

---

## The Structure and Usages of Optative Verbs in Classical Sinhalese Era

Rev. Morakandegoda Ariyawansa

*Department of Sinhala, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna,  
Sri Lanka*

Corresponding author: ariyawansamora@gmail.com

The optative mood is traditionally named *āsi kiriyā* (Skt. *āfirvāda kriyā*) in Sidat Saṅgērāvā. The Optative mood expresses a wholesome wish in future. Basically it gives good or bad wishes. But the Sidat Saṅgērāvā emphasizes only the good wishes under *āsi kiriyā*. This verbal category in Sinhalese has not undergone considerable changes in the history of the language. Mostly the same phonemic and structural value continues in the eras of Sinhalese language evolution. The ancient forms of optative are observed in the inscriptions of Prakrit Sinhalese era. The usage *ved<sup>h</sup>ā vāyu* (Skt. - *b<sup>h</sup>avatu*, Pāli - *hōtu/b<sup>h</sup>ōtu/b<sup>h</sup>avatu*, Sin. -*vāyu*) ‘may increase’ is found in Ruvanvælisæyā pillar inscription. The optative suffix ‘-*vay*’ is found in Mediaeval Sinhalese period in Gæræṅḍigalā rock inscription. *budenā bat no læbet(vay) para danmāye balu kavuḍu vetvay* ‘may they not receive food to eat; may they be born as dogs and crows in their next birth’. The optative suffix ‘-*vā*’ was attested in Morægōdā pillar inscription also. *kavuḍu balu vetvā* (*vā-ēt-vā*) ‘(may they) become crows or dogs’. Four suffixes are identified in Sigiri Graffiti which were used to make optative verbs in the classical Sinhalese era. They are ‘-*va*’, ‘-*vay*’, ‘-*vāyu*’ and ‘-*vayā*’. Two types of optative forms (benedictive and vituperative) are observed in traditional grammar whereas four types were identified in classical Sinhalese. They are Benedictive, Vituperative, Precative and Desirous. This research mainly based on qualitative research method. Primary data are quoted from inscriptions and classical Sinhalese literature and secondary data extracted from books, articles and other sources. The main objective of this paper is to identify and categorize the optative mood formations which were found in this era. The research problem of this paper is to observe ‘which type of optative formations were found in the classical Sinhalese era’. The history and the usages of the optative mood were discussed according to the data of the classical Sinhalese. Traditionally established two types of usages of optative mood extended up to four types in classical Sinhalese language.

*Keywords: Benedictive, Imperative, Optative, Precative, Vituperative*