4. Chapter

Absolutives - Structure and Usages

Introduction

The absolutives or converbs are traditionally named *Pera Kiriyə* (Skt. *Pūrva Kriyā*) in Sidat Saŋgərāvə. It defines absolutives as follows. "When a verb is preceded by, and has relation to a past tense (is preceding action)" (Alwis 1851:63). According to this definition the non-finite verbs used before the finite verbs which represent past time are absolutives. Different technical terms are given to identify this verbal category in Indo-Aryan languages: *absolutive* (Hultzsch 1925:69, Whitney 1962:203, Paranavitana 1956:cxlix, Bender 1967:246), *preterite gerund* (Geiger 1938:158), *preceding action* (English translation of *Pera Kiriyə* or *Pūrva Kriyā*) (Paranavitana 1956:cxlix) and *atītə nipāta kriyā* (past particle verbs) (Munidasa 1999:87).

The organization of this chapter is as given below.

4.1 includes general remarks on absolutives. This is followed by a brief history of the development of the absolutives in classical Sinhalese in 4.2. The morphophonemic rules which are identified in building these forms are given in 4.4. In 4.4 includes a detailed description of structure and usages of absolutives attested in the Jātəkə tales with illustrations.

4.1. General Remarks

4.1.1. There are regular as well as irregular absolutives in Sinhalese (Geiger 1938:159. Paranavitana 1956: cxlix, Munidasa 1999:88). The roots such as *kərə* 'do', *ya* 'go' and *e* 'come' have irregular absolutives. eg. *koṭə* 'having done', *gos* 'having gone', *avut* 'having come' (Geiger 1938:159).

4.1.2. In Sinhalese the particle '*lā*' is added to the end of absolutive to give rise to an additional form which does not cause a semantic change (Geiger 1938:159, Paranavitana 1956: cl). eg. *kapā-lā* 'having cut' (kapə-ā-lā), *bædə-lā* 'having roasted' (badə-lā > bædə-lā) (Geiger 1938:159).

4.1.3. The particle '*lā*' is not added after the absolutive form when the root ends with inherent '*la*' (see 4.4.11).

4.1.4. Munidasa uses a new technical term *atītə nipāta kriyā* (past particle verbs) for absolutives in Sinhalese (Munidasa 1999:87).

4.2. A brief history of the development of absolutives in the Jātəkə text

When we examine the development of absolutives, the ancient inscriptions from all the stages and the literature of Sinhalese give strong evidences to identify it clearly.

4.2.1. Some older forms of absolutives are found in Brāhmi inscriptions in the era of Prakrit Sinhalese. eg. *kaḍəyə* < (Pkt. *kʰaṇḍəyə*) 'having broken', *kariyə* < (Pkt. *kāryə*) 'having done' (Paranavitana 1956:cli). The forms *geɳeye* (Wickramasinghe 1994:250), and *geɳeyə* < (Pkt. *gaṇhiyə*) 'having taken' (ibid 251) are also mentioned in the inscriptions belonging to 4th c. A. D. *sanəhay* 'having comforted' (Wickramasinghe 1912:25[4]), *pahayay* 'having illumined' (ibid 25[7-8]), Anuradhapura slab inscription of king Kassəpə-V (929-39 c. A. D.) gives *kəray* 'having done' (Wickramasinghe 1912:40[6]), *væjæmbæ* 'having flourished' (ibid 46[2]), *pujay* 'having offered' (ibid 46[7]), and Jētəvanārāmə slab inscription of king Mahində-IV (1026-42 c. A. D.) gives *hæræ* 'drove away' (Wickramasinghe 1912:221[5]), *kæræ* 'having done' (ibid 221[5]), *kərā* 'established' (ibid 222[33]).

4.2.2. According to Sigiri graffiti, three main classes are identified under absolutives (Paranavitana 1956: cxlix-cl).

4.2.2.1. '*ā*' ending class

i. *kiyā* 'having told' (kiyə-ā)

ii. *balā* 'having looked' (balə-ā)

iii. *tabā* 'having kept' (tabə-ā).

4.2.2.2. 'æ' ending class

i. *bæɳæ* 'having said' (baɳə-æ > bæɳə-æ)

ii. *dækæ* 'having seen' (dak-æ > dæk-æ)

iii. *kæræ* 'having done' (kərə-æ > kærə-æ).

4.2.2.3. '*ī* ' ending class

i. *nægī* 'having climbed' (nagə-ī > nægə-ī)

ii. *igilī* 'having flown' (ugulə-ī > igilə-ī)

iii. *dī* 'having given' (de-ī).

4.2.3. According to the Sidat Saŋɡərāvə the following suffixes are used to build absolutives: They are '-æ, -ā, -ī, -in, -ælā, -ālā, -īlā' and '-inlā' (Gair 2013:96).

4.2.4. There are several absolutive suffixes in Jātəkə text. They are as follows:

Absolutives in the Jātəkə tales have one of the following suffixes: 'ə, ā, æ, ǣ', or 'ī'. The relevant examples are given below.

4.2.4.1. 'ə' ending type
i.   *givisə* 'agree-ABS.' (P. 227[2]) (givis-ə)
ii. *piḷivisə* 'ask-ABS.' (P. 173[2]) (piḷivis-ə)
iii. *dækə* 'see-ABS.' (P. 180[21]) (dak-ə > dæk-ə) (umlaut is applied 'a' > 'æ')

4.2.4.2. 'ā' ending type
i.   *damā* 'put-ABS.' (P. 181[14]) (damə-ā)
ii. *kapā* 'cut-ABS.' (P. 177[26]) (kapə-ā)
iii. *nasā* 'destroy-ABS.' (P. 202[35]) (nasə-ā)

4.2.4.3. 'æ' ending type (umlaut 'a' > 'æ')
i.   *vædæ* 'enter-ABS.' (P. 203[6]) (vadə-æ > vædə-æ)
ii. *ḍæhæ* 'bite-ABS.' (P. 117[29]) (ḍaha-æ > ḍæha-æ)

4.2.4.4. 'ǣ' ending type (umlaut is applied 'ā' > 'ǣ')
i.   *pǣ* 'show-ABS.' (P. 187[4]) (pā > pǣ)
ii. *ḍǣ* 'bite-ABS.' (P. 143[10]) (ḍaha > ḍæhæ > ḍæ-æ > ḍǣ)
    ('h' deletion and the lengthening of like vowels are possible)

4.2.4.5. 'ī' ending type
i.   *dī* 'give-ABS.' (P. 236[20]) (de-ī)
ii. *nægī* 'climb-ABS.' (P. 247[40]) (nagə-ī > nægə-ī)
iii. *pæhædī* 'confide-ABS.' (P. 131[8]) (pahadə-ī > pæhædə-ī)
    (umlaut is applied 'a' > 'æ')

4.2.5. Geiger mentions three main categories under absolutives according to his conjugation of verbal roots (Geiger 1938:159):
i.   *balā* 'having looked' (balə-ā)
ii. *bædə* 'having roasted' (badə-ə > bædə)
iii. *penī* 'having appeared' (pen-ī)

4.2.6. There are some irregular absolutives in Sinhalese language. It is not possible to give a rule of formation for these forms (Munidasa 1999:88-89):

i.   *karə* 'do' - *koʈæ* 'having done'

ii. *e* 'come' - *avudu ~ avut ~ ævit ~ adə ~ avudini ~ avudin ~ ævidin* 'having come'

iii. *ya* 'go' - *gos ~ gosini ~ gosin ~ gosinə* 'having gone'

iv. *vapurə* 'sow' - *vapuʈæ* 'having sown'

4.2.7. The addition of particle '*lā*' at the end of absolutive forms to build an additional form with the same semantic features is also a common status in Sinhalese. This usage is more frequently found in later period, especially in literary works. Some examples are quoted from Sigiri graffiti (Paranavitana 1956: cliv).

næɡə-lā 'having climbed', *pihirə-lā* 'having combed', *dækə-lā* 'having seen'.

4.3. Morphophonemic rules for the derivation of absolutive forms in the Jātəkə text

Some morphophonemic rules can be established based on the examples found in Jātəkə tales. These rules are as follows:

4.3.1. 'r, ŋ' > 'ʈ' when they occur in final syllable

There is a possibility to change the segments '*r, ŋ*' in final syllable into '*ʈ*' in absolutives.

4.3.1.1. 'r' > 'ʈ' when it occurs in final syllable

i.   *atuʈə* 'spread-ABS.' (P.174[14]) (aturə - r > ʈ)

ii. *koʈə* 'do-ABS.' (P. 236[15]) (kərə > korə > koʈə - *r > ʈ*)

The alternative form *kərə* 'do-ABS.' (P. 115[42]) (kərə-ø) is found in the Jātəkə text. However it does not follow the rule mentioned in 4.3.1.1.

4.3.1.2. 'ŋ' > 'ʈ' when it occurs in final syllable

i.   *vikuʈə* 'sell-ABS.' (P. 227[1]) (vikuŋə > vikuʈə - ŋ > ʈ)

ii. *vikoʈə* 'sell-ABS.' (P. 177[4]) (vikuŋə > vikoŋə > vikoʈə - ŋ > ʈ)

The alternative form *vikuŋā* 'sell-ABS.' (P. 155[39]) (vikuŋə-ā) is found in the Jātəkə text. However it does not follow the rule mentioned in 4.3.1.2.

4.3.2. Adding 'ə' to the end of root

i. *givisə* 'agree-ABS.' (P. 227[2]) (givis-ə)

ii. *isə* 'sprinkle-ABS.' (P. 206[3]) (is-ə)

iii. *piḷivisə* 'ask-ABS.' (P. 173[2]) (piḷivis-ə)

4.3.3. Umlaut (fronting/vowel harmony)

There are three short and long vowels in Sinhalese which can occur in the process of umlaut. They are mentioned below. '*a/ā*' > 'æ/ǣ', '*u/ū*' > '*i/ī*', and '*o/ō*' > '*e/ē*' (Munidasa 1958:100).

4.3.3.1. '*a/ā*' > 'æ/ǣ'

æñdə 'draw-ABS.' (P. 184[6]) (aňdə-ø)

ædə 'pull-ABS.' (P. 393[10]) (adə-ø)

pǣ 'show-ABS.' (P. 187[4]) (pā-ø)

pæhærə~pǣrə 'hit/steal-ABS.' 'beat-ABS.' (P.156[5]) (P. 192[5])

paharə-ø

pæhærə > pæ-ærə > pǣrə

(The deletion of '*h*' and lengthening of like vowels are observed.)

4.3.3.2. '*u/ū*' > '*i/ī*'

i. *ipədə~ipidə* 'born-ABS.'(P. 229[13]) (P. 185[3])

(upədə-ø > ipədə/,

upədə > ipədə > ipidə) (progressive assimilation is observed)

ii. *pibidə* 'awake-ABS.' (P. 187[34]) (pubudu-ə > pibidi-ə)

4.3.3.3. '*o/ō*' > '*e/ē*'

i. *perəvə* 'wear-ABS.' (P. 184[14]) (poro-ə > pere-ə > pere-v-ə > perə-və)

The alternative forms *porovə ~ porəvā* 'wear-ABS.' (P. 162[23]) (poro-ə > poro-v-ə) (P. 199[42]) (poro-ā > poro-v-ā > porə-vā) are found in the Jātəkə text. However they do not follow the rule mentioned in 4.3.3.3.

4.3.4. 'ā' suffix and 'v' augment

The segment '*ā*' is a suffix and '*v*' becomes the augment which helps to fill the hiatus between two morphemes.

i. *anudanvā* 'consent-ABS.' (P. 219[14]) (anudan-v-ā)

ii. *piḷiganvā* 'offer-ABS.' (P. 222[9]) (piḷigan-v-ā)

4.3.5. Umlaut and addition of suffix 'ī'

i. *pæhædī* 'confide-ABS.' (P. 131[8]) (pahadə-ī > pæhædə-ī)

ii. *nægī* 'climb-ABS.' (P.247[40]) (nagə-ī > nægə-ī)

iii. *pipī* 'bloom-ABS.' (P. 68[31]) (pup-ī > pip-ī)

4.3.6. Addition of suffix 'ā'

i. *pihiṭā* 'establish-ABS.' (P. 150[18]) (pihiṭə-ā)

ii. *damā* 'put-ABS.' (P. 181[14]) (damə-ā)

iii. *lā* 'put-ABS.' (P. 174[31]) (lə-ā)

4.3.7. Addition of suffix 'ī'

i. *sī* 'laugh-ABS.' (P. 17[4]) (se-ī)

ii. *hī* 'fall-ABS.' (P. 31[1]) (he-ī)

iii. *dī* 'give-ABS.' (P. 236[20]) (de-ī)

4.3.8. Addition of 'ə' and syncope of root

The addition of 'ə' as a suffix to the root and the syncope or deletion of middle vowel of the root can be identified (Munidasa 1999:45).

i. *ikmə* 'pass-ABS.' (P. 5[17]) (ikum-ə > ikm-ə)

ii. *nikmə* 'depart-ABS.' (P. 5[17]) (nikum-ə > nikm-ə)

4.3.9. Root itself is absolutive form in Sinhalese

The root of the verb is sometimes used as the absolutive in Sinhalese. These forms do not follow any morphophonemic rule. But they are found frequently in Jātəkə tales. In this type, the root and the verbal form are identical. Some examples are given below.

i. *biňdə* 'break-ABS.' (P. 245[7]) (biňdə-ø)

ii. *dā* 'cut-ABS.' (P. 290[26]) (dā-ø)

iii. *keḷə* 'play-ABS.' (P. 229[15]) (keḷə-ø)

4.3.10. Addition of 'lā' to the end of absolutive form

The particle '*lā*' is added at the end of absolutive form to make additional form which does not have separate meaning (see 4.2.7). This is not a morphophonemic rule

but the method of forming absolutes with morphemic variants. These form are listed in Table 4.1.

	Morphemic variants of absolutives	
1	*asā* 'hear' (P. 237[7]) (asə-ā)	*asālā* 'hear' (P.204[3]) (asə-ā-lā)
2	*asvasā* 'console' (P. 152[20]) (asvasə-ā)	*asvasālā* 'console' (P. 197[28]) (asvasə-ā-lā)
3	*damā* 'put' (P. 181[14]) (damə-ā)	*damālā* 'put' (P. 60[33]) (damə-ā-lā)
4	*læbə* 'receive' (P. 256[10]) (labə-ø > læbə)	*læbəlā* 'receive' (P. 202[35]) (labə-lā > læbə-lā)
5	*vædə* 'enter' (P. 239[3]) (vadə-ø > vædə)	*vædəlā* 'enter' (P. 13[21]) (vadə-lā > vædə-lā)
6	*væňdə* 'worship' (P. 187[9]) (vaňdə-ø > væňdə)	*væňdəlā* 'worship' (P. 308[19]) (vaňdə-lā > væňdə-lā)
7	*lā* 'put' (P. 174[31]) (lə-ā)	*lālā* 'put' (P. 399[39]) (lə-ā-lā)

Table 4.1 Morphemic variants of absolutives

4.3.11. Inherent 'lā' in absolutive forms

Some verbal roots of Sinhalese are end with inherent '*la*'. When the suffix '*ā*' is added to the root, the final vowel of root gets deleted. As a result '*la*' appears as '*lā*'. Then it looks like absolutive form with particle '*lā*'. But it does not have '*lā*' as particle.

i. *balā* 'look-ABS.' (P.244[23]) (balə-ā)

ii. *palā* 'split-ABS.' (P. 206[13]) (palə-ā)

iii. *allā* 'catch-ABS.' (P. 203[22]) (allə-ā)

iv. *apullā* 'wash-ABS.' (P. 312[24]) (apullə-ā)

4.4. Structure and Usages of absolutives in Jātəkə Text

4.4.1. Absolutive with causative suffix

There are some absolutive forms with causative suffixes in Jātəkə tales. The causative suffix '-və' is added between root and absolutive suffix.

	Absolutives	Absolutives with causative suffix
1	*pisə* 'cook' (P. 11[20]) (pisə-ø)	*pisəvā* 'cause to cook' (P. 174[26]) (pisə-və-ā)
2	*kərə* 'do' (P. 115[42]) (kərə-ø)	*kərəvā* 'cause to do' (P. 217[21]) (kərə-və-ā)
3	*damā* 'put' (P. 181[14]) (damə-ā)	*damməvā* 'cause to put' (P. 217[20]) (damə-və-və-ā > dam-və-və-ā > dammə-və-ā)
4	*tabā* 'keep' (P. 225[16]) (tabə-ā)	*tabbəvā* 'cause to keep' (P. 203[15]) (tabə-və-və-ā > tab-və-və-ā > tabbə-və-ā)

Table 4.2 Absolutive forms with causative suffix

4.4.2. Absolutives with vector verbs

In this construction, V-1 as well as V-2 includes absolutive forms. Their usages are given in the chapter of complex predicates. See 5.1 for details.

4.4.3. Use of homophony '*lā*' in Jātəkə tales

The form '*lā*' found in Jātəkə tales has two functions (Paranavitana 1993:239, Munidasa 1999:89). On the one hand it functions as absolutives and on the other hand as particle. Usages of this form are mentioned below with illustrations.

4.4.3.1. Use of *lā* 'having put' as absolutive form

(118) *yakinnō…sirəgeyi lā un kannāhə* (P. 386[6-7])

yak   -ini   -ō   sirəge   -yi   la

devil   F.   PL.   prison   LOC.   put

-ā	un	kā	-annā	-hə
ABS.	them	eat	III.FUT.PL.	PTCLE.

'Female devils having put them in prison and will eat them.'

The verbal form '*lā*' (118) represents the grammatical category of absolutive. It occurs as separate entity in the sentence.

(119) *tāpəsəyō də…kīpədavəsak ikməvālā…mesē kīhə* (P. 225[14-18])

tāpəsə	-ō	də	kīpə	davəs	-ak	ikum
hermit	HON.PL.	also	several	day	INDEF.	spend

-ā	-lā	me	sē	kiyə	-ī	hə
ABS.	PTCLE.	this	like	tell	III.PST.PL.	PTCLE.

'The hermit, having spent several days, said like this.'

The form '*lā*' (119) functions as particle used after the absolutive forms. It occurs as bound morpheme in the sentence without implying any specific meaning.

4.4.4. Absolutive forms with three verbal roots

We can see three absolutive forms in this construction which are conjugated from three verbal roots. These three forms of absolutives have their own semantic identity when they occur separately in the sentences. But these groups of words give the meaning as a unit in following examples.

4.4.4.1.   *pīnā genə gos* 'swim-ABS. TAKE-ABS. GO-ABS. > swim' (P. 179[18])

4.4.4.2.   *osəvā genə gos* 'lift-ABS. TAKE-ABS. GO-ABS. > carry' (P. 179[20])

4.4.4.3.   *luhubaňdəvā genə gos* 'chase-ABS. TAKE-ABS. GO-ABS. > chase' (P. 235[10-11])

4.4.4.4.   *gæləvī genə gosin* 'leave-ABS. TAKE-ABS. GO-ABS. > leave' (P. 245[8])

4.4.5. Absolutive form with four verbal roots

In this construction we can observe four absolutive forms which are conjugated from four verbal roots. These four forms of absolutives have their own semantic identity when they occur separately in the sentences. But in the following attested example, it gives the meaning as a unit.

4.4.5.1.   *genə hærə dakvā vadārā* 'take-ABS. LEAVE-ABS. POINT-ABS. HON.PTCLE. > preach' (P. 177[41])

The form *vadārā* is takes two meanings, namely honorific particle and absolutive. As an honorific particle it does not give specific meaning (see 4.4.5.i) but as an absolutive it gives the meaning of 'having preached' (see 2.3.1.4.2.3).

4.4.6. Irregular absolutive forms

Most of the verbal paradigms in Sinhalese are regular. But there are some absolutives in Jātəkə tales with irregular forms. They are mentioned below.

4.4.6.1.   gos ~ gosin ~ gosinlā 'go-ABS.' (P. 2[37]), (P. 221[23]), (P. 225[29])

The root of above mentioned verbal forms is *ya* 'go' (4.5.5.i). The all the past verbal forms of *ya* 'go' begin with '*g*' in Sinhalese.

4.4.6.2.   ævit ~ avut ~ avudin 'come-ABS.' (P. 33[4]), (P. 181[16]), (P. 205[9])

The root of above mentioned verbal forms is *e* 'come' (4.5.5.ii). The initial segments of all these forms begin with 'æ/*a*'.

4.4.6.3.   *bī* 'drink-ABS.' (P. 192[2])

The root of above mentioned verbal form is *po* 'drink' (4.5.5.iii). The initial segment '*p > b*' in all the paradigms except causative forms in Sinhalese.

eg: *povā* 'cause to drink-ABS.' (P. 368[36])

povə 'cause to drink-IMP.' (P. 369[3])

4.4.7. Absolutives with causative meaning

The absolutives mentioned in these sentences are used with the meaning of causative. There is causative form as well as causative meaning.

(120) *rajjuruvō...kasələ harəvā...apāsuvə kimekdæyi vicāḷōyə* (P.163[12-16])

rajjuru	-ō	kasələ	harə	-və	-ā	apāsu
king	HON.PL.	garbage	remove	CUAS.	ABS.	discomfort

-ə	kimek	-də	-yi	vicārə	-ō	yə
DEF.	what	QUES.PTCLE.	PTCLE.	ask	III.PST.PL.	PTCLE.

'The king having caused the garbage to be removed, asked what the discomfort was.'

(121) *siṭāŋō...baḍu...vikuŋəvā milə puruṣəyanṭə devvāhuyə* (P.227[7-8])

siṭu	-āŋə	-ō	baḍu	vikuŋə	-və	-ā
millionaire	HON.PTCLE	PL.	goods	sell	CAUS.	ABS.

milə	puruṣə	-anṭə	de	-və	-āhu	yə
price-DEF.	man	DAT.PL.	give	CAUS.	III.PST.PL.	PTCLE.

'The millionaire having caused the goods to be sold, gave the money to the men.'

4.4.8. Volitive and involitive absolutives

There are some absolutives which have volitive and involitive forms in the Jātəkə tales. Most of the verbal roots in Sinhalese have these two types of forms. We can identify the vowel fronting in the formation of these verbs. It is a regular process in Sinhalese (see-1.6.8).

	Volitive	**Involitive**
1	*kaḍā* 'break' (P. 319[26]) (kaḍə-ā)	*kæḍī* 'break' (P. 332[16])(kaḍə-ī > kæḍə-ī)
2	*karəkavā* 'rotate' (P.318[2]) (karəkavə-ā)	*karəkævī* 'rotate' (P. 264[28]) (karəkavə-ī > karəkævə-ī)
3	*mudā* 'release' (P. 184[34]) (mudə-ā)	*midī* 'release' (P. 260[4]) (mudə-ī > midə-ī)
4	*mirikā* 'suffer' (P. 247[15]) (mirikə-ā)	*mirikī* 'suffer' (P. 10[34]) (mirikə-ī)

Table 4.3 Volitive and involitive absolutives

Summary

Three classes of absolutive suffixes ('*ā, æ*' and '*ī*') are observed in Sigiri graffiti. The Sidat Saŋgərāvə introduces eight suffixes ('-æ, *-ā, -ī, -in, -ælā, -ālā, -īlā*' and '-*inlā*') in the formation of absolutives whereas five suffixes ('-*ə, -ā, -æ, -ǣ*' and '-*ī*') are found in the Jātəkə tales. A brief history of the development of absolutives, morphophonemic rules which are used in formation of absolutives and various types of absolutives and their usages were also described with the relevant illustrations.