



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

A grammar of Sunwar : descriptive grammar, paradigms, texts and glossary

Borchers, D.

Citation

Borchers, D. (2007, October 30). *A grammar of Sunwar : descriptive grammar, paradigms, texts and glossary*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12393>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12393>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

A Grammar of Sunwar

Proefschrift
ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof.mr. P.F. van der Heijden,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op 30 oktober 2007
klokke 13.45 uur
door
Dörte Borchers
geboren te Bremen (Duitsland)
in 1966

Promotiecommissie:

Promotor: Prof. Dr. G.L. van Driem

Referent: Prof. C. Genetti PhD, University of California (Santa Barbara, USA)

Overige leden: Prof. Dr. W.F.H. Adelaar
Prof. Dr. M. Mous
Prof. Dr. H.J. Stroomer

A GRAMMAR OF SUNWAR

Descriptive grammar, paradigms,
texts and glossary

Dörte Borchers

2007

Table of contents

Detailed table of contents	7-9
Figures and tables	10-11
Abbreviations	12-13
Acknowledgements	14
Organisation of the book	17
1 Background information.....	19
1.1 The language and the origin of the data	19
1.2 Geography	22
1.3 Linguistic affiliation and dialects	25
1.4 History of research	29
1.5 Sunwar culture	31
2 Phonology.....	39
2.1 Phonemic inventory	39
2.2 Vowels	40
2.3 Diphthongs	45
2.4 Consonants	46
2.5 Consonant clusters and the syllable	53
2.6 Neutralisation	54
2.7 Optional vowels	54
2.8 Sound change in progress.....	55
2.9 Jingles.....	55
3 The writing system	57
3.1 Indigenous script	57
3.2 Devanāgarī	59
3.3 A note on examples taken from written texts.....	60
4 Nominal morphology	63
4.1 Number marking suffixes.....	63
4.2 Case marking suffixes	64
4.3 Derivational nominal suffixes	73
4.4 Pronouns.....	75
4.5 Adverbs	91
4.6 Quantifiers.....	97
4.7 Adjectives.....	99
4.8 Information structuring morphemes.....	100
4.9 Numerals and dates	106
5 Finite verbs	111
5.1 Slots.....	111
5.2 Stems	112
5.3 Conjugations	117
5.4 Transitivity and intransitivity	119
5.5 The simplex verb.....	122
5.6 Tense markers	123
5.7 Person and number marking.....	139

5.8	The imperative suffixes ⟨-o⟩, ⟨-se ~ -is(e)⟩, ⟨-ne ~ -en(e)⟩, ⟨-n(ī) ~ -in(ī)⟩.....	151
5.9	Copulas – bācā, cha, nanī.....	153
5.10	Negation with prefix ⟨ma-⟩.....	158
5.11	Expression of unexpected action – ⟨-bā-⟩.....	158
5.12	Reflexive forms – ⟨-si-⟩ and ⟨-sā-⟩.....	159
5.13	Reciprocal forms – ⟨-mui- ~ -mum-⟩.....	160
5.14	Expression of immediacy – ⟨-di-⟩.....	162
5.15	Expression of future – ⟨-lā⟩.....	162
5.16	Auxiliary verbs.....	164
6	Non-finite verbs.....	177
6.1	Infinitive – ⟨-cā⟩.....	177
6.2	Infinitive – ⟨-ne⟩.....	177
6.3	Temporal participle – ⟨-ci⟩.....	178
6.4	Verbal noun – ⟨-jo⟩.....	178
6.5	Nominaliser ₂	179
6.6	Implement marker ⟨-tīk⟩.....	180
6.7	Progressive stem.....	180
6.8	Gerunds.....	181
7	Paradigms.....	185
7.1	Conjugation C1 ^{tr}	185
7.2	Conjugation C2 ^{tr}	188
7.3	Conjugation C3 ^{tr}	189
7.4	Conjugation C4 ^{itr}	190
7.5	Conjugation C5 ^{rm}	192
8	Texts.....	195
8.1	General remarks.....	195
8.2	Religious matters.....	197
8.3	Family life.....	207
8.4	Work.....	217
8.5	Autobiographical sketches.....	222
8.6	Miscellaneous matters.....	228
9	Glossary.....	235
10	Literature.....	277

Detailed table of contents

Table of contents	5	2.8 Sound change in progress	55
Detailed table of contents	7	2.9 Jingles	55
Figures and Tables.....	10	3 The writing system.....	57
Abbreviations	12	3.1 Indigenous script.....	57
Acknowledgements	15	3.2 Devanāgarī.....	59
Organisation of the book	18	3.3 A note on examples taken from written texts.....	60
1 Background information.....	19	4 Nominal morphology	63
1.1 The language and the origin of the data ..	19	4.1 Number marking suffixes	63
1.2 Geography.....	22	4.2 Case marking suffixes.....	64
1.3 Linguistic affiliation and dialects	25	4.2.1 Overview	64
1.4 History of research	29	4.2.2 Unmarked arguments.....	65
1.5 Sunwar culture	31	4.2.3 Agent, instrumental and locative suffix <-mī>	66
1.5.1 General setting	31	4.2.4 Object suffix <-kali>	68
1.5.2 The Sunwar house.....	32	4.2.5 Possessive suffix <-ke>.....	69
1.5.3 The agricultural cycle of the year ..	34	4.2.6 Genitive suffix <-nā>.....	70
1.5.4 Festivals and rituals.....	34	4.2.7 Ablative suffixes <-le>, <-lā>, <-re> ..	71
1.5.5 Religious specialists.....	35	4.2.8 Directional suffix <-ge>	72
2 Phonology.....	39	4.2.9 Locational suffix <-gā>.....	72
2.1 Phonemic inventory	39	4.2.10 Vocative suffix <-au>.....	72
2.2 Vowels	40	4.3 Derivational nominal suffixes.....	73
2.2.1 Inventory	40	4.3.1 Feminine suffix <-am>.....	73
2.2.2 Vowel length.....	41	4.3.2 Collective suffix <-bu>	73
2.2.3 Nasalisation.....	42	4.3.3 Suffix of manner <-sī>.....	73
2.2.4 Tone and stress.....	43	4.3.4 Suffix of action <-pā>	74
2.3 Diphthongs	45	4.3.5 Reinforcement suffix <-n>	74
2.4 Consonants	46	4.4 Pronouns	75
2.4.1 Sibilants and the glottal fricative /h/	46	4.4.1 Personal pronouns.....	75
2.4.2 Nasals.....	46	4.4.2 Case marking on personal pronouns	79
2.4.3 Bilabial plosives, bilabial approximant /w/ and former bilabial implosive /b/	47	4.4.3 Forms of address.....	80
2.4.4 Dental plosives.....	48	4.4.4 Older data-material	81
2.4.5 Retroflex plosives	48	4.4.5 Demonstrative pronouns	82
2.4.6 Palatal plosives	48	4.4.6 Question words, indefinites and relative pronouns	83
2.4.7 Velar plosives	48	4.4.7 The suffix <-me ~ -eme> (QUE) on question words	89
2.4.8 Approximants.....	49	4.5 Adverbs.....	91
2.4.9 Phonemes with restricted occurrence and non-phonemic members of the phonetic inventory	49	4.5.1 Bound adverbs of place	91
2.5 Consonant clusters and the syllable	53	4.5.2 Adverbs of place manner and amounts built around demonstratives	92
2.6 Neutralisation	54	4.5.3 Other adverbs of time and place ..	94
2.7 Optional vowels	54	4.6 Quantifiers	97
		4.7 Adjectives	99
		4.8 Information structuring morphemes	100

4.8.1	Conjunctions: an overview	100		
4.8.2	The conjunction <-nu> 'and'	101		
4.8.3	The conjunction <minu> 'and, and then'	101		
4.8.4	The conjunctions <nāmin>, <pānāmin>, <meklāpānāmin> 'then, and then'	101		
4.8.5	The conjunction <hana ~ nana> 'if'	101		
4.8.6	The conjunction <mapatke> 'because of'	101		
4.8.7	Postpositional particles	102		
4.8.8	The postposition <hanayo> 'but' ..	102		
4.8.9	The postposition <lā> 'only'	102		
4.8.10	The postposition of comparison <-bhandā>	103		
4.8.11	The postposition of singularity <cai>	103		
4.8.12	The postposition of inclusive focus <yo> 'also'	104		
4.8.13	The postposition of rethoric questions <kō>	104		
4.8.14	The postposition of insitive focus <da ~ ta>	104		
4.8.15	Rhema suffix <-nei ~ -ei>	105		
4.9	Numerals and dates	106		
4.9.1	Numerals	106		
4.9.2	Dates	107		
5	Finite verbs	111		
5.1	Slots	111		
5.2	Stems	112		
5.2.1	Stems in the preterite tense	112		
5.2.2	Stems in the non-preterite tense ..	115		
5.3	Conjugations	117		
5.4	Transitivity and intransitivity	119		
5.4.1	Transitive and intransitive verb pairs	121		
5.5	The simplex verb	122		
5.6	Tense markers	123		
5.6.1	Non-preterite tensed <i>portemanteau</i> morphemes	123		
	• Non-preterite first person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-nu> ..	124		
	• Non-preterite second person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-ne> ..	124		
	• Non-preterite first person dual <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-na> ..	124		
	• Non-preterite plural and second and third person dual <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-ni> ..	125		
	• Non-preterite third person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-ba ~ -b>	125		
5.6.2	Historical development of the non-preterite markers	127		
5.6.3	Preterite tense morphemes	128		
	• Preterite tense morpheme <-tā> (PT)	132		
	• Preterite tense first person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-ta ~ -tī ~ -tu> (PT+1s)	132		
	• Preterite tense second person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme of conjugation C4 ^{vi} <-te> (PT+2s)	133		
	• Preterite tense second person <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-ti ~ -tī> (PT-2)	133		
	• Preterite tense third person singular <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-tu ~ -ta ~ -t> (PT+3s)	134		
	• Preterite tense third person plural <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme <-te> (PT-3p)	134		
5.6.4	Historical development of preterite tense markers	135		
5.6.5	Tense markers of reflexive verbs ..	136		
5.6.6	Historical development of tense markers of reflexive verbs	137		
5.7	Person and number marking	139		
5.7.1	Person and number marking in the non-preterite tense	139		
5.7.2	Person and number marking in the preterite	139		
5.7.3	Markers of the first person singular	140		
	• First person singular suffix <-n ~ -na>	141		
	• First person singular suffix <-u> ..	142		
5.7.4	Markers of the second person singular	142		
	• Second person singular suffix <-i ~ -e>	143		
	• Second and third person singular suffix <-se>	143		
	• Second person singular suffix <-wi ~ -we>	144		
5.7.5	Markers of the third person singular	144		
	• Third person singular suffix <-a ~ -u ~ -wa>	145		
	• Second and third person singular reflexive negative suffix <-se>	145		
	• Third person singular intransitive			

simplex suffix <-me>	145	6.1 Infinitive – <-cā>.....	177
5.7.6 Dual person and number markers	146	6.2 Infinitive – <-ne>.....	177
• First person dual suffix <-sku>	146	6.3 Temporal participle – <-ci>.....	178
• Second person dual suffix <-sī>...	146	6.4 Verbal noun – <-fo>.....	178
• Third person dual suffix		6.5 Nominaliser ₂ <-m>.....	179
<-s(ī)~ -s(e)~ -s(a)>	147	6.6 Implement marker <-tīk>	180
• Third person dual negative		6.7 Progressive stem <-nu>	180
honorific suffix <-ms(e)>	147	6.8 Gerunds.....	181
5.7.7 Plural person and number		6.8.1 Present gerund	181
markers.....	148	6.8.2 Perfect gerund <-fā>.....	182
• First person plural suffix		7 Paradigms.....	185
<-k(a)~ -k(ī)>	148	7.1 Conjugation C1 ^{tr}	185
• Second person plural suffix <-nī>	149	7.2 Conjugation C2 ^{tr}	188
• Third person plural suffix		7.3 Conjugation C3 ^{tr}	189
<-m(ī)~ -m(e)~ -m(a)>	149	7.4 Conjugation C4 ^{itr}	190
5.7.8 Biactantial verbal agreement.....	150	7.5 Conjugation C5 ^{rm}	192
5.8 The imperative suffixes <-o> , <-se~ -is(e)> ,		8 Texts.....	195
<-ne~ -en(e)> , <-n(ī)~ -in(ī)>	151	8.1 General remarks.....	195
5.9 Copulas – bācā, cha, nañ.....	153	8.1.1 The collection	195
5.9.1 The copula bācā.....	154	8.1.2 Oral texts in written form	195
5.9.2 The copula cha.....	155	8.2 Religious matters	197
5.9.3 The copula nañ	156	The festival of Caṇḍī.....	197
5.10 Negation with prefix <ma->.....	158	Meselmī	200
5.11 Expression of unexpected action – <-bā->		Surom (I).....	201
.....	158	Surim (II)	202
5.12 Reflexive forms – <-si-> and <-sā->	159	Ritual on full and new moon day.....	204
5.13 Reciprocal forms – <-mui-~ -mum->....	160	Chegu.....	205
5.14 Expression of immediacy – <-di->	162	8.3 Family life.....	207
5.15 Expression of future – <-lā>	162	Name giving – naurān.....	207
5.16 Auxiliary verbs.....	164	Marriage – Gyābe	208
5.16.1 Overview.....	164	Birth	210
5.16.2 The deontic and optative		Feeding children	212
auxiliary mālcā	165	Death	214
5.16.3 Appropriative (or: proper state		8.4 Work	217
of things) auxiliary dumcā.....	166	Planting rice	217
5.16.4 Causative auxiliary paicā.....	168	Planting millet.....	219
5.16.5 Permissive auxiliary gecā	169	Working abroad	220
5.16.6 Auxiliary dācā - to like	169	8.5 Autobiographical scetches	222
5.16.7 Auxiliary of forgetting p[ēcā	170	Gītā Sunuvār's live	222
5.16.8 Potential auxiliary cāpcā.....	170	Uttar Kumār Sunuvār 's live.....	210
5.16.9 Ingressive auxiliary thālecā.....	170	8.6 Miscellaneous matters.....	228
5.16.10 Auxiliary lāgecā.....	171	Where the Sunwars come from.....	228
5.16.11 Conclusive auxiliary thumcā	171	A foreigner in Bhujī.....	231
5.16.12 Auxiliary bācā	172	9 Glossary	235
5.16.13 Auxiliary cha.....	172	10 Literature.....	277
5.16.14 Auxiliary nañ.....	173		
5.16.15 Particle marking the preterite in			
narrations tyo~ tyo.ne.....	173		
5.16.16 Narrative forms - <-bāta>.....	174		
6 Non-finite verbs.....	177		

Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Bhojbahādūr and Indirā Sunuvār	20	Table 18: Extant combinations of C ₃ and C ₄ consonants	47
Figure 2: Hemant and Māyā Sunuvār	20	Table 19: The Sunwar script (Mukhia MS)	50
Figure 3: Śobhā Mulicā Sunuvār and Gītā Sunuvār	20	Table 20: Number markers of nouns	53
Figure 4: Family of Uttar Kumār and Gītā Sunuvār and their aunt Netramāyā Sunuvār	20	Table 21: Case markers of nouns	55
Figure 5: The Likhu river at Kūbhū Kāsthālī in Rāmechāp	21	Table 22: Direct stems of personal pronouns	63
Figure 6: Principal area of Sunwar villages (source: Egli 1999: 40)	23	Table 23: Personal pronouns in Saipu (Rāmechāp)	64
Figure 7: Landscape and houses in Bhujī	28	Table 24: Personal pronouns in the dialect of Kūbhū Kāsthālī, Bhujī, Pirtī (Rāmechāp)	64
Figure 8: House in Kūbhū Kāsthālī	30	Table 25: Personal pronouns in the dialect of Khiji Caṇḍeśvarī (Okhalḍhūngā)	64
Figure 9: Fields in Bhujī	32	Table 26: The second stem of personal pronouns	65 33
Figure 10: Celebration of Caṇḍī in Hātībān near Kathmandu		Table 27: Glosses of the second stem of personal pronouns	65
Figure 11: Making of a garland	34	Table 28: Personal pronouns in Sunwar according to Konow ([1909] 1972: 254-256)	68
Table 1: Classification of the Bahing-Vayu Group according to Benedict (1972: 3-5)	24	Table 29: Personal pronouns in Sunwar according to Hodgson (1847)	68
Table 2: Shafer's classification of the Western Branch of East Himalayish languages (1974: 1-3)		Table 30: Demonstrative pronouns	69
Table 3: Linguistic affiliation of Sunwar according to Hanson (1991: 95)	25	Table 31: Basic question words	69
Table 4: Van Driem's classification of Western Kiranti (2001: 615)	25	Table 32: Emphatic interrogative pronouns	73
Table 5: Opgenort's classification of Western Kiranti (2005: 43).	26	Table 33: Interrogative adverbs and adjectives derived from the basis do 'what'	73
Table 6: Comparison of written Sunwar and Bahing (Sunuvār 1994: 2-3)	26	Table 35: Adverbs of place based on demonstratives	77
Table 7: Examples of vocalic contrasts	36	Table 36: Demonstrative adverbs of direction	77
Table 8: Examples of tonal contrasts.	38	Table 37: Demonstrative adverbs of manner	78
Table 9: Examples of contrasts between diphthongs	40	Table 38: Demonstrative adverbs of quantities	78
Table 10: Examples of contrasts between sibilants	40	Table 39: Adverbs of time	79
Table 11: Examples of contrasts between nasals	40	Table 40: Quantifiers	81
Table 12: Examples of contrasts between labials	41	Table 41: Colour terms	99
Table 13: Examples of contrasts between dental plosives	42	Table 42: Adjectives that are not verbal nouns ending in <-ŋo>	83
Table 14: Examples of contrasts between palatal plosives	42	Table 43: Conjunctions	84
Table 15: Examples of contrasts between velar plosives	42	Table 44: Cardinal numbers	89
Table 16: Examples of contrasts between approximants	49	Table 45: Fractions	89
Table 17: Syllable structure	46	Table 46: Day names	90
		Table 47: Names of months according to the Sunuvār Sevā Samāj calendar 2056 (1999/2000)	90
		Table 48: Names of months according to Mukhia (MS: 6, 11)	91
		Table 49: Time terminology as occurring in written Sunwar	91

Table 50: Slots of the verb	94	Table 72: Non-preterite tense person and number markers	115
Table 51: Preterite tense stems of Group II	94	Table 73: Distribution of first person singular markers.	116
Table 52: Preterite tense stem augments in Group III	95	Table 74: Distribution of second person singular markers.	118
Table 53: Preterite tense stem augments in Group IV	96	Table 75: Distribution of third person singular markers.	119
Table 54: Distribution of stems in the preterite tense	96	Table 76: Distribution of dual person markers.	121
Table 55: Person and number markers in the preterite	98	Table 77: Distribution of plural person markers.	122
Table 56: Verbs that are conjugated as both transitive conjugations C1 ^{vt} and C3 ^{vt}	99	Table 78: Development of modern suffixes in the affirmative preterite in the singular.	124
Table 57: Occurrence of person and number suffixes in utterances with and without object	100	Table 79: Carol Genetti (1988:82, Table 9): 'Subject Agreement Forms For Affirmative Past'	124
Table 58: Pairs of transitive and intransitive verbs	101	Table 80: Carol Genetti (1988:74, Table 3) 'Sunwari Affirmative Past Agreement'	125
Table 59: Non-preterite tense markers of conjugations C1 ^{vt} , C2 ^{vt} , C3 ^{vt} , and C4 ^{vi}	103	Table 81: Imperative suffixes	126
Table 60: Non-preterite tense, person and number markers of conjugations C1 ^{vt} , C2 ^{vt} , C3 ^{vt} and C4 ^{vi}	106		
Table 61: Non-preterite tense person and number suffixes according to DeLancey (1992: 32)	106		
Table 62: Non-preterite tense of the copula na ñ 'to be' according to DeLancey (1992: 31)	107		
Table 63: Non-preterite tense of the copula na ñ 'to be' in Rāmechāp	107		
Table 64: Preterite tense morphemes	108		
Table 65: Conjugation-specific allomorphy of the preterite tense <i>portemanteau</i> morphemes of conjugations C1 ^{vt} , C2 ^{vt} and C4 ^{vi} in the affirmative	109		
Table 66: Preterite tense morpheme of conjugation C3 ^{vt} in the affirmative preterite tense	109		
Table 67: Preterite tense <i>portemanteau</i> morphemes of conjugation C3 ^{vt} in the negative preterite tense	109		
Table 68: Preterite tense and reflexive <i>portemanteau</i> morpheme of conjugation C5 ^{vt} in the affirmative	109		
Table 69: Tense, person and number markers of the affirmative preterite	112		
Table 70: Tense, person and number markers of the negative preterite	113		
Table 71: Tense marking on reflexive verbs of C5 ^{vt}	114		

Abbreviations

Σ	stem		and morpheme, complete
[]	phonetic transcription	-	components of a <i>portemanteau</i> morph
//	phonemic transcription, e.g.		and morpheme;
/d/	‘phoneme /d/’		or components of English gloss for a
/d,t/	‘phoneme /d/ and phoneme /t/’		single lexical item in Sunwar
/da/~ta/	‘phonological form /da/ alternates with /ta/’	*	reconstructed, unattested or ungram-
⟨ ⟩	morphological/morphophonemic trans-	◦	matical form
	cription (morpheme), e.g.		glossary entry of lexeme that in my
⟨d⟩	‘morphophoneme ⟨d⟩’	→	data occurred only in written form
⟨d,t⟩	‘morphophoneme ⟨d⟩ and morphopho-		transitive relationship (Agent → Pa-
	neme ⟨t⟩’	.	atient)
⟨-ña ~ -ñ⟩	‘morpheme with allomorphic realisa-	⟨	word-internal morpheme boundary
	tions /-ña/ and /-ñ/’	⟩	derives from
~	alternates (allomorphs, allophones)	˘	yields (in diachronic analysis)
+	components of a <i>portemanteau</i> morph	˙	falling pitch
I-C1 ^{vt}	Stem Group I, conjugation C1 (transi-	INF	rising pitch
	tive verb)	INS/LOC	infinitival marker ⟨-cā⟩
1	first person		instrumental/locative marker ⟨-m ~
2	second person	JING	-mī⟩
3	third person	lit.	jingle
A	agent (of transitive verb)	MAN	literally
adj	adjective	n	nominal marker of manner ⟨-sī⟩
adv	adverb	n.a.	noun
C	suffix conjugation	NAR	not attested
C1	suffix conjugation 1	NEG	marker of narration ⟨-bāta ~ -ta ~ -t⟩
caus	causative	Nep.	negative marker ⟨ma-⟩
COL	collective suffix ⟨-bu⟩	NOM ₁	Nepali
CONT	continous marker	NOM ₂	nominaliser marker 1 ⟨-pā⟩
d ^d	dual	NPT	nominaliser marker 2 ⟨-m⟩
DU	dual marker ⟨-niḡi⟩	ns	non-preterite
e	exclusive	num	non-singular
Eng	English	OBJ	numeral
EMPH	emphatic marker	P	object marker ⟨-kal ~ -kali⟩
Eng.	English	p/ ^p	patient (of transitive verb)
FEM	feminine gender marker	part	plural
FROM	ablative marker ⟨-lā ~ -le ~ -re⟩	PF	particle
GEN	genitive marker ⟨-ñā⟩	PL	perfective gerund marker ⟨-fā⟩
i ⁱ	inclusive	pol	plural number marker
I	Stem Group I		⟨-puki ~ -paki ~ -piki⟩
IFOC	postposition of insistive focus ⟨da ~ ta⟩	POSS	polite expression
IMM	marker of immediacy ⟨-di-⟩	^{pp}	possessive marker ⟨-ke⟩
IMP ^d	imperative dual marker ⟨-se ~ -is(e)⟩	PROG	very polite expression
IMP ^p	imperative plural and honorific marker	pron	progressive construction
	⟨-ne ~ -en(e)⟩	SOC	pronoun
IMP ^{pp}	imperative plural and high honorific		synchronic gerund and sociative
	marker ⟨-ñī ~ -in(ī)⟩	PT	marker ⟨-nu⟩
IMP ^s	imperative singular marker ⟨-o⟩	PTNAR	preterite
IMPL	implement marker ⟨-tik⟩	QUE	preterite narration marker ⟨tyo⟩
IN	locational suffix ⟨-gā⟩	REIN	question suffix ⟨-me⟩
			reinforcement marker ⟨-an ~ -n⟩

REC	reciprocity marker <-mui ~ -mum>	vi/ ^{vi}	intransitive verb
RHE	rhema suffix <-ei ~ -nei>	VN	verbal noun marker <-fo>
RM	reflexive marker	VOC	vocative
S	Subject (of intransitive or reflexive verb)	vr/ ^{vr}	reflexive verb
S.	Sunwar	vt/ ^{vt}	transitive verb
s/ ^s	singular	Wrt.	Written version according to Lokpriya Sunuvār 2003/04
SNG	postposition of singularity <cai>	WrtBib.	Written version according to <i>The word of God</i> 1992
TEMP	temporal participle marker	WrtSH.	Written version according to texts written by Śobhā Sunuvār
TO	locational suffix <-ge>		
UNEX	marker of unexpected action <-bā->		
V	vowel		
v	verb	<i>italics</i>	italics in glosses indicate loans

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people supported me in various ways whilst I was working on this book. I would like to thank them all.

First of all, I owe special thanks to Chris Reintges of Leiden who made the decisive phone call that resulted in my joining the Himalayan Languages Project. That phone call was the starting point of this work.

During a total five stays in Nepal, many people constantly assisted me by being good friends, providing me with a home, supplying me with food, linguistic data as well as with practical advice and support.

I thank Bhojbahādur and Indirā Sunuvār in Kūbhu Kāsthālī, Hemant and Māyā Sunuvār in Bhujī and Mahendramān Sunuvār and his family in Kaṭārī for accommodating me during my fieldwork.

Many people in Nepal helped me to learn more about the language and the culture of the Sunwar. Some people I met regularly to question about the language, others provided information whilst walking to the market or during casual chats. I am grateful to everyone who helped me to learn and to gain a better understanding of the Sunwar language. Among those who provided me with insights was first of all, Śobhā Mulicā Sunuvār, a friend who helped me right from the very start of this project, whilst she was still living as a student with her parents in the village of Bhujī, until the end, whilst attending university in Kathmandu. In the second year of the project, I began working regularly with members of Netramāyā Sunuvār's household in Kathmandu. There I mostly worked with Uttar Kumār and Gītā Sunuvār from Saipu, and also with their aunt Netramāyā Sunuvār from Khiji Caṇḍeśvarī, with Uttar Kumār Sunuvār's brother Varuṇ Sunuvār, and with Māyā Sunuvār from Khiji Caṇḍeśvarī.

In Kūbhu Kāsthālī, all members of Bhojbahādur Sunuvār's family patiently answered my questions. In Bhujī, I worked mainly with Śobhā Mulicā Sunuvār. At the same time, I learned a lot from family members and visitors to Hemant and Māyā Sunuvār's household. In Kaṭārī, Mahendramān Sunuvār, who spent his youth in the village of Prāpcā in the district of Okhaldhūngā, checked the word list that I had compiled after my first field trip and aided me with his comments, corrections and additions. Among those who also shared their knowledge of the Sunwar language and culture with me are Gītā Sunuvār, Sīmā Sunuvār and Vimalā Sunuvār from Bhujī. Lokpriya Sunuvār from Khiji Caṇḍeśvarī, at that time president of the *Sunuvār Sevā Samāj* (सुनुवार सेवा समाज 'Sunwar Welfare Society'), was very accomodating, offering whatever help he could. He was the first person who explained and described important features of Sunwar religion to me.

At the very beginning of my first stay in Nepal I met Lāl Rāpacā Sunuvār and Bāgdevī Yāluncā in Kathmandu. Lāl Rāpacā Sunuvār is a linguist who grew up in the village of Kaṭuñje. He provided me with both published and unpublished material and information about Sunwar that I otherwise would not have been able to obtain. He and his wife Bāgdevī made me always feel welcome at their home, and our meetings and discussions made me a bit wiser. I thank them very much.

I thank Rabindra Purī, artist and architect from Bhaktapur, for his incessant hospitality, for letting me stay in his stunning, perfect house in his hometown and for showing me beautiful places and festivals in the Kathmandu valley. Gautam Basu in Kathmandu was there when I needed moral support, whenever my spirits were low and my health was poor. Navarāj Lāmā in Kathmandu offered help after I had been robbed. I thank them for their support.

The Nepal Research Centre allowed me to use their library. I also thank the staff of the Kathmandu Guest House for their friendliness and helpfulness.

A brief three-month position and later a two-year position at the Centre for Non-Western Studies (CNWS) in Leiden as well as subsidies for three field trips in the years 1999, 2000 and 2001¹ from the Netherlands Foundation of Tropical Research (WOTRO) very much helped to finance this study.

1 The dossier numbers of these subsidies are WR 39-270, WR 39-279 and WR 39-288.

In the Netherlands, I thank Chris Reintges for his hospitality, for his always interesting conversations about grammar and language in general, and for explaining a lot about practical questions I had when starting out on the project.

I always enjoyed the company of and talks with the other members of the Himalayan Languages Project in Leiden, in Nepal or at conferences elsewhere. Special thanks are due to Heleen Plaisier, who was ever helping, especially with advice about administrative and organisational questions. Special thanks are also due to Jean Robert Opgenort, who was continuously willing to answer and ask important questions that made me think further. Jean Robert Opgenort also looked, or rather listened, to some of my recordings and shared his insights on these. I thank Mark Turin for sending me a copy of the Sunwar dictionary by Lokpriya Sunuvār as soon as the book was available in Kathmandu. I thank Werner Egli for sending me a copy of the manuscript Mukhia MS and his extensive Sunwar-German glossary.

Many persons in different places listened to me when I was explaining, complaining, rejoicing and talking about Sunwar. Major victims were Julia Budka, Marion Diehr, Orly Goldwasser, Maren Härtel, Frank Kammerzell, Jo Klasen, Kate Könnecke, Marlene Kurz, Vera Dorofeeva-Lichtmann, Mathias Müller, Ethna O'Brien, Carsten Peust, Chris Reintges, Suhnu Ram Sharma, Daniel Werning, Gordon Whittaker and Thekla Wiebusch. I thank them for their patience and support.

I thank Hem Ādhikārī for giving information on Nepal before I set out for my first field trip and for translating the tale of the Bremen town musicians for me into Nepali.

For discussions of specific problems, I especially thank Frank Kammerzell, Jean Robert Opgenort, Carsten Peust and Gordon Whittaker.

I am grateful to Kate Könnecke and Tatyana Gardner for correcting the English of this entire text.

Frank Kammerzell read the text of this book not only in its final version but commented also on earlier versions. I thank him for his criticism, patience and support.

ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

This grammar has ten major chapters.

The first one is intended as an introduction and presents some background information on the Sunwar language, its speakers and their culture.

The second chapter about phonology shows that the phonological repertoire of Sunwar is similar to that of Nepali. The differences that exist between the phonological systems of these two languages are interesting for historical research. Sunwar has no implosives anymore but that the language once had at least one implosive /ɓ/ can be shown by a comparison of phonetic realisations of the former implosive /ɓ/ in different dialects.

The third chapter concentrates on written Sunwar and presents an indigenous writing system.

The nominal morphology of modern spoken Sunwar is discussed in Chapter Four. At the end of the chapter names of days, months and numerals are presented which have been substituted in the modern spoken language by loan words from Nepali.

The fifth chapter focuses on finite verbs. Instead of a former biactantial agreement system Sunwar now has several suffix conjugations.

The non-finite verbs are discussed in Chapter Six.

Chapter Seven presents examples of paradigms of verbs belonging to different stem and suffix conjugations.

Chapter Eight contains a collection of glossed and translated texts. The texts describe different religious rituals and facets of everyday life.

The glossary in Chapter Nine contains the vocabulary that occurs in example sentences and in the texts of chapter eight.

The last chapter, Chapter Ten, contains bibliographical references.

Most examples of written Sunwar cited in the grammar come from Lokpriya Sunuvār's introductory book (1997). Four written sentences (47, 157, 170, 243) come from a story Šobhā Sunuvār translated for me from Nepali into Sunwar. One written sentence (251) is a citation from the New Testament.

