Expressive adverbs are verb modifiers, most having been derived from a verbal source themselves. Of those that are not derived from verbs, some have an onomatopoeic source and others a nominal source. What most of them have in common is that they very often occur in rhyming couplets (i.e. reduplicative structures) and occur syntactically immediately preceding the verb. Since I will soon digress into the phonological structure of expressives, I need here to give the reader some idea of what an expressive adverb is. Following is an example, where the string *gyahp gehp* is the expressive, followed immediately by the verb:
17) gohra-lai gyahp gehp cep-ke-o
    horse-OBJ EXPR EXPR mount-PFV-3S

    'He mounted the horse in a single, swift jump.'

In a dictionary (Watters, unpublished) of a little over 6,000 roots, about 1,500 are verbs and another 750 roots are expressive adverbs. That is, there are half as many adverbs modifying verbs as there are verbs to be modified. None of the expressives can modify all verbs universally (as with most of the adverbs we saw earlier). A number of expressives are limited to a single verb, and many are limited to a single semantic domain. Those with the widest distribution can occur with no more than five or six different verbs.

Phonological Structure

Most expressive adverbs occur in reduplicative structures (a few occur singly). That is, two forms occur side by side, as in gyahp gehp, the one a reduplication of the other. Some reduplications are exact. But in most, the consonants remain the same and the vowels change in a principled way. In a few, the consonants also change, but this is considerably more rare and the consonant changes are probably due to a diffusion of Indian areal features. In the following discussion we will look at the basic rules of reduplication for the different types.

Exact Reduplication

The simplest form of reduplication is exact reduplication of the base morpheme (we'll deal later with which is the base and which is the copy). Exact reduplication
copies all consonants and vowels along with suprasegmental material, and can occur over one, two, or three syllables. In the bi- and trisyllabic morphemes all vowels can be identical for each of the syllables, or different. I will first illustrate monosyllabic reduplication with several simple and complex vowels in open and closed syllables:

18) a. kik kik  ‘choking’
b. rē:h rē:h  ‘strung tightly’
c. phur phur  ‘high into the air’
d. chō: chō:  ‘squirting’
e. gaḥp gaḥp  ‘stepping with long strides’
f. khās khās  ‘swarming’
g. dī: dī:  ‘full, satiated’
h. sūr sūr  ‘sour-like’
i. cōl cōl  ‘burping, spitting’
j. cyā: cyā:  ‘haggard, gaunt’
k. bwi:h bwi:h  ‘shredded’

The situation is similar with bi- and trisyllabic base morphemes. In the following, some have identical vowels across all syllables and some do not:

19) a. BISYLLABIC:
   kutu kutu  ‘in small pieces’
   pəɾəp pəɾəp  ‘dripping’

1 There is some indication that laxity of vowels in the first occurrence does not always carry over to the second occurrence.
cherla cherla ‘ragged’
zəhrāː zəhrāː: ‘streaked’

b. TRISYLLABIC:
kuturu kuturu ‘crispy, crunchy’
phiriri phiriri ‘spinning’
zigəra zigəra ‘with drooping eyelids’
khopəyak khopəyak ‘tossing one at a time’

Consonant Reduplication

Most reduplications are not exact, but copy only the consonants and modify the vowels in a principled way. In most cases, I have been unable to deduce any phonological or semantic principles for determining which pattern a sequence might follow — that is, will the copy be exact, or with modified vowels? At least in the modern language, the choice appears to be purely lexical.

In reduplicating the consonants and modifying the vowels, the following vowel changes are invariant, regardless of how many different vowels occur in the input string. That is, if three different vowels occur in a trisyllabic base, the copy will also reflect three different modified vowels. The principle is simple — back and central vowels in the input string produce ‘a’ in the output, and front vowels produce ‘ya’ (see Table 70).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel in Base</th>
<th>Vowel in Copy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>u</em></td>
<td><em>a</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>o</em></td>
<td><em>a</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ə</em></td>
<td><em>a/ə</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>i</em></td>
<td><em>ya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e</em></td>
<td><em>ya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>u + i</em></td>
<td><em>a + ya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>i + u</em></td>
<td><em>ya + a</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>u + ə + i</em></td>
<td><em>a + ə + ya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>etc.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that the copy (output string) occurs in the first sequence and the base form (input string) in the second. We will see the evidence for this later when we discuss the verb roots from which many of these forms are derived. Following are examples of vowel changes in mono- and bisyllabic roots:

20) **reduplicated structure** | **output** | **input** | **gloss** |
---|---|---|---|
*u* lam lum | lam | < lum | 'completely covered' |
*u* karap kurup | karap | < kurup | 'shriveled, crinkled' |
*o* gar gor | gar | < gor | 'gathering up remains' |
*o* zarap zorop | zarap | < zorop | 'completely penetrating' |
*ə* tap təp | tap | < təp | 'with tenacity' |
*ə* parap əpəp | parap | < əpəp | 'intermittent rain' |
The changes are specific to each vowel, something which becomes obvious when the vowel in each syllable is different, as in the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21)</th>
<th>reduplicated structure</th>
<th>output</th>
<th>input</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>u-i</td>
<td>gahpya guhpi</td>
<td>gahpya</td>
<td>guhpi</td>
<td>‘toddling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-u</td>
<td>syardap sirdup</td>
<td>syardap</td>
<td>sirdup</td>
<td>‘spastic’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-i</td>
<td>katyam katim</td>
<td>katyam</td>
<td>katim</td>
<td>‘in rapid succession’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-e</td>
<td>balya bole</td>
<td>balya</td>
<td>bole</td>
<td>‘wiry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o-e</td>
<td>khalya khole</td>
<td>khalya</td>
<td>khole</td>
<td>‘sloshing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-a-i</td>
<td>gadaryas gudaris</td>
<td>gadaryas</td>
<td>gudaris</td>
<td>‘falling flat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-a-i</td>
<td>phyasalya phisali</td>
<td>phyasalya</td>
<td>phisali</td>
<td>‘non-penetrating’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o-o-e</td>
<td>kalambya kolombe</td>
<td>kalambya</td>
<td>kolombe</td>
<td>‘rolling over’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are now in a position to reexamine those reduplications which show no change from the input string to the copy. All input syllables that contain either the vowel ‘a’ or the diphthong ‘ya’ (with ‘ə’ in some three syllable words) exhibit no change in the output string, as in the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>reduplicated structure</th>
<th>output</th>
<th>input</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>gahp gahp</td>
<td>gahp</td>
<td>gahp</td>
<td>'striding'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-a</td>
<td>khagap khagap</td>
<td>khagap</td>
<td>khagap</td>
<td>'with extended elbows'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-a</td>
<td>kapala kapala</td>
<td>kapala</td>
<td>kapala</td>
<td>'in large chunks'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya</td>
<td>cyap cyap</td>
<td>cyap</td>
<td>cyap</td>
<td>'picking'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya</td>
<td>gyal gyal</td>
<td>gyal</td>
<td>gyal</td>
<td>'tilting the head'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears, in fact, that if 'a' or 'ya' occurs anywhere in the input string, the copy will be identical with no attempt to adjust the other vowels, as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>cherla cherla</th>
<th>*chyarla cherla</th>
<th>'ragged'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zigara zigara</td>
<td>*zyagara zigara</td>
<td>'with drooping eyelids'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khopalyak khopalyak</td>
<td>*khapalyak khopalyak</td>
<td>'tossing one at a time'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, a refinement of our earlier principle is the following: back vowels in the input string produce 'a' in the output; front vowels in the input produce 'ya'; while 'a' or 'ya' anywhere in the input string insures that all vowels in the output string will be exact copies of the original.

We're still left with a residue of exact reduplications that can be attributed only to the lexical class of the word. That is, words such as those in 19 with nothing but pure high vowels (*kutu kutu, phiriri phiriri*) still remain unchanged in the copy. Later, I will suggest an onomatopoeic source for some of these forms.
Pseudo Bases

There is evidence to suggest that at least in a few cases (rarely) the base form is the first one in the reduplicated sequence. In such cases, a pseudo base assuming the character of an appropriate input string is constructed for the second form in a process of back formation. This can be illustrated with a couple of examples:

24)  
gyal gil  ‘tilting the head’

kalya kāle  ‘blackening’ (of the sky)

There is no independent morpheme gil, but there is a gyal in gyal li-nya ‘to duck the head.’ Also, gyal gyal occurs as a variant of gyal gil (see 22). This suggests that gil is no more than an improvisation. Likewise kalya comes from Nepali kale ‘blackish,’ and is certainly the base form. The string kāle, then, is a pseudo base.

Consonant Change

Reduplication marked by consonant change in the output string is relatively rare, and is probably due to an areal influence from Indic languages. Where it does occur, only the first consonant in the string changes. The most common change is some kind of a bilabial at the beginning of the second string (there is no evidence to suggest which string is basic and which is derived).² Typically, vowel modifications, some unique to

² Emeneau (1969) deduces a number of ‘Pan-Indian’ reduplicative patterns based on a comparison of Dravidian and Indo-Aryan languages. One is an initial velar or dental consonant (plus l, s, or h) replaced in the following sequence by a labial consonant (including p, ph, b, bh, v, or m).
these forms, occur at the same time. Following are examples:

25)  

a. velar + bilabial:

karjā: mərjā: ‘rugged, jagged’
kala mulu ‘crowded’
khānja mānja ‘recurring illness’
ganțhān mānthān ‘tangled and knotted’
gār bār ‘jumbled, confused’ (< Nep. gaRbaR ‘confusion’)  

b. dental/palatal + bilabial:

citiṭā: putiṭā: ‘scattered’
cirlā birlā ‘wailing and shrieking’
cere mere ‘piled and bulging’
jīlī mīlī ‘bright, colorful’ (< Nep. jhilmili ‘glitter’)
tāhā māhā ‘magnificent, pompous’
zagāi magāi ‘majestic, glorious’ (< IA *jag-mag ‘shining’)  
sf:sf: b:b:b: ‘proud, haughty’

c. other combinations:

kawā: ziwā: ‘sobbing’
zehrni gehrni ‘whining’
narya gorya ‘twisted’
chap rap ‘sifting’
dhra phāra ‘shredded’
Now that we've seen something of the phonological structure of expressives we will attempt to determine something of where these adverbs have come from. We will begin by looking at a few that are transparently derived from the verbs they modify. That is, both the verb and its expressive modifier come from the same ultimate source, though it is assumed that the expressive was derived later with the verb as its source.

Modern Verb Sources

The following examples are illustrative of the process discussed above:

26) a. ORIGINAL VERB:
   kurup-nya

   'to fold, collapse' (as an umbrella)

   b. karap kurup karup-si-nya
      fold fold fold-DETRANS-INF

   'to fold up, crinkled and shriveled'

27) a. ORIGINAL VERB:
    khole:-nya

    'to rinse'

   b. khalya khole khole:-nya
      rinse rinse rinse-INF

    'to rinse by sloshing water'
28) a. ORIGINAL VERB:
sip-nya

‘to nest, tuck up into’ (as for a plane to nest its wheels)

b. syap sip sip-si-nya
nest nest nest-DETRANS-INF

‘to nest, pull up inside, disappear’

29) a. ORIGINAL VERB:
buhr-nya \(^3\)

‘to fly’

b. phur phur buhr-nya
fly fly fly-INF

‘to fly high in the air’

Expressives in Light Verb Constructions

An intermediate stage, in which the expressive functions in a ‘light verb’ construction,\(^4\) also occurs for most forms like the ones above. The following are the light verb forms of the constructions illustrated in 26-29 (\(ta-nya\) ‘to become’ and \(ja-nya\) ‘to make’ are suppletive intransitive-transitive variants of one another\(^5\)):

---

\(^3\) The root \(buhr\) may have onomatopoeic origins and is found all over South and Southeast Asia. Benedict (1972) reconstructs TB ‘fly’ as \(*pur\). and Emeneau reconstructs Dravidian and IA ‘suddenly’ as \(*bur-bur\) and \(*bhur-bhur\), respectively, with comments like ‘noise of a bird flying up suddenly.’

\(^4\) See ‘Verbalizing Derivations’ in Chapter 5 on Nouns.

\(^5\) In some dialects like Nishel and Gamale, a non-suppletive pair occurs based on \(*ja-s\) ‘become’ versus \(*ja-t\) ‘make.’
A fair number of verbs have developed expressives occurring only in light verb constructions. That is, the expressives do not occur as yet with any verbs other than ‘become’ and ‘make.’ The light verb derivation is always semantically more general than the original verb, and somewhat conative in interpretation, like ‘to hit at’ rather than ‘to hit.’ It is this process, I am assuming, that allows the light verb ‘nominals’ to be used as modifiers on semantically related verbs. In the following examples, then, we will look at verbs that have gone a step further — modification of a verb other than the source verb, but from a related semantic domain:

31) a. ORIGINAL VERB:

   khore:-nya
   scratch-INF

   ‘to eliminate weeds by scratching the surface with a hand tool’

b. NOMINAL IN LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTION:

   khore    khore    āi-nya
   scratch  scratch make-INF

   ‘to lightly scratch the surface, to scratch at’
c. ASSOCIATION WITH RELATED VERB:

khore   khore   pur-si-nya
scratch scratch claw-DETRANS-INF

‘to scratch oneself lightly on the surface of the skin’

32) a. ORIGINAL VERB:

ghap-nya
step.over-INF

‘to step over something’

b. NOMINAL IN LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTION:

gahp  gahp  jai-nya
step  step  make-INF

‘to make long strides, to make steps toward a goal’

c. ASSOCIATION WITH RELATED VERB:

gahp gahp si:-nya
step  step  step.on-INF

‘to trample on carelessly’

33) a. ORIGINAL VERB:

cyap-nya
peck-INF

‘to peck, to strike with a pointed instrument’

b. NOMINAL IN LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTION:

cyap  cyap  jai-nya
peck  peck  make-INF

‘to pick at, to strike at’
c. ASSOCIATION WITH RELATED VERB:

cyap cyap goh-nya
peck peck dig-INF

‘to dig with a pick’

34) a. ORIGINAL VERB:

təɾəp-nya
pin-INF

‘to pin, clip together’

b. NOMINAL IN LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTION:

tarap təɾəp jəi-nya
pin pin make-INF

‘to pin up, lightly attach’

c. ASSOCIATION WITH RELATED VERB:

tarap təɾəp ruhp-nya
pin pin close/shut-INF

‘to baste, quickly stitch together as a temporary measure’

Other Examples with Known Verbal Sources

There are numerous other examples of expressives with known verbal sources. All of them have in common the fact that the expressive construction is less specific than the original verb, often denoting action toward, but not necessarily completion. As a modifier on a related verb, then, the expressive denotes the type or manner of action and functions much like an adverb of manner. Following is a further listing:
35) a. zāhrā:-nya  
   ‘to be loosely woven’
   zāhrā:  zāhrā:  ‘streaked’
   z. z. sī:-nya  ‘to dawn with streaks in the sky’

b. pərəp-nya  ‘to drizzle, sprinkle’
   pərəp pərəp  ‘sprinkling’
   p. p. gahr-nya  ‘to weep with light tears’

c. cil-nya  ‘to pinch’
   cyacyal cicil  ‘welted’
   c. c. so-nya  ‘to itch with welts’

d. pi:h-nya  ‘to scrape’
   pya:h pi:h  ‘scraped clean’
   p. p. syu:h-nya  ‘to strip bare’

e. rē:h-nya  ‘to resonate’ (as a drum)
   rē:h rē:h  ‘taut, resonating’
   r. r. thu:-nya  ‘to stretch taut’

f. luhm-nya  ‘to cover’ (as a wound with scar tissue)
   lahm lum  ‘covered over’
   l. l. kəp-nya  ‘to cover completely’ (as snow on the ground)
g. sap-nya  
   sap  
   sər sap  
   s. s. khim-nya  
   ‘to search’  
   ‘searching’  
   ‘to look for by scattering’

h. phulup-nya  
   phalap phulup  
   p. p. khya-nya  
   ‘to turn upside down’  
   ‘upside down, prone’  
   ‘to cast prone’ (of the wind to crops)

The Nominal Source

Not all expressives can be related to a verbal source. Indeed, some have been derived from nouns, both native and borrowed. Following are examples:

36) a. cherla  
   cherla cherla  
   ch. ch. cis-nya  
   ‘small animal skins dangling from a shaman’s belt’  
   ‘ragged, shabby’  
   ‘to tear into tatters’

b. dəhja  
   dəhja dəhja  
   d. d. cis-nya  
   ‘ribbon’ (Nepali?)  
   ‘shredded (as though in ribbons)’  
   ‘to tear to shreds’

c. zəhr  
   zəhr zəhr  
   z. z. was-nya  
   ‘sieve’  
   ‘evenly through spread fingers’  
   ‘to sow seed spreading it evenly’
d. johmpa ‘cluster of fruit’
    johmpa jompa ‘in clusters’
    j. j. sōi-nya ‘to bear fruit prolifically’

e. bohrla ‘a sheaf of grain’
    bohrla bohrla ‘in tufts, in sheaves’
    b. b. sāi-nya ‘to bear seed prolifically’

f. kū: ‘hole’
    kā:kā: kū:kū: ‘full of potholes’
    k. k. ta-nya ‘to get full of potholes’

The source for some expressives can be resolved only by looking at other dialects.
The following is an interesting example:

37)  a. bahle:te cuh-si-nya <
    pouting sit-MM-INF
    ‘to sit pouting’

    b. ble                  te
    lower lip (Gamale) fall (Takale and Gamale)
    ‘fallen lower lip’

Proto Tibeto-Burman Sources

A number of expressive adverbs are not easily relatable to modern verb sources.
Some, however, have clear connections either to Proto-Tibeto-Burman or to words in
related languages (including Kham dialects). Among them are:

38)  

a. bohp bop go-nya < PTB *bop ‘swelling’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) swell-INF  
   ‘to swell profusely’

b. ruhr wuhr cā:h-nya < PTB *bwar ‘burn’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) burn-INF  
   ‘to burn with a blaze’

c. sarap surup hum-nya < PTB *s-rup ‘to sip’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) sip-INF  
   ‘to sip noisily’

d. le: le: cī:-nya < PTB *s-lay ‘tongue’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) stretch-INF  
   ‘to stretch out the tongue’ (as a panting dog)

e. ga: ga: sas-nya < Chepang ga- ‘hold mouth open’  
   PTB *m-ka ‘mouth’  
   ‘to laugh with open mouth, gasping for air’

f. kalambya kolombe golō:-nya < Magar kulum- ‘to wind up string’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) roll-INF  
   ‘to roll over and over’

g. tam tum ke:h-nya < Nishel Kham tom-nya ‘to break corn’  
   \( ? \quad ? \) break-INF  
   ‘to completely break’

h. bur phārle:-nya < Tibetan bwar ‘to cast, toss’  
   \( ? \) twist/turn-INF  
   ‘to toss to the ground with a twist’ (as when tossing a sheep for castration)
Onomatopoeic Sources

Onomatopoeia, or sound symbolism, is common in South and Southeast Asian languages. Some expressives are clearly from such sources. That is, rather than expressing the manner of an action per se, these expressives attempt to imitate its sound (or feeling or smell). It is easy, of course, for sound imitation to eventually develop a secondary manner interpretation, especially if the sound is produced by a regular and repetitive action, as in the next two examples:

39) a. sehte: sehte:  
   ‘the sound of a saw’

b. sehte: sehte: kyal-nya  
saw saw cut-INF  
   ‘to cut with a sawing sound/to cut with a sawing motion’

40) a. syahr syahr  
   ‘the sound of seed being broadcast on the ground’

b. syahr syahr was-nya  
   swish swish sow-INF  
   ‘to sow seed with a swishing sound/to sow seed methodically’

Onomatopoeia is not as common a source for expressives in Kham as the verbal and nominal sources. It is, nevertheless, a common feature, and some 50 or 60 of the 750 expressives in Kham are onomatopoeic. These, like the other expressive adverbs, collocate only with single verbs, or verbs in the same semantic domain, as in:

41) a. bahrlap bohrlop te-nya  
   ‘to fall crashing and banging’

b. bulup bulup co-nya  
   ‘to boil with slow bubbling’
c. bāhk bāhkyā pā:-nya  ‘to speak stutteringly’
d. cāṭyan cāṭin gōrji-nya  ‘to thunder with sharp reports’
e. gahrla gohrlo ruhp-nya  ‘to lock a door (rattling the wooden crosspieces)’
f. gorye’ gorye’i he:-nya  ‘to grind by turning a grindstone’
g. hik hik gōhr-nya  ‘to weep with short gasping’
h. ḥāpāk ḥāpāk bihl-nya  ‘to choke with hiccups’
i. keka keka cha:-nya  ‘to gulp water (with head tilted back)’
j. khotō: khotō: chip-nya  ‘to ripen resonantly (of a pumpkin)’
k. paṭāras putārus phya:-nya  ‘to snap several strands at a time’
l. pecyak tihl-nya  ‘to spit with a neat squirt’
m. swak swak cī:-nya  ‘to puff on a pipe’
n. wahn wahn pas-nya  ‘to echo with hollowness’
o. wuhp wuhp zo:-nya  ‘to jump off a ledge one after another (of sheep)’
p. zwar zwar pī:-nya  ‘to “knead” beer grains’
q. zyahl zyahl buh-nya  ‘to bark fiercely’

Magnitude Symbolism

In some of the Kiranti languages (see Schulze 1987 for example), there is a fairly elaborate system of sound symbolism in expressive-type adverbs whereby voiceless consonants and high front vowels symbolize small objects, while voiced consonants and low back vowels symbolize large objects. There are hints of such a system in Kham, but not with the kind of elaboration found elsewhere. It occurs in only a few pairs, the following being about half of them:
42) a. VOICELESS CONSONANT, LAX REGISTER:
   \[ \text{təhr təhr cis-nya} \]
   'to tear with a ripping sound'

   b. VOICED CONSONANT, LAX VOWEL:
   \[ \text{dəhr dəhr cis-nya} \]
   'to tear with a heavy ripping sound'

43) a. VOICELESS CONSONANT, MODAL REGISTER:
   \[ \text{cyap cyap goh-nya} \]
   'to dig with picking action'

   b. VOICED CONSONANT, LAX REGISTER:
   \[ \text{jyahp jyahp goh-nya} \]
   'to dig with heavy picking action/with a large pick'

44) a. VOICELESS CONSONANT, MODAL REGISTER:
   \[ \text{chyarlyən} \ chirlən \]
   'clanging sound' (as a small cymbal)

   b. VOICED CONSONANT, LAX REGISTER:
   \[ \text{zyahrlyən} \ zihrən \]
   'heavy clanging' (as a medium bell)

45) a. VOICELESS STOP:
   \[ \text{kər kər pi-nya} \]
   'to milk in small squirts'

   \[ \text{kəkərə: kəkəri: gə-nya} \]
   'to become stiff from cold'

   b. ASPIRATED STOP:
   \[ \text{khwar khwar pi-nya} \]
   'to milk in large squirts'
khagāra: khagārī: si-nya
‘to die with rigormortis’

46) a. VOICELESS AFFRICATE:

caryap cārip ke:h-nya
‘to break with a light crackling sound’

b. VOICELESS STOP:

karyap kārip ke:h-nya
‘to break small sticks with a cracking sound’

c. VOICED STOP, LAX REGISTER:

gahryap gāhrīp ke:h-nya
‘to break large sticks with a cracking sound’

From this small amount of material we can deduce the magnitude scale in Figure 18 for Kham, with the left end signifying smaller entities/notions and the right end larger ones:

smaller < ————————————————————————> greater
v-less affricate < v-less stop < v-less aspirate < voiced stop < voiced aspirate

Figure 18. Magnitude symbolism in Kham.

A Note on the Semantics of Expressives

Up to now we’ve looked primarily at the phonological and grammatical form of expressives without giving careful attention to their semantic content. I have already alluded to them as ‘manner adverbials,’ but what specifically does that mean? Also, are there other kinds of semantic modification these adverbs contribute to the predication?
Manner of Action

We'll begin by looking at expressives that modify the meaning of the main verb in terms of the manner in which the action was carried out. Typically, in a language like Kham, a generic verb like 'go' can be modified in numerous ways to yield different manners of going — like 'to saunter,' 'to amble,' 'to stride defiantly,' and so on. In a language like English, such nuances of meaning are typically handled by families of synonyms in which manner is incorporated into the verb (cf. Talmy 1985). I will illustrate the point with expressives occurring with ba-nya, the verb 'to go,' by far the most prolific of all verbs in terms of expressive adverbs. Some have to do with bodily motion, some with mental attitude, some with ability, some in relation to a group, and some with respect to sound:

47) a. BODILY MOTION:
   chõ:jai chõ:jai (ba-nya) 'to go) on tiptoes'
   gahp gahp 'in long strides'
   kyasya kisi 'knock-kneed'
   sidaru sidaru 'sliding the feet'
   pehsyal pehsyal 'with a slight limp'
   khõ:cya khõ:cya 'limping'
   koge koge 'feet spread (as from soreness)'
   khagap khagap 'with extended elbows (of a drunk)'
   syardap sirdup 'without control, like a spastic'
   nãhtyaõ nãhtyaõ 'with bobbing head'
b. MENTAL ATTITUDE:

lukhuru lukhuru ‘without motivation’

bryan bryan ‘to saunter in a desultory manner’

johm johm ‘stomp away, defiantly’

peme peme ‘with stealth’

sehbe: sehbe: ‘slowly, forlornly’

manca manca ‘without looking back’

suhm ki suhm ‘carelessly, recklessly’

lala lulu ‘unprepared, in a moment’s notice’

suru suru ‘steadily, without being sidetracked’

c. ABILITY:

chumo chumo ‘walk hesitatingly (of an infant)’

chom chom ‘walk well (of a small child)’

gahpya gupi ‘toddling one or two steps’

d. IN RELATION TO A GROUP:

le:le: gorō:gorō: ‘single file’

gargar gurgur ‘pushing into a crowd’

sar sap ‘scattering (as on a search)’

e. SOUND:

gahrap gohrop ‘trudging through deep snow’

lakāra lakāre ‘in an ill-fitting way, as with loose fitting shoes’

lāpāryap lāpāryap ‘with chuppies (slapping the heel)’
Many other verbs have similar kinds of manner modification through the use of expressive adverbs, though in most cases, only one or two expressives per verb.

Degree or Intensity of Action

Many expressive adverbs indicate the degree or intensity of action achieved in the process of 'verbing.' In a number of cases, especially where the expressive focuses on the final outcome of the verb, we get something of a 'resultative' interpretation. At the other end of the spectrum the interpretation might be partitive. In still others, the interpretation can be collective or iterative action.

48) RESULTATIVE/COMPLETIVE READING:

cata: cətː phyaː-nya  ‘to annihilate completely’
cita pata cis-nya  ‘to tear to shreds’
cətə cətə khoə-nya  ‘to card wool into chunks’
gwa: gwa: khoə-nya  ‘to card wool into fluff’
cyakap cikup paː-nya  ‘to shatter to pieces’
gola gola ci-nya  ‘to rot soft’
gəgə gəgə məːh-nya  ‘to cook thoroughly’
kacya: kuci: kurci-nya  ‘to be dented completely’
kakəra: kakərə gəː-nya  ‘freeze stiff’
kalya kale gərəː-nya  ‘to heal completely’
karap kurup kurup-si-nya  ‘to shrivel completely’
kata: kətː jaːm-nya  ‘to pack hard (of soil)’
khat khut kəi-nya  ‘to eat thoroughly’
khərle khərle rwi:h-nya ‘to be bug eaten full of holes’
kocya kocya rum-nya ‘to smash to a pulp’
kutu kutu kai-nya ‘to chew to bits’
tar tar para:-nya ‘to slit open from one end to the other’
zarap zorop pəsi-nya ‘to penetrate completely’

Some expressives denote that the action is only partial or occurring in a lesser degree that with the unmodified verb:

49) PARTITIVE/LESSER DEGREE READING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>expressive + verb</th>
<th>verb meaning</th>
<th>resulting interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cara: cəɾi: bohs-</td>
<td>uproot</td>
<td>‘to become loose, about to uproot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>col col khyo:-</td>
<td>stab</td>
<td>‘to prick slightly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cəl cəl woih-</td>
<td>vomit</td>
<td>‘to spit, burp up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curup curup thə:-</td>
<td>dry</td>
<td>‘to shrivel at the edges’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khesə: khesə: gəɾ-</td>
<td>cry</td>
<td>‘to be almost in tears’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kur kur pi:-</td>
<td>milk</td>
<td>‘to milk in small squirts’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyacya: cici: jyah-</td>
<td>grow dark</td>
<td>‘to begin to darken’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khap khop dupsí-</td>
<td>meet</td>
<td>‘to meet in small numbers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khore khore pur-</td>
<td>scratch</td>
<td>‘to scratch lightly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarap təɾəp ruhp-</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>‘to stitch up partially’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the last four expressives in 49 (for which the verbal source is known), it becomes obvious why we get a ‘lesser degree’ interpretation — the source verbs are
either less intense synonyms of the main verbs, or they imply inception or tentative action, as in: cici- ‘to spoil along the edges,’ khop- ‘to plant sparingly,’ khore- ‘to weed by scratching the surface,’ tarap- ‘to clip together.’

Some expressives, as reduplicated forms, imply iteration or collective action, as in:

50) chana chana phwi-nya  'to hack brush methodically'
gahda: guhdu: dahli-nya  'to topple one after another'
guhr guhr ro:h-nya  'to churn and churn'
kahryap kahrir ke:h-nya  'to break several at a time'
khala khala gal-nya  'to swallow one after another'

Derivation from Expressives to Nominal Modifiers

Any of the expressive adverbs that can be appropriately cast in ‘light verb’ constructions (see examples 26-34) can also be nominalized and used as nominal modifiers. What is at issue in both cases is whether or not the expressive is independent enough in its semantics to stand as an independent predicator. As a modifier/predicate adjective, the erstwhile expressive brings into the equation some of the semantics of the verb (or verb domain) with which it is associated, as in:

51) a. EXPRESSIVE FUNCTION:

kakara: kakari: gā:-nya
stiff stiff freeze-INF

‘to freeze stiff’
b. **ADJECTIVAL FUNCTION:**

kakəra: kakəri:-wo  
stiff  stiff-NML

‘stiff (esp. from the cold)

52) a. **EXPRESSIVE FUNCTION:**

khâle khâle rwî:h-nya  
hole  hole  worm.eat-INF

‘to be worm-eaten full of holes’

b. **ADJECTIVAL FUNCTION:**

khâle khâle:-wo  
hole  hole-NML

‘full of holes’ (esp. from worms)

Recall from Chapter 7 on Modifiers that transitive verbs too can serve as modifiers after passive participle derivation — a double derivation that both detransitivizes and nominalizes, as in:

53) phulup-si-u  
turn.over-DETRANS-NML

‘turned over, upside down’

Functioning within expressive constructions (as in 26-34), the same transitive verb roots do not require, indeed do not allow, detransitivization, as in:

54) a. phalap phulup ta-nya  
turn.over turn.over  become-INF

‘to become turned over, knocked down in a prone position’ (esp. by the wind)
b. phalap phulub-o
   turn.over turn.over-NML
   ‘turned over, knocked down’ (as by the wind)

c. *phalap phulup-si-u
   *turn.over turn.over-DETRANS-NML

Likewise:
55) a. tarap-si-u
    clip-DETRANS-NML
    ‘clipped together, fastened’

b. tarap tarap ruhp-nya
   clip clip close-INF
   ‘to sew shut by clipping or pinning’

c. tarap tarab-o
   clip clip-NML
   ‘basted, held together by pins or long stitches’

d. *tarap tarap-si-u
   *clip clip-DETRANS-NML

Summary

Adverbs that collocate freely with verbs or nominal modifiers in a more or less universal fashion are rather rare in Kham, and denote a few broad notions like the emotion of the actor, the time of the action, or the speed of the action. The more productive set of adverbs are those that are much narrower in semantics and modify the action of a single verb or sometimes a related domain of verbs. Many of these adverbs are historically derived from verbs themselves. Others have more of an onomatopoetic source.