a/-am/-om
<i>Non-past</i>	-e	-i/-u

Even this inflection system is marginal, since only event verbs, i.e., transitive and intransitive verbs, follow this inflection. Impersonal verbs inflect for tense, but not for the category of person. In Classical Newari stative and attributive verbs are marked with the future morpheme -i or -u, while in modern usage these verbs do not inflect at all. The conjunct forms normally occur with first person, and disjunct forms with non-first persons in statements. In questions and other pragmatic situations, however, the conjunct forms (-A, -e) can occur with second person, and disjunct forms (-a, -i) with first and third persons (Hale 1980):

¹ The low, front tense vowel [a] is represented by the upper case symbol "A."

- (3) a. *jī-ĩ khApA tin-A*
I-ERG door close-PC
'I closed the door.'
- b. *cha-ã khApA tin-A lA*
you-ERG door close-PC Q-marker
'Did you close the door?'
- (4) a. *jī-ĩ khApA khan-e*
I-ERG door open-NPC
'I will open the door.'
- b. *cha-ã khApA khan-e dhAl-a*
you-ERG door open-NPC say-PD
'You said you would open the door.'
- (5) a. *wa-ã khApA til-a/tit-a*
he-ERG door close-PD
'He closed the door.'
- b. *jī-ĩ khApA til-a/tit-a lA*
I-ERG door close-PD/close-PD Q-marker
'I closed the door (accidentally).'/ 'Did I close the door?'
- (6) a. *wa-ã thva jyA yA-i*
he-ERG this work do-NPD
'He will do this work.'
- b. *jī-ĩ thva jyA yA-i lA*
I-ERG this work do-NPD Q-marker
'Would I do this work?'

Apart from this simple inflectional pattern, Classical Newari verbs have three morphologically derived forms:

- a. Imperative: *khan-o/- wo* 'tell!'; *yA-wo* 'do!'; *bi-wo* 'give!'
- b. Stative (future): *khan-i, yAy-i, biy-i/-u*
- c. Causative: *gAyak-al < gAl-* 'to fan'
cAyak-al < cAl- 'to open'

Newari verbs also have some non-finite forms which are crucial for an analysis of verb sequences. They are the *infinitive*, *gerundive/concatenative*, and the *participle/non-final*. The infinitive occurs in three different forms:

- a. Citation form: kham-ja 'to tell', lhA-ca 'to speak'
bila-ya 'to give'
- b. Infinitive of purpose: khana-ŋAna, yAta-ŋAna, bila-ŋAna
- c. Verb complement form (only found in later MSS):
yayayA-gu/-guli 'which was done'
bilayA-gu/-guli 'which was given'

The gerundive form is the same as its past conjunct form (i.e., the -A form), e.g., *khan-A-wo* 'seeing', *bhAlap-A-wo* 'thinking'. The participial, too, is the same as the past conjunct form except that the -A is long -A:, e.g., *khva-yA:* 'on weeping', *syAn-A:(-wo)* 'on killing'. In Classical texts, participial forms such as -*syam/-sem* or -*ana* are also well attested.

- (7) *thva svAna todaphe-syam...*
this flower drop-PTP
'Having dropped this flower...'
- (8) *ajhosit-om snAna bijyAŋ-ana...*
river-LOC bathe come (HON)-PTP
'After bathing in the river...'

2.2 Nominal and verbal affixes

The nominal and verbal prefixes are widely used but do not affect the inflectional morphology of the root words, at least in the earlier texts. These affixes seem to be related more to semantic distinctions and less to grammatical functions, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (9) a. *dū-cho* 'drop into' *li-jo* 'leak backward'
in-send *back-leak*
pi-kAl 'take out' *li-phyA* 'take in return'
out-take *back-take*
- b. *co-gva* 'used to live' *mel-a-ko* 'as much as needed'
stay-NOM *need-PST-ADV*
tAth-a-sA 'if left behind' *bil-a-sem* 'when given'
leave-PST-COND *give-PST-ADV*
- c. *tokha-dhul-* 'to be broken'
piece-break

monda-lhu-ya 'to bathe'
head-wash-INF

tama-cA-ya 'to be angry' (lit. to feel anger)
anger-feel-INF

thona-kA-ya 'to be drunk'
beer-take-INF

In (9a) the adverbial prefixes **dū-**, **pi-**, and **li-** have independent lexical meanings but normally function as bound morphemes in phrases or compounds. In (9b) the suffixes **-gva**, **-ko**, **-sA** and **-sem** have nominalizing/adverbial functions and can be attached to any event verb; while the nominal prefixes **tokha-**, **monda-**, **tama-** and **thona-** are what Jorgensen (1941:48) has described as 'preverbs' as compared to the postpositions of verbs which express case-like relations of nouns.

3. VERBS AND AUXILIARIES

The grammaticalization of independent verbs to auxiliaries and to verbal suffixes are well-known processes in other T-B languages which have been discussed at length among others by Matisoff (1969, 1976, 1991) for Lahu, DeLancey (1985a, 1991) for Lhasa Tibetan, and Genetti (1986a, 1986b) for Newari. In this paper I shall be concerned with three types of aspect verbs that have been grammaticalized fully or partially and used with various meanings in Classical Newari texts. I shall classify these verbs as (1) verbs of location/position, such as **da-/dva-** 'have', **com-** 'stay, sit', **tal-** 'put', **tAth-** 'leave behind', **then-** 'arrive'; (2) verbs of motion or direction, such as **won-** 'go', **wal-** 'come', **jul-** 'be/ become', **yen-** 'take away', **hal-** 'bring', **yAt-** 'do', **kAl-** 'take', **bil-** 'give'; and (3) experiential/perception verbs such as **cAl-** 'feel', **tAl-** 'hear', **khamn-** 'see.' Since many of these verbs have finite lexical status with inflectional suffixes of their own, we shall assume that the auxiliary or quasi-auxiliary functions acquired by the three categories of verbs are fairly recent, as these are attested only in later texts of the late 17th century. The development of auxiliaries is an important example of syntactic change in a language. The process of change in the status of lexical verbs such as **tal-**, **cAl-**, **tAl-** to auxiliaries marks a significant stage of grammaticalization in later Classical and modern Newari. It will therefore be the purpose of the following sub-sections to trace the development of the three types of verbs on the basis of semantic and syntactic changes which are rapidly taking place in the language.

3.1 Verbs of location/position

The lexical meaning and grammaticalized status of each category of verbs can be represented as follows:

(10) Verb	Lexical sense	Grammaticalized sense
da-/dva-	'is/have'	existential
com-	'sit/stay'	progressive
tad-	'put'	durative/stative
tAth-	'leave behind'	completive perfect

The grammaticalized meanings acquired by these verbs of location in later Classical texts and modern Newari can be seen in examples such as:

- (11) a. khamn-a dvAt-am 'came into view'
 see-PST be-PST
- b. basa-rap-am com-ga 'used to live'
 live-INF-PST stay-NOM
- c. raksa tady-am 'kept protected'
 protection keep-PST
- d. khA-se tAth-A 'left hanging'
 hang-PTP leave-PST

In these verb phrases the lexical meanings of the principal verbs and the auxiliaries are not significantly different from the grammaticalized uses of these verbs. This perhaps indicates that the grammaticalization of these verbs is fairly recent and that semantic change is a necessary initiator of this process. In the phrase *khamn-a dvAt-am* both verbs are marked for tense but it is the auxiliary *dvAt-am* which conveys a passive existential meaning in the construction. The verb *com-* is progressive in contrast to its lexical meaning 'sit, stay', but can convey habitual action in the past when the nominalizing suffix *-ga* (Mod. *-gu*) is attached to it. Genetti (1986:58) observes that *tad-* (Mod. *tal-*) 'put' "does not require an overt syntactic reference to the locative goal", and in her examples the verb can also be glossed as durative 'keep'. I have glossed the phrase *raksa tady-am* as 'kept protected' rather than in the simple past 'protected', since the auxiliary *tad-* would not specify a single event like 'put'. The appropriate expression in the context of non-durative action would be *raksa yAt-am* 'did protection/protected'. The use of the non-final (NF) participle in *khA-se* (Mod. *khAy-A:*) and past tense *tAth-A* within a phrase suggests a single event rather than a series of events indicated by the verbs *khA-* 'hang' and *tAth-* 'leave.' The fact that Newari and other T-B languages can have sequences like "he did the work and finished it" or "she cooked the food and completed it" is assumed by DeLancey "to constitute the seedbed for grammaticalization."

3.2 Verbs of motion/direction

(12) Verb	<i>Lexical sense</i>	<i>Grammaticalized sense</i>
won-	'go'	imperfective
wal-	'come'	come to be
yen-	'take away'	progressive
hal-	'bring'	initiative

These auxiliaries which make reference to motion or direction are significant in two ways: first, they provide the best examples of the development from periphrastic constructions to derivational/inflectional markers, and at the same time illustrate the role of grammaticalization from discourse to grammatical structure. The relationship between periphrastic word order and non-finite uses of the verb can be seen in the following examples:

- (13) a. bon-a won-Ava 'going with'
 take-PST go-PTP
- b. jul-a waly-am 'came to be thus'
 be-PST come-PST
- c. dhA-yA yemn-Ava 'continuing to say'
 say-PST take-PTP
- d. kaŋ-A haly-am 'was told and sent'
 tell-PST bring-PST

The sequences in (13a-d) behave as periphrastic constructions in discourse situations rather than as verb phrases. The verb **bon-** 'take (a person) with' and **won-** 'go' in (5a), and **kaŋ-** 'tell' and **hal-** 'bring' in (5d) are all finite verbs, but they are in irreversible order and function as part of larger syntactic structures. These verbs also confirm my earlier assertion that a single event can be expressed by a series of motion verbs. Since such serialized verbs are essentially participial non-final strings with the suffix -Ava or -sem (lengthened final vowel in modern Newari), they function as links in the clause chain which as a rule ends in a final verb with finite marking. In Classical Newari texts we come across innumerable sentences such as the following:

- (14) je-pani-syam tod-a-ma-tot-ala
 1-PLU-AGT leave-PST-NEG-leave-PST
 'Till we release (you)...

chu dhA-ya nam ma-te-va dhA-syam
 any say-INF INT NEG-permit-PTP say-PTP
 'Saying that (he) should not speak any word...'

anega kodap-am
 much instruct-PTP
 'After much instructing...'

sim cha-pu vAn-a kAca-k-Ava
 wood one-CLF bite-PST take-CAUS-PTP
 'Making (it) bite a piece of wood...'

thva sim ne-mha-m hamsa-na twAtha-na kAṇ-ana
 this wood two-CLF-AGT swan-AGT beak-INST press-PST
 'The two swans biting this stick firmly with their beaks,

thva kApare boy-a-k-am yamṇ-A jur-o
 this tortoise fly-INF-CAUS-PST take-PST be-PST
 flew away carrying this tortoise.'

The clause chains in (14) bring out several interesting points concerning grammaticalized berbs:

(a) The participial and perfective are the two basic verb forms that characterized the T-B tense system, i.e., the participle and gerundive or the non-finite form of the verb were not yet clearly distinguished. The sentence is connected by various forms of NF participles (-Ava, -syam, -ana), whereas modern Newari has only vowel lengthening to indicate participial use.

(b) Verb phrases like dhAya mateva, vAna kAcakam, boy-a-k-am yamṇ-A jur-o provide clear evidence of the use of the auxiliary as an aspect marker which can also occur as a finite lexical verb at the end of the sentence. It is also evident from the study of Classical Newari texts of the earlier period that the present auxiliaries have developed from full verbal forms, similar perhaps to the change from lexical verbs to modal auxiliaries (*may, can, must, do*) in English. We will not be concerned here with how these changes have taken place, but it will be clear from subsequent discussions that some of the changes are still ongoing.

(c) The order in which the clauses appear is syntactically significant and closely related to the pragmatic discourse of the language at a particular point in its history. This would support Givón's (1971b, 1979a,b) focus on the

historical data of a language, and his view of grammaticalization as a development from paratactic discourse structure to closed syntactic structures.

3.3 Experiential/perception verbs

(15) Verb	Lexical sense	Grammaticalized sense
cAl-	'feel'	experiential perfect
tAl-	'hear'	predictive
khamŋ-	'see'	fulfilment

The semantic extensions of grammaticalization are more obvious in the experiential verbs shown in (15). The development of grammaticalized meanings in verb phrases provides clear evidence that experiential verbs tend to acquire multiple and at times abstract meanings from concrete concepts. The following pairs of examples should help to make this concept clear:

- (16) a. tama cAl-am 'was angry' (lit. felt anger)
anger-feel-PST
- b. nhedana cAl-am 'woke up'
sleep feel-PST
- (17) a. nvaŋ-A tAy-Ava 'hearing what was said'
speak-PST hear-PTP
- b. ju-yu tAly-am 'may become so'
be-FUT hear-PST
- (18) a. ahadi-na khamŋ-ava 'the hunter on seeing (the animal)'
hunter-AGT see-PTP
- b. karma khamŋ-Ava 'fulfilled destiny'
destiny see-PST

In these pairs of examples, the first phrases marked (a) express surface, concrete meanings while the (b) phrases represent abstract, derived meanings. It is obviously difficult to relate the semantic interpretation of the first set of verbs (16a-18a) to the second set (16b-18b) in terms of their concrete lexical meanings. The abstract meanings conveyed by these verbs are semantically unique, like metaphorical or idiomatic expressions that are language-specific. Although cAl-, tAl- and khamŋ- differ in degrees of perception it is possible to view the metaphorical extensions as a part of their underlying semantic structure. Matisoff (1991) in fact called grammaticalization a subtype of

4.1. Causative -k-

A more important observation that can emerge from the data presented here is that the auxiliary status of at least some of these verbs has been further grammaticalized as suffixes in modern Newari finite or derived verb forms. Genetti (1986:58) took note of one such function when she remarked that "the causative morpheme **kAI-** has grammaticalized to the point of having no independent lexical meaning, and has become syntactically a suffix. Thus it can never be separated from a main verb in a clause chain." DeLancey (1991:7-8) regards 'morphologization' as the third stage in the grammaticalization process, the preceding two being 'serialization,' i.e. "the dropping of the mark of subordination on the first verb in a chain", and 'auxiliarization,' i.e., "the loss by the grammaticalized verb of its phonological and morphological independence." Morphologization has been defined as "the grammaticalized morpheme which occurs as, rather than in construction with, finite verb inflection." It must be noted however that not all cases of grammaticalization involve morphologization. In Classical Newari the cases of verb serialization and clause chaining discussed above must be regarded as prerequisites to the development of morphological categories in the language. The lexical-derivational-inflectional continuum as proposed by Bybee (1985) can be accounted for in the development of certain Newari verbs such as the causatives which are often lexicalized:

- (19) na- 'eat' > na-kAl- > nay-a-k-am
eat-take 'caused to eat'

- bo- 'fly' > bo-kAl- > boy-a-k-Ava
eat-take 'caused to eat'
- deŋ- 'sleep' > (deŋ-kAl) > theŋ-A
eat-take 'caused to eat'
- niŋ- 'count' > niŋ-kAl- > niŋ-kA-se
'causing to count; causing to twist or turn
around; to grind', etc.

In these examples, each verb stem and its meaning affects or modifies the semantic content of the second or the third unit. The verb *na-* 'eat' combined with *-kAl-* 'take' is causativized to mean "took (the food) to feed someone". A similar lexical or inflectional expression is applicable to the verb *bo-* 'to fly', i.e., "to take a bird or a kite to make it fly", but the suppletive causative formation of *deŋ-* > (*deŋ-kAl*) > *theŋ-* without the causative marker *-k-*, involves a change in voicing and aspiraton of the initial stem consonant. The next example *niŋ-k* is an interesting lexicalized form which has developed various other meanings from its original T-B semantic content that is comparable to other cognate languages. The causativized form in Newari however does not reveal a radical change in meaning although the causative suffix *-k-* is now recognized as a grammaticalized bound morpheme.

4.2. tal-

Genetti's analysis of *tal-* as an event verb 'put' and as a durative or stative verb 'keep' clearly points to the grammaticalized status of the verb with different aspectual meanings. The contrast she has established between the participle and the perfective form of the verb in modern Newari sentences is worth noting in this connection:

- (20) wā-ā saphu: chē-ē tal-a
he-ERG book house-LOC put-PD
'He put the book in the house.'
- (21) wā-ā saphu: chē-ē tay-A tal-a
ge-ERG book house-LOC put-PTP put-PD
'He kept the book in the house.'

While (20) expresses a simple past disjunct form of the verb, (21) uses the verb first as a participle *tay-A* and repeated as perfective *tal-a* which encodes the durative meaning of 'keep'. It is precisely this type of repeated occurrence of

tal- that tends to be phonologically or morphologically reduced, so that it loses its status as a full lexical verb. Consider the following examples:

- (22) *jĩ-ĩ tisA tay-A ta-i-tale*
 I-ERG jewelry put-PTP put-PTP-until...
 'As long as I keep the jewelry...'
- (23) *jĩ-ĩ tisA tay-A ta-i-bale*
 I-ERG jewelry put-PTP put-PTP-when...
 'When I was keeping the jewelry...'

In example (22) the alliterative sequence *tay-A ta-i-tale* is never uttered as such in modern Newari speech, and is always reduced to *ta-i-tat-le*. What happens here is that the first participial form *tay-A* is phonologically reduced to *ta-i* and the already reduced second participial verb *ta-i* is fused morphologically to the following concessive adverbial suffix *-tale*. In (23), however, we have a reduplicated sequence *ta-i ta-i-bale* without morphological fusion. The phonological similarities between the verb 'put' and the adverbial suffix *-tale* is also striking, but this may simply be a case of homonymy rather than of one being a derivative of the other. The adverbial suffix can occur after all event verbs, e.g., *dhA-tale* 'as long as said', *byu-tale* 'as long as given', *kam-tale* 'as long as told', etc.

4.3 cAl-

The perception verb *cAl-* 'to feel' is rapidly losing its status as a finite verb and its surface meaning. Its use in Modern Newari is now confined to aspectual functions and to denote various concrete or abstract meanings. Although phrases with surface meanings like *tama cAl-a* 'felt anger', *gha cAl-a* 'felt repulsive' or *tyAnu cAl-a* 'felt tired' are still in use, the verb has also developed other word-order collocations with diverse semantic potentials, as the following examples illustrate:

- (24) *jyA ko-cAl-a*
 work end-feel-PST
 'The work was completed.'
- (25) *wA-phasa-e jhu: cAl-a*
 rain-wind-LOC soak-feel-PST
 '(It) was completely soaked in the storm.'
- (26) *dhebA mhā-cAl-a*
 money save-feel-PST
 'Money was saved.'

- (27) cheri-i tham-cAl-a
 ground floor-LOC up-feel-PST
 'Moisture seeped up to the ground floor.'
- (28) jvar pi-cAl-a
 fever out-feel-PST
 'The fever started.' (lit. the fever came out)
- (29) pe-rhu cAl-a
 four-times feel-PST
 '[Someone] went to (the same place) four times.'

As we can see in examples (24-29) it is difficult to perceive how the original meaning of cAl- came to have such diverse interpretations. It is however obvious that the verb may well be on its way to being reduced to auxiliary status in modern Newari, and its collocations with verbs, adverbs and nominals seem to indicate that it is fast on the way to becoming a syntactic suffix or at least a bound morpheme in metaphorical expressions. The fact that cAl- has very restricted uses as a finite verb in modern Newari seems to indicate the semantic and syntactic grammaticalization of this verb, although morphologization as a syntactic process may not yet be fully evident in the examples chosen.

5. CONCLUSION

Scholars have observed the limited tense marking system of past/non-past inflections and the importance of word-order and clause-chaining as syntactic devices in Newari. However very little work has been done on the lexical and syntactic study of Classical Newari texts from the point of view of grammaticalization as a historical evolution. This paper has attempted to discuss the grammaticalized verbs of Classical and modern Newari in terms of verb serialization, auxiliarization and morphologization, although the motivations for these changes are far from clear. The data were drawn from a wide range of texts with concentration on three types of verbs, namely verbs of location/position, motion/direction and experience/perception. In Classical Newari, as in modern usage, the verb concatenation or the non-final participial use of the verb contributes to clause-chaining in a specific and often irreversible order. The development of an auxiliary system has been given some importance in the paper as it reflects an early stage of grammaticalization from independent lexical verbs to auxiliaries with tense and aspect morphology. The auxiliary status of at least some of the verbs is shown to have been further grammaticalized to syntactic suffixes in modern Newari speech and writing.

The morphologization of causative **-k-** is well-known, and the paper also draws attention to other auxiliaries like **tal-** 'put' and **cAl-** 'feel' which were fully auxiliarized in later Classical Newari texts, and are rapidly being reduced to suffixial slots in modern Newari discourse. This is particularly true of the grammaticalized verb of perception **cAl-** which is clearly losing its status as a fully marked finite verb. The semantic potentials of this verb have also been discussed briefly to show the importance of semantic parameters in the process of grammaticalization.

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