GRAPHIC AND CLASSIFIER VERB BASES
IN THE NEWAR LANGUAGE

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Introduction
According to the definition of a classifier language set out by Joseph Greenberg (1972), Newar can be described as a classifier language. It has several types of distinct numeral classifiers.

The classifier and quantifier (or graphic) morphemes in Newar are found in various syntactic situations throughout the language. The role of these morphemes in the formation of verb bases is the subject of this paper.

Verb bases derived from classifier and quantifier (graphic) morphemes are widely used in both colloquial and written Newar. Verb bases formed from both types of morphemes can essentially be viewed as nominal in nature.

In the Newar language true nominal verbs are derived from adjectives. The verb bases derived from classifier and quantifiemorphemes can be treated as subgroup to the true nominal verbs derived from adjectives. Both nominal verbs and verb bases are impersonal. The true nominal verbs are always paradigmatically irregular causative form whereas the verb bases derived from classifier and quantifier morphemes are always paradigmatically kausative forms.

K forms of true nominal verb are always paradigmatically irregular. Examples are:

Non-causative
phākula. (It) became pungent.
cākula. (It) became sweet.
pāyula. (It) became sour.
wācula. (It) became blue.
wācula. (It) became green.
hīyula. (It) became red.
khījula. (It) became dark.
mhāsula. (It) became yellow.

Causative
phākukala. (One made (it) pungent.
cākukala. (One made (it) sweet.
pāykala. (One made (it) sour.
wācukala. (One made (it) blue.
wājukala. (One made (it) green.
hīyukala. (One made (it) red.
khiukala. (One made (it) dark.
mhāsukala. (One made (it) yellow.
K forms of classifier and quantifier (graphic) verb are always paradigmatically regular. Examples for the classifier verb base are given below:

che takhāta. A house became huge. waa che takhākala. He has a huge house built
wa swāq ciphwala. That flower became small. gathuṣ swāq ciphwackala. A gardener made flowers small.
āmāsi tagwla. A guava grew large. wāq āmāsi tagwaekala. He made a guava grow large.
mari tapāta. A bread became large. wāq mari ta pākala. (He) made a bread large.

Examples for the graphic verb base are as follows:
che tajala. A house became high⁴ waa che tajakala. He made a house high.
huu la tabyata. That path became broad. imisaa la ta byakala. They made a path broad.
kapaa ciwyata. Cloth became narrow. waa kapaa ci byakala. He made cloth narrow.
keba tahala. A garden became long. waa keba tahāekala. He made a garden long.

Verb types in
Basically there are two types of verbs fundamental to the Newar language, each with importance in its own area. These can be set out as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
v \\
e \\
r \\
s \\
\end{array}
\]

Root Verbs (stem verbs)
Nominal Verbs (verbs derived from adjectives, quantifiers and classifiers)

Fig. 1 (see figure 4)

Root Verbs: Root verbs or the principal verbs have six possible morphophonemic endings: 
/l/ //y/ //l/ //p/ //u/ //k/
Each of these endings has its distinct characteristic inflectional conjugational forms and their derivational features as follows:
Nominal verbs: The nominal verbs are the ones derived from adjectives and graphic or classifier morphemes. They are always impersonal. The following examples are derived from adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>v. form</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sweet</td>
<td>cāku</td>
<td>cākula</td>
<td>(II) became sweet.</td>
<td>cākula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweet</td>
<td>māku</td>
<td>mākula</td>
<td>(II) became sweet.</td>
<td>mākula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sour</td>
<td>pāu</td>
<td>pāula</td>
<td>(II) became sour.</td>
<td>pākala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>wāj</td>
<td>waula</td>
<td>(II) became green.</td>
<td>wākala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>wāc</td>
<td>wācula</td>
<td>(II) became blue.</td>
<td>wācula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>hyāj</td>
<td>hyājula</td>
<td>(II) became red.</td>
<td>hyākala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>mhāsu</td>
<td>mhāsula</td>
<td>(II) became yellow.</td>
<td>mhāsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>hāku</td>
<td>hākula</td>
<td>(II) became black.</td>
<td>hākula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>tuyu</td>
<td>tuyula7</td>
<td>(II) became white.</td>
<td>tuyukala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td>yāju</td>
<td>yājula</td>
<td>(II) became light.</td>
<td>yākala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin</td>
<td>sālu</td>
<td>sālula</td>
<td>(II) became thin.</td>
<td>sāluka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thick</td>
<td>khwātu</td>
<td>khwatala</td>
<td>(II) became thick.</td>
<td>khwakuaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rough</td>
<td>kwācu</td>
<td>kwācula</td>
<td>(II) became rough</td>
<td>kwācula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slippery</td>
<td>culu</td>
<td>culula</td>
<td>(II) became slippery</td>
<td>culaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean</td>
<td>yeccu</td>
<td>yeccula</td>
<td>(II) became clean</td>
<td>yeckala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy</td>
<td>jhyātu</td>
<td>jhyatula</td>
<td>(II) became heavy</td>
<td>jhyatukala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smooth</td>
<td>picu</td>
<td>picula</td>
<td>(II) became smooth</td>
<td>picula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greasy</td>
<td>thyācu</td>
<td>thyācula</td>
<td>(II) became greasy</td>
<td>thyācukala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verb Bases
The nominal verb has two semantically similar and characteristically correlative sub-sets, i.e. verb bases, which have a wide range of colloquial and written uses. These are:

Graphic Verb Base: It gives a clear, effective, view of size, height, length, breadth, things.

Classifier Verb Base: It gives a clear, effective, view of shape, size, figure, things.
Each of these verb bases has two sub-sets. The sub-set for the graphic verb base may be set out as follows:

**Simple Graphic Verb Base:** The quantifier morpheme plus a morpheme representing a graphic feature of height, length or breadth may be formed as a simple graphic verb base. The quantifier morpheme may be treated as a verbal prefix and morpheme for the graphic feature may be treated as a stem verb and it can be conjugated as a root verb ending with /y/. In the similar way K form may also be formed, e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>qni. + gm.</th>
<th>gloss.</th>
<th>V.form⁸</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ta + jāā</td>
<td>height</td>
<td>tajāla</td>
<td>(It) became higher</td>
<td>tajaekala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ci + hāā</td>
<td>length</td>
<td>cihāla</td>
<td>(It) became shorter</td>
<td>cihaekala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta + byāā</td>
<td>breadth</td>
<td>tabyāla</td>
<td>(It) became wider</td>
<td>tabyakala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ci + dhikaa</td>
<td>height</td>
<td>cidhikala</td>
<td>(It) became shorter</td>
<td>cidhikaekala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta + kuu</td>
<td>size</td>
<td>takula</td>
<td>(It) became bigger</td>
<td>takuikekala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Complex Graphic Verb Base:** The complex graphic verb base may be formed with the help of a morpheme representing the graphic feature of height, length or breadth. The postpositional pae is preceded by a pronominal particle a-, āma-, ga-, tha-, huy, and followed by a morpheme representing the graphic feature. This morpheme for graphic is then a verb base which can be conjugated as a morphophonemically /y/ ending verb root. The postpositional pae, which denotes 'like', and pronominal morphemes (a-, āma-, ga-, tha-, or huy-) are also treated as verb prefixes.

The formation of the complex graphic verb base can be set out as follows:

```
\{ a
| ama-
g-
| ga-
| tha-
| huu
\}
```

\{ g m
| r o
| a r
| p p
| h h
| i e
| c m
| e s
```

**Fig. 2**
kāe huṣ-pāe dhikala. The son became that tall (i.e. tall like that).
paakhaa a pae jāla. The wall became that high (i.e. high like that).
pāa āma-pāe hala. The bamboo became that long (i.e. long like that).
che gapāe jala? How high did the house became. (i.e. like what)
kāpaa thāpāe byāta. The cloth became this wide (i.e. wide like this).

The sub-set for the classifier verb base may be set out as follows:

**Simple Classifier Verb Base:** The quantifier morpheme plus a classifier morpheme may be formed as a classifier verb base. The quantifier morpheme may be treated as a verbal prefix, and the morpheme for classifier may be treated as a stem verb that can be conjugated as a root verb ending with /y/. Similarly, the K form can also be formed. A head noun of the class defined by the classifier morpheme must always be the subject, for example:

che takhāta. A house became large.
kathi ciipula. A stick became thin.
swāa taphwala. A flower became large.
lāa ciipāta. Clothes became small.
jāsi tagwala. A rice cooking pot became large.

**Complex Classifier Verb Base:**
The complex classifier verb base can be formed in exactly the same way in which the complex graphic verb base has formed, only it needs the replacement of the graphic morpheme by the classifier.

The formation of the complex classifier verb base can be set out as follows:

![Diagram](image)

che apāe khāta. A house became that big (or small).
aa āma-pāe guala. A mango became that big (or small).
che gapāe khāta? How big did the house become?
mari thāpāe pāta. A bread became this big (or small).
tu huṣ pāe pula. A sugarcane became that like big (or small).
swāa apāe phwala. A flower became that large (or small).
It should be further added that the pronominal morpheme can be replaced by a noun which has represented (semantically) a distinct shape or particular figure. When this representation occurs a new pattern is formed for both graphic and classifier complex verb bases. Examples are:

**complex graphic verb base**

paakhāā chepæ jala. A wall became as high as a house.
janii gapæ byāta. A girdle became as wide as a shawl.
sq mhadhu pæœ hala. A hair became as long as a body.

**complex classifier verb base**

mari hāsāpæ pàta. A pastry became as large as a winnowing tray.
gulaph swāgh taphwaaswāgh pæc phwala. The rose became as large as a marigold.
mikhā bakhyukhee pæc gwala. The eyes became as large as a pigeon’s egg.

The post positional ‘-pæe-’ morpheme may also add the diminutive ‘-ca’ suffix. The combination of ‘-pæe-’ and ‘-cā’ makes three semantic forms:

1) -pæcā
2) -picā
3) -pca

Each of them denotes ‘only this (or that) like’, ‘merely this (or that) like’. For example:

wa ngeαa thα {pæcā} jāla. That wall became only this high (or low).

chāγu chæ a {pæcā} khāta. Your house became only that large (or small).

la gwaa āma {pæcā} gwala. A meat ball became only that big (or small).

taphwaa swāγ ga {pæcā} phwala? How small (or big) did a marigold become?

maaya sikhaa huu {pæcā} pula. A chain became only that small (or big).

‘baacā’ denoting ‘middling or minimal’ may also be added to the postpositional ‘-pæe’ morpheme exactly in the same way, e.g.:
ché baacāpæ jāla. A house became slightly high (i.e. not so large and not so small).10
swāgī baacāpāe phwala. A flower became slightly large (i.e. not so large and not so small).
wayā kāe baacāpāe dhikala. His son became slightly tall (i.e. not so tall and not so short).
āmāsī baacāpāe gwalā. A guava became slightly large (i.e. not so large and not so small)
lā baacāpāe byālā. A path became slightly wide (i.e. not so wide and not so narrow).
tu baacāpāe pula. A sugarcane became slightly large (i.e. not so large and not so small)
gulāph swāgī baacāpāe phwala. The rose became slightly large (i.e. not so large and not so small).

In a similar way, two semantic variations from quantifier morphemes (ta- and ci-) can be formed by lengthening or intoning the final vowel (ta- into taa- and ci- into cii-) to emphasize the meaning semantically, and for giving semantic dimensions to both (ta- and ci) quantifiers by replacing 'bharāe' and 'sasipāe' with the meaning reciprocally gigantic and tiny. Then we have three semantic categories for both quantifier morphemes, which vary and emphasize the meaning to the same extent. These may be listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ta-</th>
<th>taa-</th>
<th>bharāe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ci-</td>
<td>cii-</td>
<td>sasipāe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of them can be used for both simple graphic and simple classifier verb bases.

**Examples for graphic verb base:**

chē tajālā. A house became high.10
chē taajālā. A house became (a bit more) high.
chē bharāejalā. A house became (too) high.
bhārājala cihala. A skirt became short.
bhārājalā ciihala. A skirt became (a bit more) short.
bhārājalā sasipāchal. A skirt became (too) short.

**Example for classifier verb base:**

chē takhātā. A house became big.
chē taakhātā. A house became (a bit more) big.
chē bharāekhātā. A house became huge.
lā ci pātā. A vesture became small.
lā cii pātā. A vesture became smaller.
lā sasi pāe pātā. A vesture became too small.
āmāsī ci gwala. A guava became small.
āmāsī cii gwala. A guava became smaller.
āmāsī sasi pae gwala. A guava became too small.
Verb Diagram
Root Verb (It has morphophonemically /n/, /y/, /u/, /o/, /u/, /k/ endings).

Figure 4

True Nominal Verb: cakula, pícula, waula, salula

S.Gr.V.B.

tajāla, cihāla, tadhikala

Gr.V.B.

C.Gr.V.B.

apāeja la, thapa e dhikala

S.Cl.V.B.

cipula, jajula, tagwala

Cl.V.B.

C.Cl.V.B.

āmapāepula, hupāe kāta
APPENDIXES

Relating to the verb bases

Appendix A. The role of classifiers in forming the verb base.

There are four kinds of principal classifiers in Newar. These can be set out according to the following criteria:

- **i)** True classifier is an itemizer which imposes a semantic classification upon the noun head and which is normally counted as individuals with reference to the structured unit.
- **ii)** Reduplicative classifier forms a subset of the true classifier formed by reduplication of the noun head or part of the noun head.
- **iii)** Pseudo classifier is a non-unit counter and pseudo unit counter which often acts as a noun itself.
- **iv)** Measure classifier differs from true classifier in the unit of quantification is unit of measure.

*Figure 5*

Apart from true classifier each of these has many sub-classes. Only those classifiers from which verb bases can be formed will be discussed and listed in their verb forms with K form:

(a) **From the true classifier.**

- gwaa. cl. for round object, container and house parts.
- phasi ta gwała. A pumpkin became big. K. gwaa kala
- pá. cl. for flat object, and paired object.
- mari tapáta. A bread became large. K. pakala.
- pu, cl. for long thin object.
- wayá lháá tapula. His hand became fat. K pukala. (Irr.)
- phwa. cl. for flower, floral object.
- guláph swáá ciphwala. The rose became small. K. phwa kala.
- caá. cl. for circular object.
- ghaacáá tacála. A wheel became large. K. caakala.
- khā. cl. for house (unique).
- chaágu che cikhata. Your house became small. K. hakala.
- páa. cl. for shirt, skirt, and coat. (unique).
- macááta laa tapata. A vesture became large for a child. K. pakala.
pwāā. cl. for lamp, light (unique).  
mata tapwāta. A lamp became bright. K. pwakala.

(b) From the reduplicative classifier.

pwaat cl for package, swelling (of a body part).
wasaa pwaat ta pwaal. A package of clothes became large. K. pwaakala.
kii, cl. for a nail, peg.
hwaat cl for hole.
śasa hwaat ciwala. The larynx (wind pipe) became small. K. hwaakala.
pwaat cl for hole.
bhau pwaat tapwāta. A cat-hole became large. K. pwakala.
duwāā. cl for gate.
cheyāta lukhā-duwāā ciwdwāta. A gate became small for (that) building. K. dwāakala (irr).
pati, cl for a finger.
aagupati ci patina. The ring-finger became small. K. pati kalā.
хаа. cl. for leaf.
kawāa cl. for column spacing between two pillars.

(c) From the pseudo classifier.

ju. cl. for paired object.
lakāa tajula. A pair of shoes became large. K. jukala. (irr.)
jwaa. cl. for a set of 108 standing lamps.
jwaa cl. for paired or grouped object.
puiyābhāa cijwala. A set of plate for worship became small. K. jwakala.

The following are the sub-groups of pseudo classifier:

i. Approximate arrangement.
kuk cl for a load.
jāki takula. A load of rice became large. K. kukula. (irr)
thu. cl for bundle.
jhwaat cl for a line, a row, queue.
bhwaat tajhwaat. The line for a feast became longer. K. jhwaakala
dhwaat cl for a line, stripe.
kāpatae hyān tadhwała. The red stripe in the cloth became wider. K. dhaekala. mhuu. cl for a bundle.
pasālæ tarkāricimhula. A bundle of vegetable in the shop became small. K. mhuikala.

ii) Approximate volume.
bhwaṅ, cl for flat palmful morsel.
macāyāta baji tabhwaṅa. For the child, a heaped handful beaten rice became more than enough. K. bhwaṅkala.
pee. cl for fingerful morsel.
jiisā jā tapela. For me the morsel of fingerful of cooked rice became large. K. peekala.
bekyu. cl for armful load or package.
wasaa tabekuna. The armful of clothes became big. K. bekypjkala.

iii) Approximate size
kawaa. cl. for column spacing (between two poles, pillars)
pasaa ta kawala. The column spacing of a shop became large. K. kawekala phwaṅ. cl for flower. floral object swāṅ taphwaṅa. The size of a flower became large. K. phwaekala.

iv) Shape (a described entity)
gwāṅ. cl for a log.
si tagwala. A log became large. K. gwāṅkala.
tā. cl. for a piece of bread.
mari tatāta. The bread became large. K. takala.
thuu. cl for rolled item.
sukku tathula. A roll of mat became large. K. thukala. (irr)

v) Shape (simple proximity)
dwāṅ. cl for heap
cā tawala. The heap of earth became large. K. dwaekala
pucaaa. cl for a group.
puyābhalaæ jāki tapucal. An amount of rice in the Puja plate became K. pucakala.

vi) Integral part
gājaa. cl for cluster, bouquet.
swāṃnā tagajala. A flower plant became tufty. K. gājaekala.
thwaṅ. cl for head of Cauliflower.
kaule ta thwata. The head of cauliflower became large. K. thwāṅkala.
vii) Bounded Item
kūu, cī for wound, dried wound; piece, cut piece.
ghāā takula. A wound became large. K. kukala.

Appendix B. Reduplicative uses.

i) Reduplication of quantifier morphemes.
For both verb bases, quantifier morphemes tā- and bharāc-, cī- and sasipāc may be reduplicated. This reduplication may denote semantically the individuality of the items. e.g.:
sācāsī cicigwaa. The oranges have grown small (Each orange is small; they are small individually).
sācāsī tatachwala. The oranges have grown large (individually).
ukīj ukīi bharāc bharāc gwa gu lyā: So, choose the biggest (huge) ones among them.
tī tatahāa. The reeds are long (each reed is long; they are long individually).
jhītta cīcīhāggu māā. We need short ones.
ukīj ukīi sasipāc sasipachwāgu leya kae nu. So, let us choose the shortest ones among them.

ii) Reduplication of pronominal morphemes.
There may be reduplicated pronominal morphemes ‘a-’ ‘āma-’, ‘ga-’, ‘tha-’ ‘hūu-’ or postpositional -pāc- in exactly the same manner. Each of them occur separately or together, e.g.:
kathi {āma āma pāc} hāla. The stick became that long. K. hāekala.
chē {tha tha pāc} khata. A house was built this big K. khakala.
pāsī {ga ga pāc} gwala? How big did become pears? K. gwaekala.
khičā {hūu hūu pāc} dhikal. The dogs had become that big. K. dhikaekala.
paakhā {a pāc} a pāc a pāc} jala. The wall became that high. K. jāekala.
Appendix C
Generic Negation
The generic negation ma morpheme is always inserted in between the prefix and the root verb in Newar. So the negation ma discriminates the verbal prefix and the root verb.

The following are examples of insertion

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wāq dya}a & \quad \text{pujyā}a. \text{He worshipped the god.} \\
\text{māq pīhā}a & \quad \text{bijyā}a. \text{Mother went out.} \\
\text{waa jyā} & \quad \text{bi ma jyā}a. \text{Mother did not go out.} \\
\text{si ma dhāek}a & \quad \text{sidhaek}a. \text{He fulfilled (his) duty.} \\
\text{si ma dhāek}a & \quad \text{He did not fulfill (his) duty.}
\end{align*}
\]

Similarly the morphemes which are treated as verbal prefixes can also be distinguished from the graphic and classifier verb base by insertion of the generic negation ma morpheme, e.g.:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wāigu cē} & \quad \text{tajī}a. \text{His house became high.} \\
\text{ta ma jā}a & \quad \text{His house did not become high.} \\
\text{bharāc khaī}a & \quad \text{Your house became gigantic.} \\
\text{bharāc ma khā}a & \quad \text{Your house did not become gigantic.} \\
\text{bharāc pā}a & \quad \text{The clothes are too large for your son.} \\
\text{bharāc ma pā}a & \quad \text{The clothes are not too large for your son.} \\
\text{ci ma gw}a & \quad \text{The sweet meat pill became small.} \\
\text{ci ma gw}a & \quad \text{That sweet meat pill did not become small.}
\end{align*}
\]
nhãe pwâlaacâ  

pãepula. (His) nose became as big as gourd.

pãe ma pula. (His) nose did not become as big as gourd.

gulâph lakhaeswaâ  

pãephwala. That rose was as large as daisy.

pãe ma phwala. That rose did not become as large as daisy.

Appendix D.
Causative K
For almost all verbs, K is the causative marker in Newari. (i.e. excluding the non-causative K ending root verbs). This occurs with both the graphic and classifier verb bases. e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-causative</th>
<th>Causative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wayã che tajalla, His house became high.</td>
<td>waq che tajáekala, He made (his) house high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takuswâ ga taphwala. The rhododendron became large.</td>
<td>waq takuswâ ga taphwakala. He made the rhododendron large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la cibyâta. A path became narrow.</td>
<td>imisga la cibyakala. They made a path narrower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waita laa tapâta. A shirt became larger for him.</td>
<td>waq jitta laa tapâekala. He made a shirt larger for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khicã cidhikala. A dog became small.</td>
<td>waa khicã cidhikaekala. He made a dog smaller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caa cidhana, A swivel became small.</td>
<td>barejuu caa ci dhaakala. Bare made a swivel smaller.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix E. Pronominal morphemes.
The pronominal morpheme a is the syncopated form of the demonstrative pronoun wa, ‘that’. The morpheme tha is the syncopated form of demonstrative thwa, ‘this’. In Newar there are four demonstrative pronouns, while in other languages such as Japanese, there are often fewer (with Japanese equivalents):

1) thwa this (if the object is close to speaker), the Japanese equivalent is kore.
2) ãma that (if the object is very close to the hearer), (the Japanese equivalent is sore.)
3) ḫyu that (if the object as far away from both the speaker and hearer),
4) wa that

References


Greenberg, Josheph H., 1972, Numeral Classifiers substantival numeral: Problems in the genesis of a linguistic Type.

