

These are notes from elicitation done before 2013, with input from Sassi Gurung (from Nace, Manang)

A note about ERGATIVE: -e, -ji, V: (It frequently appears either as vowel lengthening, as a diphthong or as a glide-initial suffix on pronouns and lexical nouns, which are themselves almost always vowel-final. I plan to elicit some consonant-final proper names to see what form it takes. My guess is that it will be -ji)

ja 'go'

1. nga ja mo
I go NPST
'I go.'

Note: *nga-e ja mo
I-ERG go NPST 'I go'

2. ngjo ja-pa
1PL.INCL go-NOM
'We(INCL) go.'

Note: *ngjo-e ja-pa
1PL.INCL-ERG go-NOM 'We(INCL) go.'

Note: ngo ja mo also okay

3. ngi ja-pa
1PL.EXCL go-NMLZR
'We(EXCL) go.'

Note: *ngi-ji ja-pa
1PL.EXCL-ERG go-NOM 'We(EXCL) go.'

Note: ngi ja mo also okay

4. kjon ja-pa
you(SG) go-NMLZR
'You(SG) go.'

Note: *kjon-ji ja-pa
You(SG)-ERG go-NMLZR 'You(SG) go.'

Note: kjon ja mo is also okay

Note: final n means nasalization on prior vowel.

5. khe (bakhale) ja-pa
2(PL) (PL) go-NMLZR
'You(PL) go.'

Note: the PL bakhale is optional, and khe alone also signals 2.PL

Note: *khe bakhale: ja-pa
You(PL) PL.ERG go-NMLZR 'You(PL) go.'
(Note that with the plural, ERG is signaled by vowel lengthening, but it is not permitted in this instance)

Note: khe (bakhale) ja mo is also okay
(Another note on the plural: is it very likely an independent prosodic word, but it is a grammatical affix, as it follows only to its immediate head, and it may not stand alone)

6. thi ja-pa
3(SG) go-NMLZR
'S/he goes.'

Note: *thi-ji ja-pa
S/he-ERG go-NMLZR 'S/he goes.'

Note: thi ja mo is also okay

7. the (bakhale) ja-pa
3(PL) (PL) go-NMLZR
'They go.'

Note: the PL bakhale is optional, and the alone also signals 3.PL

Note: *the bakhale: ja-pa
3(PL) PL-ERG go-NMLZR 'They go.'
(Note that with the plural, ERG is signaled by vowel lengthening, but it is not permitted in this instance)

Note: the bakhale ja mo is also okay

9. toso nowa ja mo
now cat go PRES
'The cat goes now.'

Note: *toso nowa-ji ja mo
now cat-ERG go PRES 'The cat goes now.' (no ERG marking permitted)

9. nga tela ja-e
1(SG) yesterday go-PST/PRF

'Yesterday I went.'

Note: *nga-e tela ja-e
1(SG)-ERG yesterday go-PST/PRF 'Yesterday I went.'

Note: tela nga ja-e okay too

Note: sometimes sounds like nga tela ja-i
I am not sure how to interpret this yet: either PAST or PERFECTIVE. This happens for all persons.

10. nga tela ja-e
1(SG) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday I went'

Note: *nga-ji tela ja-e
1(SG)-ERG yesterday go-PST/PRF 'Yesterday I went.'

Note: tela ng ja-e is also okay

11. ngjo tela ja-e
1(PL.INCL) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday we(INCL) went.'

Note: *ngjo-e tela ja-e
1(PL.INCL) yesterday go-PST/PRF 'Yesterday we(INCL) went.'

12 ngi tela ja-e
1(PL.EXCL) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday we(EXCL) went.'

Note: *ngi-ji tela ja-e
1(PL.EXCL) yesterday go-PST/PRF 'Yesterday we(EXCL) went.'

13. kjon tela ja-e
2(SG) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday you(SG) went.'

Note: *kjon-ji tela ja-e 'Yesterday you went.'

14. khe (bakhale) tela ja-e
2(PL) (PL) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday you(PL) went.'

Note: *khe bakhale: tela ja-e

2(PL) (PL) tela ja-e 'Yesterday you(PL) went.'

15. thi tela ja-e
3(SG) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday s/he went.'

Note: *thi-ji tela ja-e
3(SG)-ERG yesterday go-PST/PRF 'Yesterday s/he went.'

16. the (bakhale) tela ja-e
3(PL) (PL) yesterday go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday they went.'

Note: *the bakhale: tela ja-e 'Yesterday they went.'

17. tela nowara ja-e
yesterday cat go-PST/PRF
'Yesterday the cat went.'

Note: *tela nowara-ji ja-e
yesterday cat-ERG go-PST/PRF 'The cat went yesterday.' (ERG not permitted)

18. nake nga ja mo
tomorrow 1SG go NPST
'Tomorrow I will go.'

Note: *nake nga-e ja mo 'Tomorrow I will go.'

19. nake ngjo ja mo
tomorrow 1(PL.INCL) go NPST
'Tomorrow we(INCL) will go.'

Note: *nake ngjo-e ja mo 'Tomorrow we(INCL) will go.'

20. nake ngi ja mo
tomorrow 1(PL.EXCL) go NPST
'Tomorrow we(EXCL) will go.'

Note: *nake ngi-ji ja mo 'Tomorrow we(EXCL) will go.'

21. nake kjon ja mo
tomorrow 2(SG) go NPST
'Tomorrow you(SG) will go.'

Note: *nake kjon-ji ja mo 'Tomorrow you(SG) will go.'

22. nake khe (bakhale) ja mo
tomorrow 2(PL) (PL) go NPST
'Tomorrow you(PL) will go.'

Note: *nake khe (bakhale:) ja mo 'Tomorrow you(PL) will go.'

23. nake thi ja mo
tomorrow 3(SG) go NPST
'Tomorrow s/he will go.'

Note: *nake thi-ji ja mo 'Tomorrow s/he will go.'

24. nake the (bakhale) ja mo
tomorrow 3(PL) (PL) go NPST
'Tomorrow they will go.'

Note: *nake the (bakhale:) ja mo 'Tomorrow they will go.'

25. nga ja jue?
1(SG) go Q
'Did I go?'

Note, also ok: nga ja mo?
1(SG) go NPST
'Did I go?'

26. ngjo ja jue?
1(PL.INCL) go Q
'Did we go?'

27. ngi ja jue?
1(PL.EXCL) go Q
'Did we go?'

28. kjon ja jue?
2(SG) go Q
'Did you go?'

29. khe (bakhale) ja jue?
2(PL) (PL) go Q
'Did you(PL) go?'

30. thi ja jue?
3(SG) go Q
'Did s/he go?'

31. the (bakhale) ja jue?
3(PL) (PL) go Q
'Did they go?'

jo 'cook'

32. nga kae jo mo
1(SG) rice cook NPST
'I cook rice'

Note: nga-e kae jo mo 'I cook rice' is accepted, but not preferred

33. ngjo kae jo mo
1(PL.INCL) rice cook NPST
'We(INCL) cook rice.'

Note: ngjo-e kae jo mo 'We(INCL) cook rice' is accepted, but not preferred

34. ngi kae jo mo
1(PL.EXCL) rice cook NPST
'We(EXCL) cook rice.'

Note: ngi-ji kae jo mo 'We(EXCL) cook rice' is accepted, but not preferred

35. kjon kae jo mo
2(SG) rice cook NPST
'You(SG) cook rice.'

Note: kjon-ji kae jo mo 'You(SG) cook rice' is accepted, but not preferred

36. khe (bakhale) kae jo mo
2(PL) (PL) rice cook NPST
'You(PL) cook rice.'

Note: khe bakhale: kae jo mo is accepted but not preferred

37. thi kae jo mo
3(SG) rice cook NPST
'S/he cooks rice.'

Special note: I have heard thi-ji, and at first I thought it was an optional occurrence of 3(SG)-ERG, but both Sassi and Gopi Maya inform me that thi-ji means 'uni' in Nepali, with a particular emphasis on males, and is not an ergative marker like Nepali -ley.

38. the (bakhale) kae jo mo

3(PL) (PL) rice cook NPST
'They cook rice.'

Note: the bakhale: kae jo mo is accepted, but not preferred

39. tela nga-e kae jo-e
yesterday 1SG-ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday I cooked rice.'

Note: *tela nga kae jo mo (ERG required)

40. tela ngjo-e kae jo-e
yesterday 1(PL.INCL)-ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday we(INCL) cooked rice.'

Note: I've also heard ngjo bakhale: accepted (1(PL.INCL) PL.ERG

Note: ERG required

41. tela ngi-ji kae jo-e
yesterday 1(PL.EXCL) rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday we(EXCL) cooked rice.'

42. tela kjon-ji kae jo-e

43. tela khe bakhale: kae jo-e

44. tela thi-ji kae jo-e

45. tela the bakhale: jo-e

46. tela dadzu-i kae jo-e
yesterday elder.brother-ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday elder brother cooked rice.'

Note: ERG required

Here are some other phonological manifestations of ERG on different types of lexical nouns:

47. mwime = 'boy'
tela mwime-i kae jo-e
yesterday boy.ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday (the) boy cooked rice.'

48. ama = 'mother'

tela amae kae jo-e
yesterday mother.ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday mother cooked rice.'

49. rime = 'girl'
tela rimei kae jo-e
yesterday girl.ERG rice cook-PST/PRF
'Yesterday the (girl) cooked rice.'

50. nake dadzu-ji kae jo mo
tomorrow elder.brother-ERG rice cook NPST
'Tomorrow elder brother will cook rice.'
Note: seems to prefer ERG in this circumstance

nowara = 'cat' (nowa in short/fast speech); nukju = 'dog' chui = 'bite'

51. toso noware: nukju-ni chui mo
now cat.ERG dog-PAT bite NPST
'Now the cat bites the dog.'

Note: the PAT marker -ni sometimes sounds like -ne
Note: the speaker alternates noware: with nowara-ji for cat-ERG; it appears that the 'clipped' form of 'cat' shows a final vowel lengthening, while the 'full' form shows the suffix
Note: interestingly, speaker finds nowa nukju (no case marking at all) acceptable

52. tela noware: nukju-ni chui-e
yesterday cat.ERG dog-PAT bite-PST/PRF
'Yesterday the cat bit the dog.'

Note: also okay is nowa nukju-ni (case only marked for DAT)
Note: this is not acceptable: nowa nukju (no case marked at all)

53. nake noware: nukju-ni chui mo
tomorrow cat.ERG dog-PAT bite NPST
'Tomorrow the cat will bite the dog.'

Note: Also accepted in form is: nowara-ji cat-ERG, in careful slow speech
Note: *nowara nukju (no case marked at all)

se 'kill'

54. toso nowara-ji ngimu se mo
now cat-ERG mouse kill NPST
'Now the cat kills the mouse.'

Note: nowara ngimu-ni is also okay (no ERG)
Note: *nowara ngimu (no case at all is not allowed)

55. tela nowara-ji ngimu sea-e
yesterday cat-ERG mouse kill-PST/PRF
'Yesterday the cat killed the mouse.'

Note: ngowara-ji ngimu-ni is also okay (both cases marked)
Note: ??ngowara ngimu-ni (sound strange without ERG)

56. nake nowara-ji ngimu se mo
tomorrow cat-ERG mouse kill NPST
'Tomorrow the cat will kill the mouse.'

Note: nowara-ji ngimu-ni is okay (both cases marked)
Note: *nowara ngimu (no case marked)

Some evidence for case markers as enclitics:

57. the-pae nowa-ji cong-pae ngimu-ni chui mo
big-NMLZR cat-ERG small-NMLZR mouse-PAT bite NPST
'The big cat (will) bite(s) the small mouse.'

58. toso the-pae nowa njo-klon-ji cong-pae ngimu son-klon-ne chui mo
now big-NMLZR cat two-CLASS-ERG small-NMLZR three-CLASS-DAT bite NPST
'Two big cats (will) bite three small mice.'

Some evidence that a numeral can be the head of a NP:

59. the-pae njo-klon-ji cong-pae son-klon-ni chui mo
big-NMLZR two-CLASS-ERG small-NMLZR three-CLASS-DAT bite NPST
'Two big ones bite three small ones.'