

## Lesson 12

*Conditional converbs in {-sā} and {-ñāwo} –the negative conditional converb in {-sanō} – conditional sentences – indefinite pronouns*

**Conditional converbs.** In Classical Newari, conditional sentences (“if ... , (then) ...”) are constructed by means of converbs: the action of the conditional clause is expressed through a conditional converb, and the action of the consecutive clause by means of a finite verb. There are several forms of the conditional converb (“if ... does”), the two most common of which will be introduced here.

*Converb in {-sā}*: This is by far the most common of the conditional converbs; it is formed by adding the conditional marker {-sā} to the second grade stem of classes I-III, and to the third grade stem of class V verbs.

I	II	III	IV	V
<b>wona-sā</b> “if ... goes”	<b>yāta-sā</b> “if ... does”	<b>bila-sā</b> “if ... gives”	—	<b>mocakala-sā</b> “if ... kills”

NB – The Class III verb **juye** “to become” has a variant **jusā** (besides regular **julasā**).

(12.1) जेपनिस्ता थ्व कन्या म बिलसा छन ड्हुवने जेपनिस्यं प्राण तोलते ।

**je-pani-stā thwo kanyā-Ø ma bila-sā chan-Ø ñhawone**  
**je-pani-sē prāṇa tolat-e.**

“If (you) *don't* give us this girl (in marriage), we will commit suicide in your presence.”

*Converb in {-ñāwo}*: This is formed by adding the SOC case marker {-wo} to the extended stem of the verb. Compared with the converb in {-sā}, the implication of a causal relationship between the two actions is weaker: “when”, rather than “if ... does”.

I	II	III	IV	V
<b>jona-ñāwo</b> “when ... seizes”	<b>data-ñāwo</b> “when ... exists”	<b>wola-ñāwo</b> “when ... comes”	—	<b>gācakala-ñāwo</b> “when ... caused to rain”

(12.2) ओ ब्राह्मन वनडाव विचित्र खं ल्हायाव बोध याडाव लि छोयिव ।

**wo brāhmana-Ø wona-nāwo bicitra khā lhāy-āwo bodha yān-āwo li choy-iwo.**

“*When that brahman goes*, he will persuade him by speaking fanciful words and send him back.”

NB – Another frequent formation (which seems not to be attested in the *Vetālapañcaviṃśati*) involves the *tatsama* {-**kāle**} “at the time of ~” added to the zero grade stem. In some contexts, the coincident converb in {-**nās**} can also have conditional force – see below, § 130.

117 *Converb in {-sanō}*: A negative conditional converb (“even if ... does”) is formed by adding the locative case marker {-**s(a)**} and the indefinite marker {-**nō**} (*var.* {-**nā**}) to the second grade stem of classes I-III, and to the third grade stem of class V verbs.

I	II	III	IV	V
<b>khana-sanō</b>	<b>data-sanō</b>	<b>jula-sanō</b>	<b>māla-sanā</b>	<b>mocakala-sanō</b>
“even if ... sees”	“even if ... exists”	“even if ... becomes”	“even if ... is necessary”	“even if ... kills”

NB – Irregular forms on record include **hanasenā** besides **hanasanō** “if ... happens” and **hawosanā** (besides regular **halasanō** “even if ... brings”).

(12.3) जे थव प्रान मोरसन्वं थ्वपनि रक्षरपे । (DCM)

**je-Ø thawo prāna-Ø mola-sanō thwo-pani-Ø rakṣalap-e.**

“I will protect them *even if my life is lost*.”

118 The conditional force of this converb is not particularly strong; more often than not, it is used as a functional equivalent of the adversative converb (see above, § 102):

(12.4) थ्या उपकार जेन सेया खे । येथेन सेरसनो थ्व लक्षा याय फवम्हं पुरुष त्रैलोक्यसं म दु ।

**thwo-yā upakāra-Ø je-n sey-ā khe. yethenā sela-sanō thwo-Ø rakṣā yā-ye pha-wo-mhā purukha-Ø trailokya-s-ā ma du.**

“I do know a remedy; *However, even though* (I) *know* (it), there is no man in all the three worlds capable of saving him.”

119 Note the following uses of the conditional converbs as conjunctions: (1) **chān dhālasā**, *varr.* **gathē dhālasā**, **gathen dhālasā** [“if (you) say why/how?”=] “because”, (2) **yethē julasanō**, *var.* **yethē jusē hanasanō** “nevertheless”:

- (12.5) हे वेताल । डेंड । राजा तव वीर । छान धारसा । गनानं सेवकन स्वामिसेवास  
प्राण त्वडतयिव ।

**he betāla-Ø, ñeña-Ø. rājā-Ø tawo bīra-Ø. chā-n dhāla-sā –  
ganānā sebaka-n swāmisebā-s prāṇa-Ø tolatay-iwo.**

“O vetāla, listen! The king is the greater hero. *Here’s why:*  
Under any circumstance, a servant will give up his life in  
service of his master.”

- (12.6) यथे जुरसनो जे म्हाच छम्हं । छेसकर स्वम्हं । थ्व जेन गर्थे बिय ।

**yethē jula-sanō je-Ø mhyāc cha-mhā-Ø; che-skala-Ø  
so-mhā-Ø; thwo-Ø je-n gathē biy-e?**

“*Nevertheless*, I (only) have one daughter; there are three of you;  
how can I give her (to you in marriage?)”

**Conditional sentences.** The construction of these is relatively straight- 120  
forward; characteristically, there is no morphological distinction between *realis* and *irrealis*, and only the narrative and/or communicative context indicates whether the condition for the action of the main clause has been met. Without such context, sentence (12.1) could also be translated as “If you *hadn’t* given us this girl, we *would have committed* suicide in your presence” – neither the form of the conditional converb, nor the morphological marking on the main verb is sufficient for a correct interpretation. Cf. the following examples:

- (12.7) जेन भस्म लक्षा म यातसा छन गथे म्वाचके ।

**je-n bhasma-Ø rakṣā-Ø ma yāta-sā cha-n gathē mwācak-e?**

“If I hadn’t kept (her) ashes, how *would you have revived* (her)?”

- (12.8) जे पुरुख जुरसा थ्व जस लाय दव ।

**je-Ø purukh-Ø jula-sā thwo jasa-Ø lā-ye da-wo.**

“If I were a man, I could attain that glory.”

In (12.7), the speaker *has* retained the ashes of the dead girl, and hence the addressee has been able to revive her with a magic spell (spoiler alert for one of the reading passages!). Yet the morphological marking on both verbs is identical with (12.1), where the father is still resisting the entreaties of the suitors. By the same token, the only indication that the condition in (12.8) is not met is the fact that the speaker is a girl.

**Indefinite pronouns.** These are formed on the basis of the inter- 121  
rogative stems **su-** “who?” and **chu-** “what?” with the indefinite marker

{-nā} (older variant {-nō}). The indefinite marker is preceded by any case markers, e.g. **su-nā** “anyone”, **su-yā-nā** “anyone’s”. In negated sentences, indefinite pronouns convey the notions “nobody” and “nothing”.

(12.9) जे राजा । सूयाकेनं भोक म फोया ।

**je-∅ rājā-∅, su-yāke-nā bhok ma phoy-ā.**

“I am a king, I haven’t (ever) bowed to anyone.”

(12.10) वीरवरनं ... छुनं म लेनकं खङ्ग जोडाव चान न्हिनं राजद्वारस चोन वानं ।

**bīrabala-n-ā ... chu-nā ma len-akā khaḍga-∅ joñ-āwo cā-n  
nhi-n-ā rājadvāra-s con-a wān-ā.**

“Vīrabala ... [not waiting for anything =] immediately took up his sword and went to stand at the king’s gate day and night.”

## Exercise 12

1) छन सत्य यातसा जे वचन छहती ल्हाय ।

**chan satya yātasā je bacan chahati lhāye.**

2) छेजे जोग्य खव खे । यथे खतसनं बबुन ददान म बियकं गथे काय ।

**cheje jogya khawo khe; yethē khatasanā babun dadān ma biyakā  
gathē kāye?**

3) हे पिता । जेतं स्वामि बिय जुरसा थथिंड ज्ञानी असा नाना ज्या सव असा शूल थ्व स्वतास  
छता गुण दवम्हं बिय माल ।

**he pitā, jetā swāmī biye julasā thathiña jñānī asā nānā jyā sawo asā  
śūra – thwo sotās chatā guṇa dawomhā biye māla.**

4) थ्व जन्मसं स्त्रीवध यातसा लिथु जन्मस गथे जुयु ।

**thwo janmasā strībadha yātasā lithu janmas gathē juyū**

5) थथिंड अन्धकारस रात्रिस मेव सुनं म दु ।

**thathiña andhakāras rātrīs mewo sunā ma du.**

6) सुयानं म खु, जे थुका । गथेन धालसा । जे मन्त्रबलन थुका म्वातं ।

**suyānā ma khu, je thukā. gathen dhālasā – je mantrabalan thukā  
mwātā.**