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Noun phrase form and cohesive function in Newari

The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between the specific forms of noun phrase found in running text and the cohesive functions of these noun phrases.¹ The basic assumption made here is that although the large number of noun phrase forms available to the native speaker of Newari are 'free variants' from the standpoint of phrase-level grammar, they are not altogether interchangeable from a discourse point of view. Indeed, it is this range of 'free variants' which constitutes the 'vocabulary' of discourse so far as the noun phrase is concerned.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) has been found helpful, and their general framework is adapted here for Newari. A number of excellent studies have already dealt with the Newari noun phrase², and this study does not represent an attempt to replace or rework any of them. Our primary attention will be directed to the common noun phrase.

Common Noun Phrase

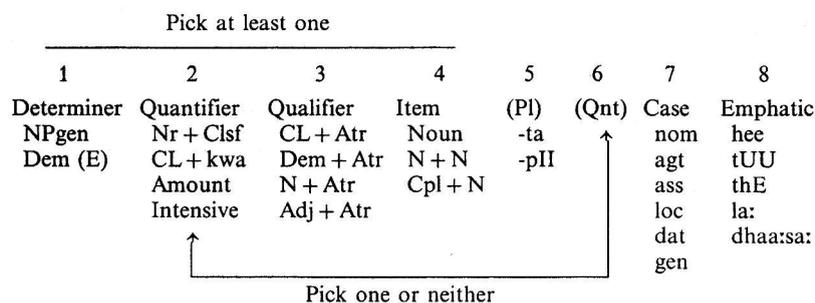


Figure 1. Normal order of constituents in the Newari noun phrase.³

A. Decapitation: Headed and Beheaded Noun Phrases

One of the fascinating characteristics of the Newari noun phrase is its ability to survive decapitation. In Figure 1 it is indicated that any combination of constituents 1 through 4 can be chosen, but that at least one must be chosen. If constituent 4, Item, is chosen the result is a noun phrase with a noun, a noun compound, or complement-plus-noun structure as head. This head then accepts plural affixes (unless it is either inanimate or is a quantifier), case affixes, and can be followed by emphatic particles.⁴

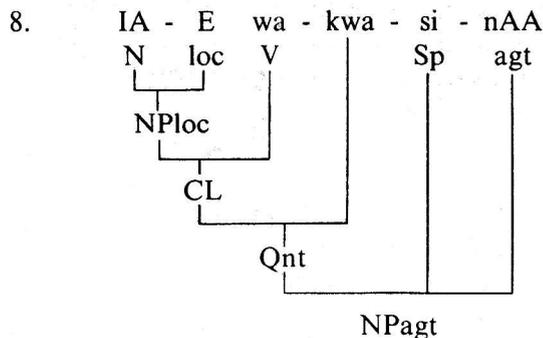
1. wa maca: - ta ni - mha
 Det Noun Pl Nr Clsf
 those two children
2. da:ju pin - sAA
 Noun Pl agt
 (by) older brothers

A noun head can be followed by a numeral classifier phrase as in 1 above, and in such instances the case endings attach to the classifier rather than to the noun head.

3. dee cha -gu -III
 Noun Nr Clsf loc
 throughout the whole country.
4. Kwaa cha - mhae - syAA:
 Noun Nr Clsf agt
 (by) one crow

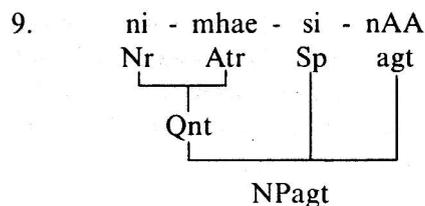
In case the Item constituent is not chosen, the noun phrase is considered semantically beheaded. Grammatically, however, the right-most constituent is treated as head in the sense that it will accept plural affixes (unless it is inanimate or is a Quantifier) as well as case.

5. bhII bhII - gu
 Adj Adj Atr
 good things



(by) as many as came along the road.

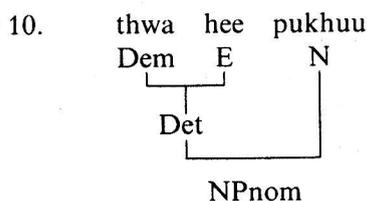
Numerical Quantifiers also serve as grammatical heads of semantically beheaded noun phrases, as is illustrated in 9.



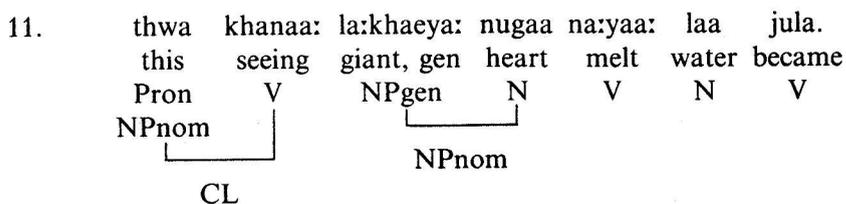
(by) the two of them

Here again we find the specific item marker in what could be considered the Item position.⁵

Only a limited set of Determiners serve as grammatical heads of semantically beheaded noun phrases, and these are the pronouns and demonstratives. Pronouns and demonstratives are inflected for number and case and can be followed by emphatic particles. The stems of these forms reflect differences of person, proximity, honorific grade, and inclusiveness. Example 10 illustrates *thwa* as a determiner, and 11 shows it as a demonstrative pronoun.



this very pond



Seeing this, the Giant's heart melted and became [like] water.

B. Cohesion and Noun Phrase Constituency

Halliday and Hasan (1976) deal with four major types of cohesion in English: Reference, Substitution and Ellipsis, Conjunction, and Lexical Cohesion. Each of these types can be illustrated for Newari in terms of the noun phrase. Newari appears to make more use of ellipsis than of substitution so far as the noun phrase is concerned, but even here there are a few items that appear to be functioning as substitutes. Interestingly enough, each major type seems to be related to one or more of the major constituents in the Newari common noun phrase. The relationships between cohesive types and noun phrase constituents is summarized in Figure 2.

Types of Cohesion and the Newari Noun Phrase

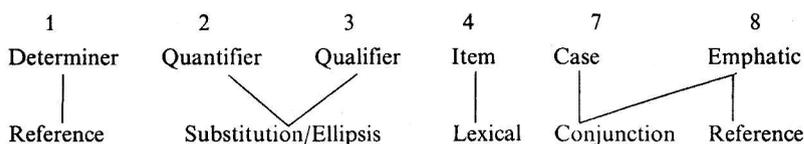
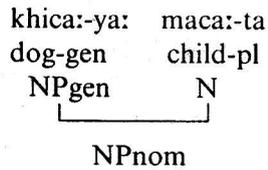


Figure 2. General relation between types of cohesion and the Newari noun phrase constituents which bear these cohesive relationships.

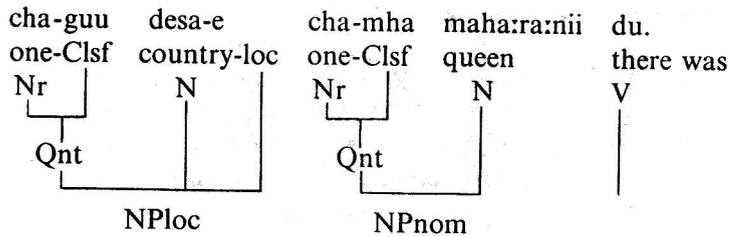
A good way to illustrate the relationships posited in Figure 2 is to trace them through a piece of narrative text. The story chosen for this purpose is a children's story written by Prem Bahadur Kansakar entitled "The Children of the Dog."⁶

Title: The Children of the Dog



(Non-cohesive headed NP of the form, Det Item Pl.)

(1) In a certain country there was a certain queen.

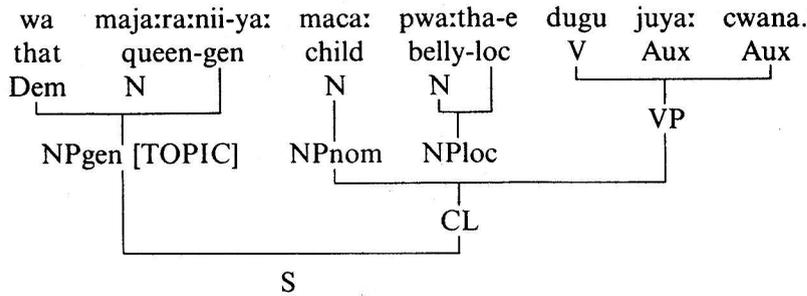


In (2) we find the form *wa mahaxra:nii-ya*: 'that queen', in which there are two types of cohesion. The demonstrative, *wa*, 'that' is an instance of anaphoric reference on a scale of proximity. This scale is defined by the paradigm of demonstrative forms in which *wa* 'that' occurs:

a:ma	'this right here'	wa	'that'
thwa	'this'	hUU	'that over yonder'

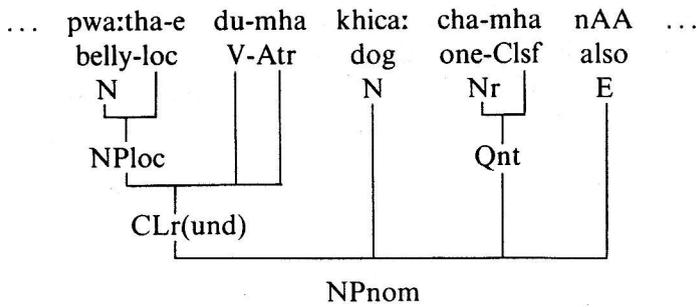
The noun head, *maha:ra:nii*, 'queen' is an instance of reiterative lexical cohesion with a tie to the first reference to the queen in (1).

(2) As for that queen it happened to be that she was expecting



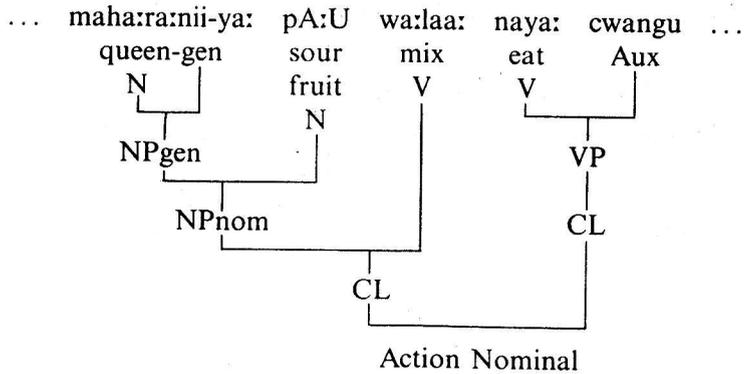
The story continues: (3) It was fall. (4) It was the time when there was lots of fruit. (5) One day the queen was sunning herself while mixing and eating a potful of sour [fruit].

(6) Nearby, a dog that was also expecting came and was sitting.



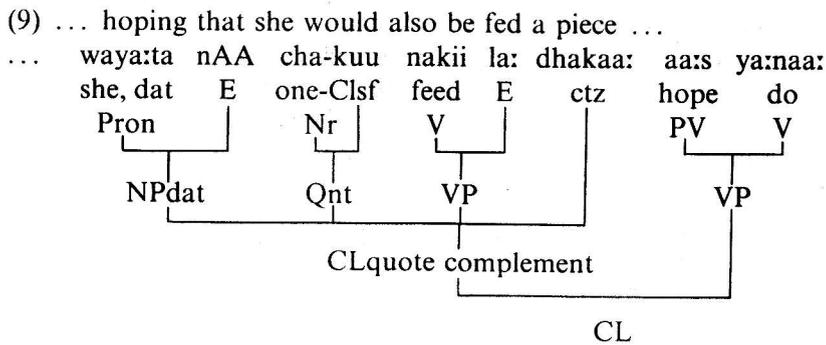
Of primary interest in (6) is the fact that the emphatic particle, *nAA* 'also,' is an instance of conjunction in that it expresses a meaning which presupposes the presence of another component in the discourse, namely the pregnant queen. It is the specification of a coordinate relationship between dog and queen with respect to the state of pregnancy.

(7) That dog, desiring the mixing and eating of the queen's fruit looked on with [her] mouth watering.



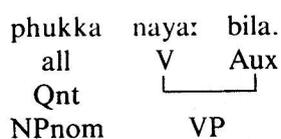
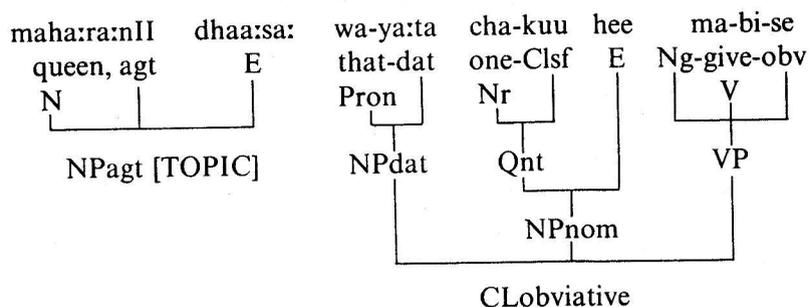
Sentence (7) is of interest simply as an illustration of an action nominal.

The story continues: (8) The queen was noisily eating one fruit after another. (9) The dog, hoping that she would also be fed a piece was looking on eagerly.



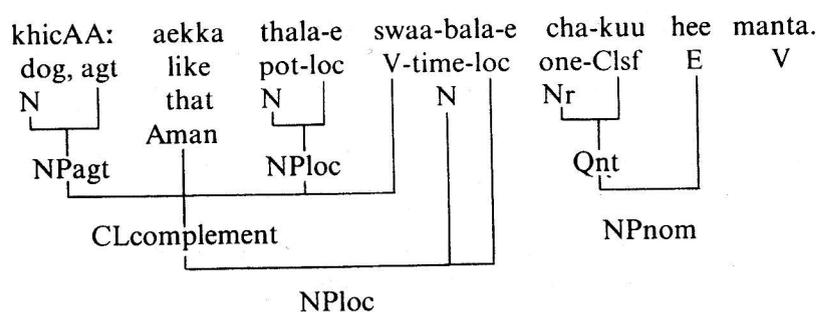
Of interest here is not only the conjunctive use of the emphatic particle, *nAA*, but also the occurrence of *cha-kuu* 'one piece' the grammatical head of a beheaded noun phrase. If we view beheading as the primary fact here, with *pA:U* 'sour fruit' as the ellided head, then this would be an example of cohesion via ellipsis. The tie would then be a grammatical one. If one chose not to view this as ellipsis, then the tie would be primarily semantic, since the antecedent is a noun and the cohesive structure under consideration here is a quantifier phrase.

(10) As for the queen, however, without giving her even a single piece, [she] ate it all [herself].



In (10) we have further evidence of the use of Quantifiers, both numerical and non-numerical, as beheaded noun phrases. A further example is found in (11).

(11) When the dog looked like that into the pot there wasn't a single piece left.

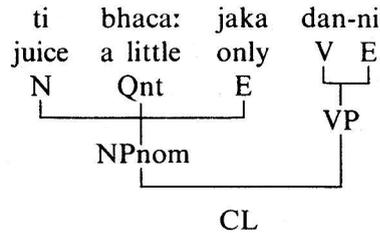


Sentence (11) also illustrates one kind of clause structure which can be viewed as a complement to a noun Item. Alternatively *-bala-e* could be viewed as a temporal subordinator. In all likelihood this is an example of the grammaticalization of a general noun in process, hence the indeterminacy represented by the alternative

analyses is here viewed as a reflection of linguistic change in progress.

Sentence (12) illustrates the post-head position for the non-numerical Quantifier.

(12) Only a little juice remained.

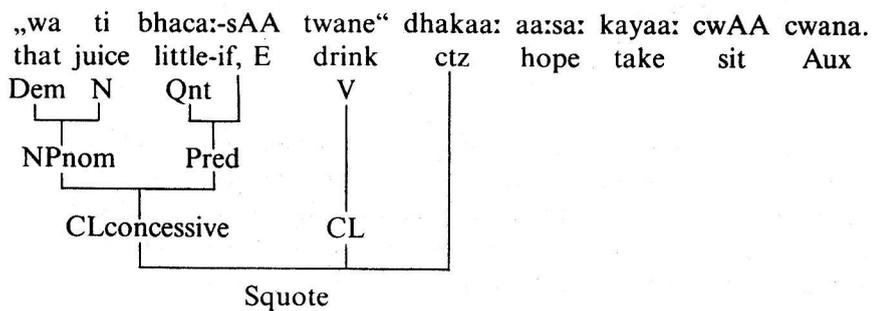


Sentence (13) provides another instance in which the Determiner, *wa* 'that', is involved in cohesive reference, and the noun head which follows it, *ti* 'juice', provides lexical cohesion. It also provides an example of conjunct person⁷ marking in the verb which makes possible a very light first person reference. The paradigm of forms involved in this is the following:

	Conjunct	Disjunct
Past	twana:	twana
Non-Past	twane	twanii

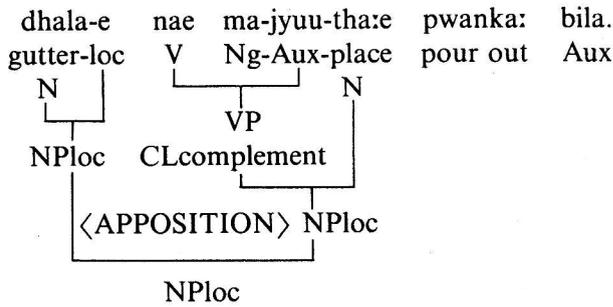
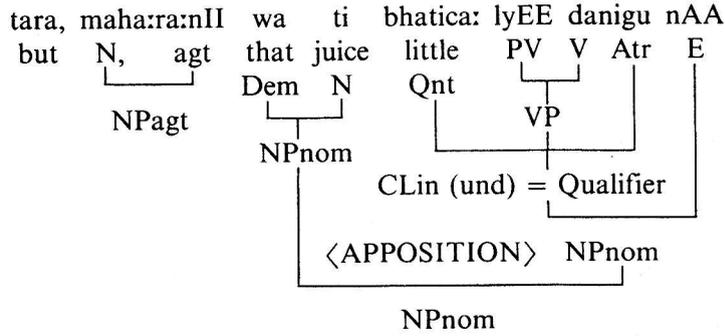
Figure 3. Conjunct and disjunct forms for the verb 'to drink'

(13) Taking hope she sat there thinking "Even if there is only a little juice, I will drink it."



Sentence (14) provides two good examples of apposition within the noun phrase.

(14) However, the queen poured out that juice – even the little that remained – into a gutter, a place [from which] it was not good to eat.

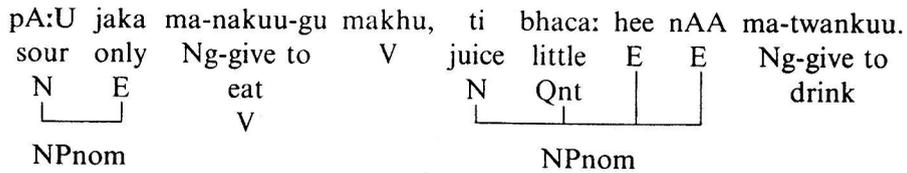


It might well be asked why these are considered to be examples of apposition and other structures not. In the first instance we find the Qualifier constituent following what would have to be the Item constituent, were this to be interpreted as a single noun phrase rather than as two noun phrases in apposition. At this point we have no clear examples of this kind of constituent ordering within a single noun phrase. Qualifier constituents ending in *-gu* or *-mha* in all clear cases either precede their Item constituents or are themselves the grammatical head of the phrase.

In the second instance the first noun phrase ends with a locative suffix. We do have many clear cases in which noun phrases ending in genitive suffixes function as Determiners within the noun phrase but we have no clear examples of locative noun phrases embedded as constituents of a noun phrase.

The story continues: (15) The dog's hopes were shattered. (16) Then, in utter frustration, she pronounced a curse like this: (17) "Hare! As for this queen, she has turned out to be utterly selfish!

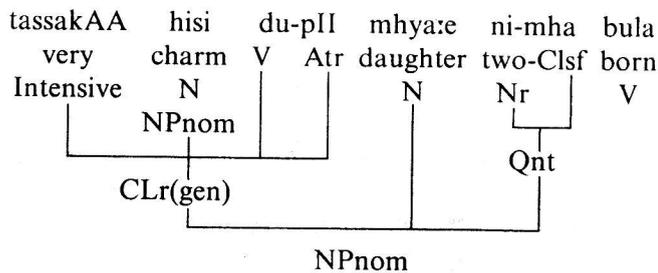
(18) It's not just that she didn't give sour fruit to eat — she didn't give even a little juice to drink.



Sentence (18) is an example of a pair of emphatic particles functioning as conjunctive correlatives. Since both are parts of the same sentence they would not be treated as cohesive by Halliday and Hasan, but it does illustrate the fact that emphatics have conjunctive function, and a case in which an emphatic can be seen to be cohesive in this way has been encountered in (6) above.

The story continues: (19) Is it only she that is pregnant? [No!] I am also pregnant! (20) If there is any justice in the world, may a baby dog be born to her and to me a human child."

(21) The time arrived. (22) The dog went into labor. (23) Lo and behold, the babies were born and they were actually human! (24) Two utterly charming daughters were born.

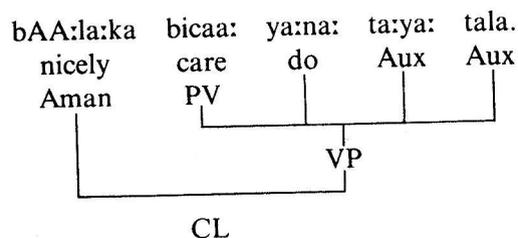


In (24) we have an illustration of a Qualifier modifying an animate plural head. The plural attributive suffix, *-pII*, though homophonous with the honored plural for animate items is nonetheless different since the attributive suffix carries with it no honorific status at all as it is the only possible form of the plural attributive

in the contexts in which it occurs⁸ whereas the animate plural suffix, *-pII*, contrasts with *-ta*. The plural *-ta* has not been found to occur with Qualifier clauses.

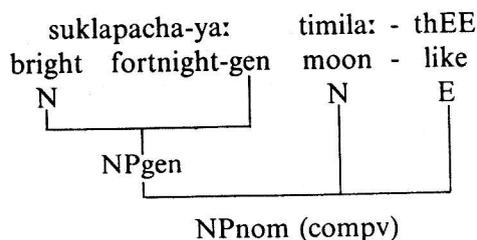
The story continues, but enough has been given by now to provide context for the few remaining examples that will concern us here.

(28) [She] took very good care [of them].



What is interesting about (28) is that all participants are zero. From context it is clear that the active agent involved is the dog and the ones cared for are her daughters. In this instance zero is cohesive by ellipsis.

(29) Like the waxing of the moon, day by day the children kept on growing.

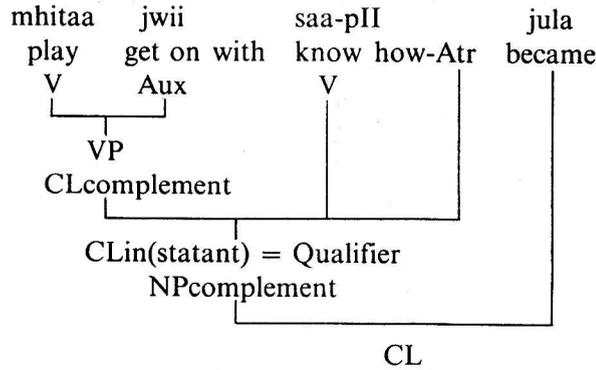


maca:ta	nhi-ya:	nhi-thAA	taadhikaa	juya:	wala.
child-Pl	day-gen	day-	big	V	Aux

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 37) list two types of comparative reference: identity and similarity. Both of these involve the use of emphatic particles in Newari. Example 10 in section A exemplifies identity: *thwa hee pukhuu* 'this very pond' where the emphatic particle, *hee*, in combination with a demonstrative carries this force. In (29) we see the emphatic particle, *thEE*, used in comparative reference involving similarity. Though this instance has exophoric

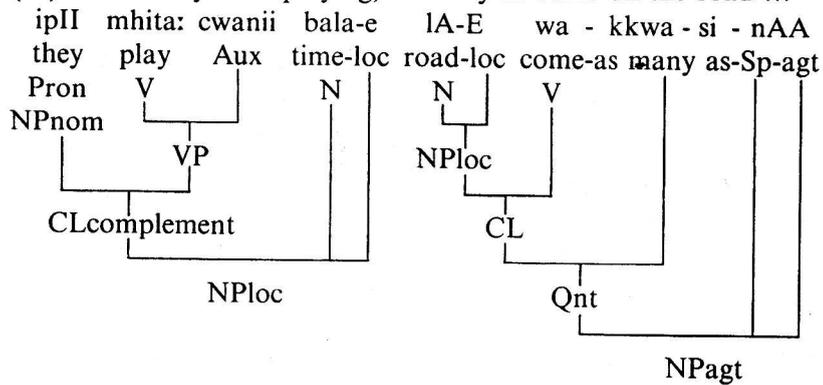
reference and is thus not textually cohesive as such, the same form in other contexts finds frequent use as a cohesive.

(36) [They] became ones who knew how to play.



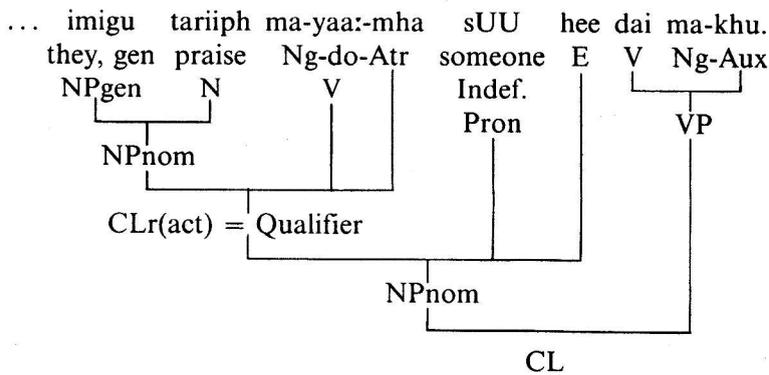
In (36) we see an example of a beheaded noun phrase with the grammatical head as the Qualifier constituent. The whole noun phrase serves as predicate complement of *jula* 'become'. Here the subject of the clause is zero, but it is possible to reconstruct that zero on the basis of agreement patterns which hold between the attributive suffix of the predicate nominal and the subject. On this basis the subject is animate and plural. From the fact that the verb, *jula* 'became' is disjunct we can say that the subject is not referentially identical to the one projected as teller of the story. In context the subject is clearly the two daughters of the dog. This zero is an example of cohesive ellipsis.

(41) When they were playing, as many as came on the road ...



In this first portion of (41) we find another example of the temporal noun phrase complement structure. There is a pronoun, *ipII* 'they', which is referentially cohesive through the category of person. There is a CL+*kwa* type Quantifier construction which functions as an animate agent noun phrase. Semantically it is clearly plural but in form it is singular as is the case for Quantifier constructions in general. This Quantifier construction is semantically beheaded, and thus in another context could have been cohesive through ellipsis. In this instance, however, it constitutes the first reference to admiring passers-by and cannot be considered cohesive.

... there were none that did not sing their praises.



In the final portion of (41) we have an illustration of a noun phrase in which an indefinite pronoun functions as the Item, the grammatical and semantic head.

To this point the desire to provide context for claims of cohesion has dictated following a text sequentially. Now we will attempt to summarize what has been found so as to show how the examples discussed relate to the system presented above in Figures 1 and 2.

TYPES OF COHESION

Reference	Substitution	Conjunction	Lexical
Personal	by Quantifier	Additive	Reiterative
(9)	(9)	(6)	(2)
(10)	(10)	(9)	(7)
(41)	(11)		(10)
Demonstrative	by Conjunct Verb	Correlative	(11)
(2)	(13)	(18)	(14)
(13)			Collocation
(14)	by Qualifier		(12)
Comparative	(18)		(24)
10.	(41)		
(29)	by Zero		
	(20)		
	(36)		

Figure 4. Types of cohesion illustrated. (Numbers in parentheses refer to sentence numbers from the text, "The Children of the Dog." Unparenthesized numbers refer to examples in section A.)

Notes

1. This paper is intended as a tribute to Professor Werner Winter on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. Professor Winter has for a number of years taken a leading role in the Linguistic Survey of Nepal, a survey which has already contributed in a major way to our appreciation of the linguistic complexity of this country as it stands at a meeting point of four major language families, Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Dravidian, and Munda. Newari is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken by nearly half a million people living in Kathmandu Valley and in market centers throughout Nepal. This brief study is offered in tribute to the South Asian facet of Professor Winter's contribution to fundamental linguistic research.
2. Especially outstanding as treatments of structure are the works of the Kølvers and of K. P. Malla listed in the bibliography. Of special current theoretical interest are the items listed by de Lancy and Givon.
3. The following abbreviations are used:

act,	actor	gen,	genitive
Adj,	adjective	iden,	identical
agt,	agentive	Indef.,	indefinite
Aman,	manner adverb	loc,	locative
ass,	associative	Ng,	negative
Atr,	attribute affix	N + N,	noun compound
Aux,	auxiliary	nom,	nominative
CL,	clause	NP,	noun phrase
CLin,	item nominal clause	Nr,	numeral
CLr,	relative clause	obv,	obviative

Clf,	numeral classifier	Pl,	plural
compv,	comparative	Pron,	pronoun
Cpl,	complement	Qnt,	quantifier
ctz,	complementizer	S,	sentence
dat,	dative	Sp,	specific item
Dem,	demonstrative	und,	undergoer
Det,	determiner	VP,	verb phrase
E,	emphatic		

The forms, *-kwa*, *-ta*, *-pII*, *hee*, *tUU*, *thEE*, *la*, and *dhaa:sa*: in Figure 1 are Newari forms.

- In this paper upper case vowels are nasalized; geminate vowels and consonants are long and not rearticulated; colon is used to distinguish the low front-to-central vowel /a:/ from the Newari shewa, /a/, which ranges from mid-central to low-back; /h/ following voiceless consonants represents aspiration and /h/ after voiced consonants represents breathiness; /wa/ could have been written /o/ and /waa/ as /oo/; /j/, /c/, /jh/, and /ch/ represent affricates; /y/ and /w/ represent glides. For more detail on vowels, an important problem area in Newari phonology, see Friedman, Kansakar, Tuladhar and Hale (1983).
- The problem with viewing the specific item marker as the grammatical head is that it occurs only in the oblique cases. Thus we have the following paradigm for example 9.

nom	ni-mha
agt	ni-mhae-si-nAA
ass	ni-mhae-si-ke
dat	ni-mhae-si-ta
gen	ni-mhae-si-ya:

Furthermore, the specific item marker seems limited to noun phrases with animate referents. Thus, if it is a substitute for the Item in otherwise beheaded noun phrases, it is one which has a distribution with markedly asymmetrical limits.

- The transcription used for the story is a phonemic one rather than a transliteration of the original in Devanagari.
- Newari has a system of actor-verb government which distinguishes between conjunct and disjunct persons (Hale, 1980). In this system, inanimate forms govern only disjunct forms of the verb, while animate forms govern both conjunct and disjunct forms. For a noun actor to govern the conjunct form of the verb it must occur in a finite clause, and the actor must refer to the same person as the speaker of the clause in the case of statements, or to the person who will be the one to answer in the case of true questions. In both cases the actor must be a voluntary actor. Thus conjunct forms (*wana*: 'went') are found in the following:

Ji ana wana: I went there.
 Cha ana wana: la:? Did you go there?

and disjunct forms (*wana* 'went') are found in the following:

Cha ana wana. You went there.
 Wa ana wana. He went there.
 Wa ana wana la:? Did he go there?

In the case of first person questions there are two possibilities. The following is a true question and has the disjunct form of the verb because in such a case the actor is not considered to be a voluntary actor. A voluntary actor would know what he had done.

Ji ana wana la:? Did I go there?

The following is a rhetorical question used as a strong denial. It expects no answer, and is equivalent to a statement and is so treated by the actor-verb government system:

Ji ana wana: la:? Did I go there? (No indeed!)

Another interesting case occurs in indirect quotations. In English the sentence

He said he went there.

is ambiguous. The two instances of "he" can refer either to the same person or to different persons. In Newari the actor-verb government system disambiguates this. Either we get

WAA wa ana wana: dhakaa: dha:la. He said he went there.

in which case the disjunct form of the verb, *wana*, 'went' indicates that the two third-person pronouns, *wAA* and *wa*, refer to different individuals, or we get

WAA wa ana wana: dhakaa: dha:la. He said he went there.

in which case the conjunct form, *wana*: 'went' indicates that two pronouns refer to the same individual and that he was voluntarily involved in the act of going.

8. There is no inanimate plural attributive form parallel to the animate attributive, *-pII*. The distinction between honored plural, *-pII*, and common plural, *-ta*, which exists for animate noun phrases (constituent 5, Figure 1) is not found in the attributive affixes (Atr of constituent 3, Figure 1). The attributive, *-pII*, occurs with both honored and common animate items.

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