

## Binding and Shifting in Kathmandu Newari

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**Overview.** The purpose of this paper is to provide a syntactic account for the conjunct/disjunct system in Kathmandu Newari (Tibeto-Burman, SOV), first reported in Hale (1980) and later discussed in DeLancey (1992) and Hargreaves (2005). The data reported here are collected from my own fieldwork. I show that Kathmandu Newari provides morphological evidence for Kratzer’s (2009) claim that verbal functional heads act as intermediates for co-indexation between minimal pronouns (a cover term for both reflexives and bound variable pronouns) and their antecedent DPs. More specifically, the functional heads that host the conjunct/disjunct markers are subject to binding theory. Conjunct markers are *anaphors*, and are thus subject to binding principle A. Disjunct markers are *pronouns*, and are thus subject to binding principle B.

**Binding in matrix clauses.** Hale (1980) observes that Kathmandu Newari has a morphological distinction between what he calls conjunct and disjunct verb forms. The conjunct form normally occurs with first person subject in declarative clause (1) and second person subject in interrogative clause (2), while the disjunct form occurs elsewhere (3–4).

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| <p>(1) Ji/*Cha/*Wa ana wan-e/ā.<br/>         I/you/(s)he there go-FUT:CJ/PST:CJ<br/>         “I/*You/*(S)he will go/went there.”</p> | <p>(3) *Ji/Cha/*Wa ana wan-e/ā lā?<br/>         I/you/(s)he there go-FUT:CJ/PST:CJ Q<br/>         “Will/Did *I/you/*(s)he go there?”</p> |
| <p>(2) *Ji/Cha/Wa ana wan-i/a.<br/>         I/you/(s)he there go-FUT:DJ/PST:DJ<br/>         “*I/You/(S)he will go/went there.”</p>   | <p>(4) Ji/*Cha/Wa ana wan-i/a lā?<br/>         I/you/(s)he there go-FUT:DJ/PST:DJ Q<br/>         “Will/Did I/*you/(s)he go there?”</p>   |

There is now good evidence that discourse participants are syntactically active (Speas & Tenny 2003), and can serve as the target of morphological agreement (Miyagawa 2012) or antecedent of emphatic reflexives (Ross 1970 *Physicists like myself/\*himself...*). Speas & Tenny suggest that the utterance of a clause is embedded in a higher structure determining the speech act (saP) whose specifier is filled with discourse participant roles such as SPEAKER. They further claim that interrogative clauses have structures that result from a Larsonian dative shift type movement, in which case HEARER becomes the closest c-commander of the CP. Following Kratzer (2009) I take reflexives and bound variable pronouns as minimal pronouns ( $\emptyset$ ) which are born without  $\phi$ -features and only acquire their morphological shape from their binders. Ever since Finer (1985), a number of authors (Borer 1989, Hale 1992) have already observed that binding is tied to verbal inflectional heads. Kratzer (2009) suggests that indices are introduced by these heads, rather than by some antecedent DPs. Kathmandu Newari thus provides morphological evidence for such a claim, where the conjunct/disjunct markers are the overt manifestations of this functional head and as such determines the spell-out of the minimal pronoun in the local subject position. Given the distribution of conjunct and disjunct markers in (1–4), I argue that they correspond to anaphoric and pronominal heads, respectively, and are subject to different binding conditions. More specifically, binding condition A forces the conjunct marker and an immediately c-commanding DP to be co-referent (5a, 6a), whereas binding principle B forces the disjunct marker and an immediately c-commanding DP to have disjoint reference (5b, 6b).

- (5) Declarative clause: a.  $[_{saP} \text{Speaker}_i [_{CP} \emptyset_i \dots \text{CJ}_i] \text{sa}]$  b.  $[_{saP} \text{Speaker}_i [_{CP} \emptyset_j \dots \text{DJ}_j] \text{sa}]$   
 (6) Interrogative clause: a.  $[_{saP} \text{Speaker} [_{SAP} \text{Hearer}_i [_{CP} \emptyset_i \dots \text{CJ}_i \text{Q}] \text{SA}] \text{sa}]$   
 b.  $[_{saP} \text{Speaker} [_{SAP} \text{Hearer}_i [_{CP} \emptyset_j \dots \text{DJ}_j \text{Q}] \text{SA}] \text{sa}]$

Full Interpretation requires that the minimal pronoun have its  $\phi$ -features checked with the conjunct/disjunct marker, aka the local functional head. This results in its necessary coreference with a higher DP with the presence of a conjunct marker and its obligatory disjoint reference with said DP when the disjunct marker is around.

**Binding in embedded clauses.** When conjunct and disjunct verbs appear in complement clauses of attitude verbs, the former requires its subject be co-indexed with the matrix subject (7), whereas the latter requires for obligatory disjoint reference between two subjects of adjacent clauses (8).

- (7) Shyam [wa gana won-e] dhaya dhau?  
 Shyam (s)he where go-FUT:CJ that said:DJ  
 “Where did Shyam<sub>i</sub> say that he<sub>i/\*j</sub> would go?”
- (8) Shyam [wa gana won-i] dhaya dhau?  
 Shyam (s)he where go-FUT:DJ that said:DJ  
 “Where did Shyam<sub>i</sub> say that he<sub>\*i/j</sub> would go?”

The first person pronoun *ji* that licenses the conjunct verb in (1) can only license disjunct verb in complement clauses (9) unless the matrix subject is also a first person pronoun (10). In other words, what matters is not the choice of the embedded subject, but whether it is co-indexed with a higher subject.

(9) Shyam [ji gana won-*\*e/i*] dhaya dhau?  
 Shyam I where go-FUT:CJ/DJ that said:DJ  
 “Where did Shyam say that I would go?”

(10) Ji: [ji gana won-*e/\*i*] dhaya dhayu?  
 I:ERG I where go-FUT:CJ/DJ that said:CJ  
 “Where did I say that I would go?”

I argue that in the same way as the matrix conjunct/disjunct marker determines the reference of the minimal pronoun in its local subject position, the embedded subjects in (7–10) are also minimal pronouns that do not enter the syntactic derivation with a full set of interpretable features. Rather, they start out as featureless and acquire their  $\phi$ -features from the embedded conjunct/disjunct marker. However, there is one important difference between matrix clauses and complement clauses. The discourse participant roles in the latter clauses undergo obligatory shifting (à la Schlenker 2003). They pick out their reference from the embedded context, rather than from the context of the live utterance. It has been noticed that languages vary in their inventories of attitude predicates and shiftable indexicals (Anand & Nevins 2004). In Uyghur only Nominative Case-marked first and second person pronouns shift (Shklovsky & Sudo 2014). Misha Tatar allows null pronouns, but not overt ones to be shifted (Podobryaev 2014). Here I argue that in Kathmandu Newari, the covert discourse participant SPEAKER of complement clauses necessarily shift to refer to the agent of the matrix clauses. This account predicts that the conjunct/disjunct marking in relative clauses and adverbial clauses should behave like it is in matrix clauses, since shifting is impossible in these environments. This prediction is borne out. Below are a couple of examples. When the conjunct marker appears in the relative clause (11), the subject of the relative clause needs to be a first person pronoun. In contrast, the disjunct marker is only compatible with second and third person pronouns in relative clauses (12). The embedded subject may or may not refer to the matrix subject, but crucially the co-indexation between them (if there is one) does not affect the choice between *-ā* and *-ã:*.

(11) Shyam [Ji/*\*Cha/\*Wo:* cwan-*ā*-gu] chē wan-a.  
 Shyam I/You/(s)he stay-PST:CJ-REL house go-PST:DJ  
 “Shyam went to the house where I/*\*you/\*(s)he*<sub>i/j</sub> stayed.”

(12) Shyam [*\*Ji/Cha/Wo:* cw-*ã:*-gu] chē wan-a.  
 Shyam I/You/(s)he stay-PST:DJ-REL house go-PST:DJ  
 “Shyam went to the house where *\*I/you/(s)he*<sub>i/j</sub> stayed.”

Schlenker (2003) argues that attitude verbs are “monsters” that select clausal complements and manipulate their contexts. The discourse participant SPEAKER under the scope of a monster is bound by the author of the matrix event. This binding relation, too, is mediated by a functional head which I ignore for simplicity. The shifted interpretation of the embedded SPEAKER eventually affects the reference of the minimal pronoun in the complement clause (13). In relative clauses, however, no monsters are involved. As a result, the embedded SPEAKER points to whoever utters (11–12), i.e., the first person. The contrast between complement clauses and relative clauses in terms of the interpretation of the embedded subject is thus accounted for.

(13) Complement clause: a. Shyam<sub>i</sub> said [<sub>saP</sub> Speaker<sub>(i=Shyam)</sub> [<sub>CP</sub>  $\emptyset_i$  ... CJ<sub>i</sub>] sa]  
 b. Shyam<sub>i</sub> said [<sub>saP</sub> Speaker<sub>(i=Shyam)</sub> [<sub>CP</sub>  $\emptyset_j$  ... DJ<sub>j</sub>] sa]

(14) Relative clause: a. Shyam went to [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>saP</sub> Speaker<sub>(i=I)</sub> [<sub>CP</sub>  $\emptyset_i$  ... CJ<sub>i</sub>] sa] N ]  
 b. Shyam went to [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>saP</sub> Speaker<sub>(i=I)</sub> [<sub>CP</sub>  $\emptyset_j$  ... DJ<sub>j</sub>] sa] N ]

### Selected References

**Borer** (1989) Anaphoric AGR. In *The Null Subject Parameter*. **DeLancey** (1992) The historical status of the conjunct/disjunct pattern in Tibeto-Burman. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*. **Finer** (1985) The syntax of switch reference. *LI*. **Hale** (1980) Person markers. *Papers in South-East Asian Linguistics*. **Hale** (1992) Subject obviation, switch reference, and control. In *Control and Grammar*. **Hargreaves** (2005) Agency and intentional action in Kathmandu Newar. *Himalayan Linguistics*. **Miyagawa** (2012) Agreements that occur mainly in the main clause. In *Main Clause Phenomena*. **Podobryaev** (2014) Persons, imposters, and monsters. MIT dissertation. **Shklovsky & Sudo** (2014) The syntax of monsters. *LI*.