# Nepalese Linguistics

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# Contents

# Working prototype of a multimodal dictionary

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*The state of minority languages is in the verge of extinction in Nepal, especially, when they don't have a proper writing system, archival, and where Nepali is a predominantly used. Lohorung is an example, of such minority language, spoken among Lohroung Rai communities of Sankhuwasabha, a hilly district of eastern Nepal. The aim of this project is to document, preserve and vitalize the Lohorung language by using a multimodal dictionary which allows community members to collaboratively create an encyclopedic multimodal dictionary. The project envisages an active partnership between the researchers and the community members.*

*We have developed a working prototype of the multimodal dictionary which can be used to document Lohorung and practically any languages of the world where language community actively collaborates to author the dictionary. Currently, the dictionary is ready for the usability testing. We envisage evolving the prototype into fully working application with very high usability considerations, for usability will be the one of the most important factors which will encourage the community members to actively participate in dictionary building process.*

## 1 Introduction

Traditionally, paperback dictionaries are limited to words, their meanings, usage and pictures. Owing to the tradition, online dictionaries are limited to word meanings, its usage and symbolic or audio pronunciation at most. However, learning a new language using only such information is not adequate. A multimodal dictionary is an encyclopedic dictionary which describes a word and its usage in more than one mode. The information can be in the form of meaning of a word in various languages, description about the word in text, pictorial, audio or video, pronunciation of word in symbols (IPA) or audio, example on usage of the word and so on.

We have built a Multimodal Dictionary as a web application where different words in a target language (here Lohorung ) along with their meaning, pronunciation, description, examples and

related audio, picture and video information can be added by authors and browsed by general users. Each word also contains its Nepali & English meaning(s) and pronunciations. The system supports Unicode encodings which allows data to be written in Devanagari or Latin scripts. Hence, collation operation like sorting and searching can easily be performed.

We have built this application in order to pilot it for Lohorung; however, it can be used for any other languages of the world. Lohorung is one of the minority Tibeto-Burman languages of Kirati group spoken in Eastern Hilly region of Nepal. Lohorung has its origin at the area between Arun River and Sabha river of Shankhuwasabha District. However, today, Lohorungs are found in the towns and cities around Ilam and Sankhuwasabha, southern plain of Terai, Kathmandu valley and Darjeeling in Nepal. Some preliminary study has been done on Lohorung languages which include a basic dictionary in Lohorung with a grammatical sketch (Yadava et al 2004).

Lohorung is one of the many endangered languages of the world. Speakers of Lohorung are decreasing everyday due to the dominance of Nepali, the national language, and inter-language marriage between Lohorung and other communities. The children of Lohorung and non-Lohorung parents have been found to adopt Nepali, the lingua franca, as a primary language. It has been reportedly found that there is a growing trend of marriage between Lohorung, other Kirati Rai communities like Yakkha, Khaling, Khulung and other non Kirati communities like Gurung, Tamang, Bahun, Chettris etc., who reside in the areas near to Lohorung Villages. Such a scenario is quite common in other endangered and small language groups in Nepal.

Currently, the system is made to support three languages namely: Lohorung, Nepali and English but it can be easily adapted to any other language according to need by creating language packs. Dictionaries in other languages can easily be built with this system. The multimodal dictionary project is a part of Nepali and Lohorung Spoken Language project which is a collaborative project

between University of Gothenburg, Sweden and Centre for Communication and Development Studies, Nepal. It is funded by Swedish Research Council (VR), in collaboration with the development agency SIDA.

In section 2, we will discuss how preservation of a language like Lohorung can be done with the help of Multimodal Dictionary. In section3, we will discuss how multimodal dictionary can aid in language vitalization. We will further point out other possible uses of multimodal dictionary in section 4. Section 5 will present an overview of the technical details of the dictionary. In section 6, we will discuss the challenges we have faced during implementation of Multimodal Dictionary. The web version of Multimodal Dictionary has been completed and is available online where more than 50 Lohorung participants are actively collaborating in self documentation of their language. We will discuss about the result of the participation in the section 7. In the final section, we will conclude by presenting the possibilities of using Multimodal Dictionary in other languages of Nepal and rest of the word.

## 2 Preservation of a language using multimodal dictionary

In an endangered language like Lohorung, where the number of speakers is decreasing every year, Multimodal Dictionary will play a vital role in archival and preservation of the language, for it collects words and a lot of information related to the meaning and the usage of a word.

The Multimodal dictionary can also be a language learning resource for the new learners. It will be an archive of words, meanings, usage, grammar and language features. It will also be an archive of spoken usage of a language, say pronunciation, stress, intonation, tone etc. It can also be modified to a talking dictionary.

Apart from language, multimodal dictionary will also be a very rich resource of culture documentation because it has the capabilities of storing textual, audio and video stories or description related to words. The descriptions could be on meaning, etymology, history, cultural and indigenous knowledge of a word etc. It can also show relationship of a language community

(here Lohorung) with other language group/community.

In the scenario where there are only a handful of speakers who can speak their native language (here Lohorung), it is even more significant to document a language in as many different modes as possible.

## 3 Vitalization of a language using multimodal dictionary

In the context, where most of the have stopped using their native language (here Lohorung), Multimodal Dictionary can trigger in use of use of Multimodal dictionary can increase teaching, learning and hence, use of Lohorung.

Multimodal dictionary uses crowd-sourcing in order to collect data from a language community. Crowd-sourcing is a type of participative online activity in which an individual, an institution, a non-profit organization, or company proposes to a group of individuals of varying knowledge, heterogeneity, and number, via a flexible open call, the voluntary undertaking of a task (Estellés-Arolas and González-Ladrón-de-Guevara 2012). The productivity in crowd-sourcing exhibits a strong positive dependence on attention (Huberman et al 2009). We emphasize on the social prestige as recognition, a motivating factor for the contributors. Attention given by other users to an author's entry in the form of comment encourages the author to improve his contributions.

For the transfer of a language, from one generation to another, survival of a language is essential. We intend to interest younger generation in their native language by making the dictionary available in web, where most of the youngsters like to spend a considerable amount of their time.

As new generations are acquainted with Internet and Mobile telephony with services like GPRS or 3G, even in remote villages in Sankhuwasabha, access of multimodal dictionary in Lohorung villages should not be a hurdle anymore. Hence we believe that Multimodal dictionary, when adapted to work on cellular phones and computers at the same time, will help in vitalization of an endangered language.

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## 4 Other uses of multimodal dictionary

Apart from vitalization and documentation of a language, we are using Multimodal Dictionary as a tool to collect multimodal data in Lohorung. Short videos and audio clips can be used as the raw material by Linguists for transcription and annotation using tools like Elan (www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Nepal_nepal_stati stics. html) in order to build a Lohorung Spoken data corpus, which can be further used for analysis of various features of spoken data. Currently, we are working on study of feedback, pause, silence and own-communication in the Lohorung Spoken Data corpus, built from the data collected through Multimodal Dictionary.

Apart from this, data from multimodal dictionary can also be used to study culture, religion, natural resources usage and many other sociological aspects of Lohorung.[1]

## 5 Technical details

The Multimodal dictionary has capabilities of storing words in different categories of parts of speech and phrases as idioms and proverbs. The following table lists the categories and their abbreviation.

| POS | abbreviation | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Noun | n | ना |
| Pronoun | pron | सर्व |
| Adjective | adj | वि |
| Verb | v | क्रि |
| Adverb | adv | क्रिवि |
| Postposition | pp | नायो |
| Conjunction | conj | सं |
| Interjection | interj | विस्म |
| Particle | part | नि |
| Number | num | सङ्ग |
| Classifier | cl | कोका |

| non-human call | nhc | बोखे |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Idiom | idiom | टु |
| Proverb | prov | उ |

Table 1: POS Abbreviation

Apart from grammatical categories, the words and phrases can be categorized semantically into various categories. These categories are tag based and each word or phrase can belong to more than one category. Currently we have categories like relation, ornament, medicine, crops, human body, nature, tools etc.

| Categories | Subcategories |
| --- | --- |
| Relationship | |
| Ornaments | |
| Medicine | |
| Human Body | |
| Animals | Domestic, Wild, Bird, |
| Plants | Crops, flower, tree, other |
| Minerals | |
| Tools | |
| Activities | |
| Numerals | |
| Clothing | |
| Food | Liquor, other |
| Occupation | |
| Miscellaneous | |

Table 2: Categories of words in Lohorung Multimodal Dictionary

The system can be broadly divided into dictionary browser and administration panel:

### 5.1 Dictionary browser

Dictionary Browser is the public word browsing interface, using which any user can search a word textually or graphically. Users can view the word's description in text, audio, picture and video.

### 5.1.1 Navigation

Users can navigate through the categories using pictorial menu to find their desired words. A user who is new to the target language (here Lohorung)

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[1] If used in other languages, the same is possible in other language groups.

can also navigate through the system using pictures to find a word.



Figure 1: Pictorial navigation

Apart from pictorial representation, words can be browsed using textual cues or alphabetical index. A word can also be directly searched using a conventional search box where text in Nepali, Lohorung or English can be entered. We will discuss about Input methods functionalities in Multimodal Dictionary in the next section.

### 5.1.2 Input methods

Normally, Unicode keyboard map has to be installed for a separate language in Windows or Linux machines which can be a not simple for people new to computer. At times, other technical problems can arise which hinders the users to access a platform like Multimodal Dictionary. To solve this problem we have included virtual keyboards to search and other forms using which users can type text in Lohorung, Nepali, English and IPA irrespective of availability of keyboard layouts for these languages.



Figure 2: Virtual keyboard for Roman, Devanagari & IPA
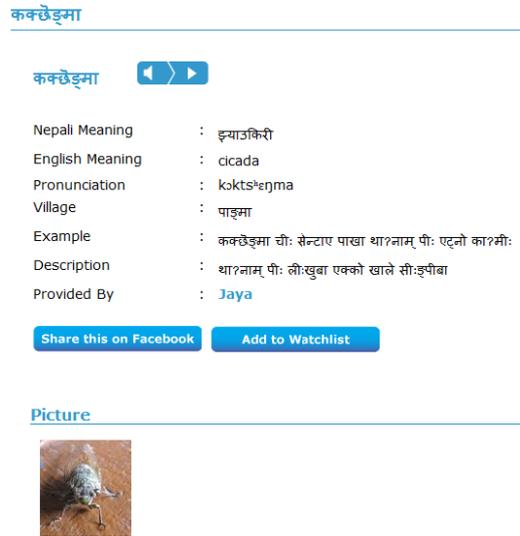


Figure 3: A dictionary entry

### 5.1.3 Versioning system

Authoring an online multimodal dictionary is a collaborative work, where members from the community members have to work together on word entries. A contributor may know about the grammatical details about a word while another contributor may know about its uses and another contributor may have some pictures and videos about on the word. Multimodal Dictionary allows the contributors to work on the same word entry together. For this, a proper versioning system is necessary.

We have built a versioning system in the Multimodal Dictionary which allows contributors to review all the versions of a word entry and then if necessary revert to the old version.

This feature will also be useful to see the trends of change in usage of a word.

### 5.1.2 Commenting

One part of collaboration is communication between the contributors. The contribution can be a direct one where contributors add words, audio or video. Another way of contribution could be indirect where contributors can find mistakes or suggest a new definition or uses to the contributors. This has been made possible with the addition of commenting system to the multimodal dictionary. Please see the figure below:
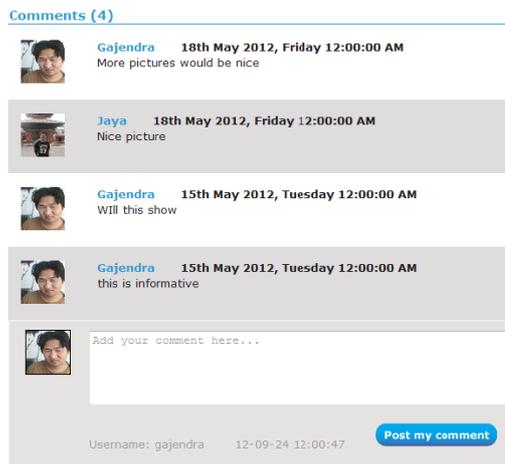
Figure 4: Commenting in each word entry

Our focus while developing the Multimodal Dictionary has been usability, because the dictionary needs to be used by people with various levels of literacy and computer experiences. We have taken special care on the ease of use, intuitiveness and fun experience for users.

## 5.2 Contributor's panel

Contributor's Panel is a collection of tools to be used by contributors in order to add and update new word entries. In addition there are tools to view the media that has been submitted to the dictionary. This tool is also ideal for linguists who want to use the multimedia data to transcribe and annotate in order to make a spoken language corpus. Apart from this, the contributors have facilities to maintain a profile which is a useful feature for collaboration and ranking that we use to encourage contributors.

In the contributor's Panel, the contributor can also get an overview of the dictionary. In the overview information like own contribution and other's contribution, grouped into various categories. The contributor can also search a word using the search tool and get the details about that word.

## 5.2 Administrator's panel

In administrator's panel there are features that can be used to manage users, word entries and categories in the Multimodal Dictionary. The administrator has a right to approve and disapprove a word entry. In our approach, a representative from the language community takes the role of the administrator who has the responsibility to authorize a word entry, manage users and categories. Admin panel also has search component to search words from the database of words. It also has media management component to manage the audio, video and pictures related to a word.

## 6. Challenges in the implementation

There are several challenges that we have met and dealt with during the process of developing the Multimodal Dictionary. This section will briefly describe the challenges and our approach to tackle them.

## 6.1 Literacy and IT experience

For a country like Nepal, literacy can be an issue for using a dictionary, because nearly half of the population is non-literate (Abras et al 2004). However, there is a growing trend of sending children to school so younger generation have better literacy rate and more of their generation use mobile phones daily. Though this generation cannot be good resource for language to be documented using Multimodal dictionary, their involvement will certainly encourage participation of older family members and can hence aid in vitalization of the language.

## 6.2 Crowd-sourcing as the source of data

In Lohorung dictionary contribution, we have found that at the beginning only about 5 % of the registered users were actively participating in the contribution. Most of the contributors contributed once to the dictionary or just registered. Our idea of fun and social prestige has to be well communicated in the dictionary user experience. While designing the application we have used user centered design approach where representatives of Lohorung community have been involved actively in feedback and testing of the application from the early stages.

After initial study of contributors' behavior we introduced contributor's ranking, word of the day and latest word features, in order to encourage them. Ranking is a way to give recognition to the contribution and gives social prestige to the contributors. This also encourages other contributors to compete the top ranking contributors. After the introduction of ranking

system we have found that there was a considerable increase in the contribution and participation by the community.

### 6.3 Availability and sustainability

Availability of dictionary application is an issue because dictionary building process is an over going process. The contents have to be continuously updated if we are to vitalize the language. Communities in remote villages have limited to resources to keep the system alive because even if people contribute voluntarily on data, there is cost in running computers, Internet and the web application. To mitigate this problem, we have visualized a concept of self-sustainable telecentre in the village which will be run by community and cost of multimodal dictionary project is maintained by the income from such telecentre.

### 7 Results

Building Multimodal Dictionary has been a major part of this project. The web application is fully functional at this stage however, we are still maintaining it. Apart from the web application, we are also making mobile application to suit android platform. So far, if we consider amount of data that has been collected as a tangible result of the Multimodal Dictionary, we have results in the form of collected words, contributors and spoken data corpus.

### 7.1 Collected words

Currently, there are more than 1600 word entries in the Lohorung Multimodal Dictionary. Most of the words have just text. We have following categories in the Multimodal Dictionary System. Currently, the system has mostly nouns as entries. There is currently a very high demand on addition of words from other parts of speech as category from the community. However, words falling into categories like verbs, adjective, prepositions have not yet been entered.

All the word entries may not be complete because it is possible to partially enter the data.

### 7.2 Contributors

There are more than 50 Lohorung contributors who live in different parts of Nepal and abroad. These participants are originally from Lohorung villages in Sankhuwasabha and who have migrated to bigger cities in Nepal and elsewhere.

Out of these registered contributors, round 20 participants are very active. Some of them are active in online contribution directly while others have important role in publicity and awareness.

### 7.3 Lohorung spoken data corpus

From the data that has been collected using Lohorung Multimodal Dictionary, we have extracted the audio and audio-video data that has been contributed by the crowd (community members). We have started transcribing and annotating the audio and video data using Elan Multimedia Annotation tool (Wittenburg et al 2006). Until now, we have already transcribed a total of about 40 hours of data which should roughly yield an activity based spoken language corpus with 350,000 words. The audio and video data can be broadly divided into 6 different activities.

### 8 Conclusion

In this paper we have sketched how we have implemented our concept of multimodal dictionary platform for preservation and vitalization of Lohorung. We also reported the preliminary results that we have achieved from the deployment of the multimodal dictionary.

We want to emphasize, however, that the current system's use is not limited to Lohorung. It can be adapted for any other languages of the world. Having a language documented in multimodal dictionary can create a very rich resource for learning and teaching, language and culture. The data collected from dictionary contributors can also be used for further analysis.

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# Baram in comparison with Proto-Tibeto-Burman

*Krishna Prasad Chalise*

## 1 Introduction

This paper compares the Baram native roots found in Baram Swadesh 100 wordlist with their corresponding Proto-Tibeto-Burman (PTB) roots reconstructed in Matisoff (2003) in order to find out the Baram reflexes of Tibeto-Burman roots and determine the general patterns of sound change that took place in the development of Baram from Proto-Tibeto-Burman.

Baram, a Tibeto-Burman language with alternative names Baramu, Brahmu and Bhramu is spoken in Dandagaun, Takukit-8 and Mailung, Takukot-5 in the central part of Gorkha district between Daraundi and Budhigandaki rivers by less than 40 elderly speakers (above 55 in age).

It belongs to the West Himalayan group of Tibeto-Burman languages (Bradley, 1997).

```
Tibeto-Burman
    North-east India
    Western
            Himalayan
            Central
        Magar, Kham, Newar, Chepang, Raji, …
                    Kiranti
        …………
                    West Himalayan
                        NNW (Lahul)
                        NW (Kinnaur)
                        Kanashi/Malana
                        Almora
                        Eastern (Nepal)
                    +Bhramu, Thami
                        Tshangla
            …………..
                        West Bodish
                        Central Bodish
                        East Bodish
        South-eastern
        North-eastern                    [Bradley 1997]
```
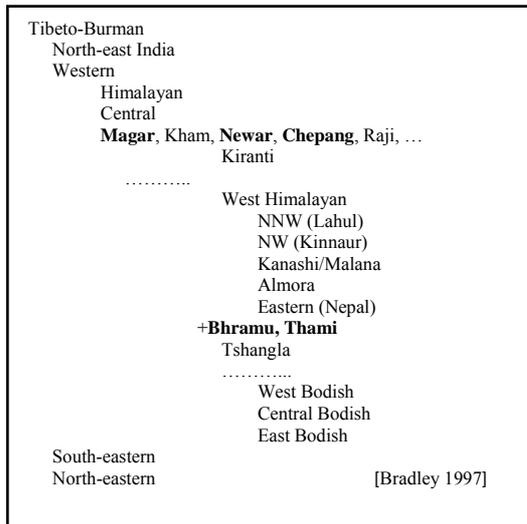
Figure 1: Classification of Baram in Bradley 1997

Thami is its closest language and Chepang and Newar are other closer languages (Kansakar et al., 2011c).

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 The wordlist

For the purpose of this research Swadesh 100 word list of basic vocabulary was taken as the wordlist.

#### 2.1.1 Recording

The words were recorded form four speakers (two adult males and two adult females) using EDIROL, R09HR audio recorder and Sony ECM-MS908C electret condenser microphone with the following sound quality:

| | |
|---|---|
| format | .wav |
| bit rate | 1411 kbps |
| audio sample size | 16 bit |
| channels | 2 (stereo) |
| audio sample rate | 44 KHz |
| audio format | PCM |

The words then were phonetically transcribed. The word lists were verified from other speakers and a final list was prepared.

Root identification was one of the most important and challenging parts of the analysis because it would directly affect the outcomes of the research. The following issues were taken into consideration regarding this issue.

#### 2.1.2 The loan words

As Baram is highly influenced by Nepali, there were a number of loan words in the list which were because of the fact that it has either lost its native words or it did not have native words to them and adopted loan words from other languages. The loans were excluded from the analysis as far as possible.

## 2.1.3 The compound words

In some cases, a compound word was found in Baram equivalent to a single word in English, e.g. *siŋma* (*siŋ* 'wood' and *ma* 'mother') 'tree', *mektu* (*mik* 'wood' and *ku* 'excreta') 'tear'. Some compounds are easy to find out the meanings of the components but in some cases the compounds are so opaque that the meanings of both of the components are almost impossible to find out. In such situations, the corresponding roots were taken for analysis.

## 2.1.4 Multiple words

There were found multiple words in Baram to refer to the meaning of a single English word. Some examples from Baram are presented in (1).

(1)  'come'

| təi | 'come' |
| hyaŋ | 'come down', |
| waŋ | 'come up' |
| yu | 'come vertically down' |

## 2.2 Identification of the roots

The roots in TB are monosyllabic and before and after the roots there may be affixes sometimes separable and sometimes unseparable. In some cases they are so grammaticalized and lost their function and meaning and original shape and ther might be a single consonant or consonatn cluster. Newar has stem final consonants that is attached to the verb roots (Matisoff, 2003).

Table 1: The roots in different languages

| Baram | Thami | Chepang | Newar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| si | si | si | sit | 'die' |
| pi | pi | bəy | bil | 'give' |
| a-ku | gui | khui | kʰul | 'steal' |

In such cases root identification was made with the help of the reconstructed PTB roots and comparison with the corresponding roots in the related languages like Thami, Chepang or Newar.

Table 2: Roots in different languages

| PTB | Baram | Thami | Chepang | Newar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *sya | ku-sya | cyi | mayʔ | la | meat |
| *siŋ | seŋ-ma | seŋ | siŋʔ | syi-ma | tree |
| *ley | ce-le | ci-le | le | mye | tongue |

So For example, Baram word for 'nail' is *luŋjiŋ* with two roots *luŋ* and *jiŋ* compounded. Out of them the exact root for nail is *jiŋ* because following comparison gives evidences to it.

Table 3: The compound words

| PTB | Baram | Thami | Chepang | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *tsyen | luŋ-jiŋ | pin | sən | nail |
| *bu | kə-pu | ka-pu | ta-laŋ | head |
| *kəw | is-ku | tarba | as-ku | smoke |
| *na | ku-na | Ku-nla | no | ear |

3 Overview of the comparison

In Baram Swadesh 100 wordlist, there are 85 native words and 15 Nepali loans.

Table 4: The Nepali loans

| | PTB | Baram | English |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | *ka | səpəi | all |
| 2. | *mya | dʰerəi | many |
| 3. | *pul | jəra | root |
| 4. | *kok | bokra | bark |
| 5. | *pun | cʰala | skin |
| 6. | *myal | pwãkʰ | feather |
| 7. | *gu(:)k, *put | gʰũḍa | knee |
| 8. | *ʔol | gʰãṭi | throat |
| 9. | *ka, *sin | kəlejo | lever |
| 10. | *kar, *mwat | tara | star |

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| 11. | *ŋow, *riŋ | həriyo | green |
| 12. | *glaŋ | ciso | cool |
| 13. | *wal *sey | golo | round |
| 14. | *luŋ, *ni | muʈu | heart |
| 15. | *duŋ | pahaɖ | mountain |

| 15. | *la | cə-la-uni | moon |
| 16. | *mik | mik | eye |
| 17. | *sa | nə-sa | soil |
| 18. | *ni | nis | two |

The loans are the words for quantity (all, many), internal parts (throat, heart, lever, root), outer layer (bark, feather, skin), part of an organ (knee), star, mountain, green, cool and round. If the Baram has not lost its existing words, it shows that Baram didn't have words for the internal body parts. The words for other internal body parts not listed in the Swadesh word list are not available in Baram (see Kansakar et al. 2011b). Similarly, the words for parts of an organ and the heavenly bodies except sun and moon seem lacking in the language. The lack of words for mountain, green, etc shows that some items are default in some environments and languages don't have words to refer to such things.

It shows that Baram has retained a larger number of exact Proto-Tibeto-Burman roots. Some of the roots are very common in other Tibeto-Burman languages, but the exact PTB roots found in Baram are not exact in its related languages Thami and Chepang. Baram has 6 more roots than the languages have.

Similarly, 43 of the Baram roots have similar phonological shapes to the PTB roots. The roots have suffered phonological change during the development of Baram from Proto-Tibeto-Burman.

While comparing the Baram roots with the PTB roots, 18 Baram roots have exact phonological shape to the PTB roots.

Table 6: The roots similar to the PTB roots

| SN | PTB | Baram | English |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | *day | to | that |
| 2. | *ba, *ma | hai | what |
| 3. | *dik | de | one |
| 4. | *low | lam | long |
| 5. | *ŋay | iki-ne | small |
| 6. | *mow | ma-ma | woman |
| 7. | *pʷa | bal | person |
| 8. | *kʷəy | a-kya | dog |
| 9. | *siŋ | seŋ-ma | tree |
| 10. | *yəw | ayu | seed |
| 11. | *hywəy | tsi-hwui | blood |
| 12. | *tsow | u-tsʰo | fat |
| 13. | *ʔu | wom | egg |
| 14. | *gruŋ | u-yuŋ | horn |
| 15. | *bu | kə-pu | head |
| 16. | *ka(:)m | a-nam | mouth |
| 17. | *ley | tse-le | tongue |
| 18. | *tsyen | luŋ-dziŋ | nail |
| 19. | *wam | u-yaŋ | abdomen |
| 20. | *nəw | nə-nu | breast |

Table 5: The roots with same phonological shape

| | PTB | Baram | English |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | *ŋa | ŋa | I |
| 2. | *naŋ | naŋ | you |
| 3. | *su | su | who |
| 4. | *ma | ma | not |
| 5. | *pʷa | pa-pa | man |
| 6. | *ŋa | nə-ŋa | fish |
| 7. | *wa | wa | bird/hen |
| 8. | *la | ho-la | leaf |
| 9. | *sya | ku-sya | meat |
| 10. | *sam | syam | hair |
| 11. | *na | tsi-na | nose |
| 12. | *na | ku-na | ear |
| 13. | *swa | swa | teeth |
| 14. | *sat | sat | kill |

| 21. | *daŋ, *ʔam | syaŋ | drink |
|-----|-----------|------|-------|
| 22. | *dzya | tsa | eat |
| 23. | *ney | ni | look |
| 24. | *hyen | səi | hear |
| 25. | *syey | tsi | know |
| 26. | *səy | si | die |
| 27. | *byam | u-ble | fly |
| 28. | *hwaŋ | hyuŋ | arrive/come |
| 29. | *duk | huk | sit |
| 30. | *bəy | pi | give |
| 31. | *nəy | u-ni | sun |
| 32. | *rəw | a-wa | water |
| 33. | *sa | nə-sa | earth |
| 34. | *məw | a-mu | cloud |
| 35. | *kəw | is-ku | smoke |
| 36. | *mey | mui | fire |
| 37. | *nya | pʰə-ya | red |
| 38. | *wa | keu-wo | yellow |
| 39. | *bok | gya-bo | white |
| 40. | *ya | u-ya | night |
| 41. | *miŋ | u-min | name |

There are 15 roots not resembling the PTB roots at all.

| SN | PTB | Baram | English |
|----|-----|-------|---------|
| 1. | *wa | aŋmət | rain |
| 2. | *rus, *rəw | hot̪ | bone |
| 3. | *mey | pitik | tail |
| 4. | *kaŋ | unjik | leg |
| 5. | *k(r)u, *lak | hit | hand |
| 6. | *gwap, *tsat | aŋak | bite |
| 7. | *ha:y | na | lie |
| 8. | *rap | t̪ʰiŋ | stand |
| 9. | *luk | kumba | stone |
| 10. | *tal | mau | ash |
| 11. | *ha:ŋ,*tyaŋ | ciliŋ | black |
| 12. | *tsa | gyodum | hot |

| 13. | *sar, *sik | kaui | new |
|-----|-----------|------|-------|
| 14. | *gaŋ | kyoksi | dried |
| 15. | *l(y)aŋ, *ma:y | kisen | good |

Most of the adjectives in Baram are derived from the verbal roots so there is no match between PTB roots and Baram roots. Similarly, the words for 'bite' and 'stand' in Baram have derived from onomatopoeic source. The words for 'hand' and 'leg' in Baram represent a part of the organs, not a whole. The word for 'water' in Baram represents the PTB root for 'rain' so the Baram word for 'rain' must have been derived from other sources. There have been found 7 roots in Baram whose corresponding roots have not been reconstructed in Matisoff (2003).

Table 7: The roots not available in Matisoff (2003)

| SN | PTB | Baram | English |
|----|-----|-------|---------|
| 1. | - | ni | we |
| 2. | - | yo | this |
| 3. | - | alam | large |
| 4. | - | pəuri bəne | swim |
| 5. | - | jyo, ya | walk |
| 6. | - | da | say |

## 3. Patterns of sound change

### 3.1 Rhymes

There are 6 basic vowels /i/, /e/, /u/, /o/, /a/ and /ə/ and occur at the nucleus position. Apart from the basic vowels, diphthongs also occur at the position but this paper only discusses the basic vowels.

Out of 941 native Baram words, there are 410 (43.57%) open syllables and 531 (56.42%) closed syllables. It shows that the number of closed syllables is also high in the language. Only the following consonants can occur in the syllable final (coda) position.

/p/    /t/    /t̪/    /k/

/m/    /n/    /ŋ/

/l/    /r/

The pattern of sound change in the rhymes is described below.

### 3.1.1 -a-

-a- seems to be the most prominent rhyme in the Baram language. Firstly, 29 roots out of 68 words from Swadesh 100 words contain it. Secondly, out of 18 PTB roots retained in Baram, 15 roots contain this rhyme (see Table 5). Thirdly, out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 484 (51.43%) words contain /a/. So, it shows that it is the most stable rhyme in the Baram language. There is one instance in which /a/ has been diphthongized as in (2).

(2)      *ma      hai            what

There are some limited instances in which other PTB rhymes have been changed into -a- in the Baram language. There are only two instance to show that PTB rhymes -ow- and -əy- have been changed into -a- in Baram (3).

(3)   *low     a-lam     big
      *mow     ma-ma     human female
      *kʷəy    a-kya     dog

The cases show that it is because of the influence of /a/ in the previous syllable.

### 3.1.2 -i-

-i- is a less prominent rhyme in Baram because out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 208 (22.10%) words contain /i/. Similarly, it seems to be a less stable rhyme because only two roots exactly resemble the PTB roots (see Table 5).

There are some clear evidences to show that other PTB rhymes also have been changed into -i- in Baram (4).

(4)   *syey      ci         know
      *tsyen     luŋ-dziŋ   nail
      *səy       si         die
      *bəy       pi         give
      *hyen      səi        hear
      *ney       ni         look

*nəy      u-ni      sun
*mey      mui       fire

The evidences show that the PTB rhymes containing -ey-, -ye- and -əy- have been changed into -i- in Baram.

### 3.1.3 -e-

-e- is a less prominent rhyme in Baram because out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 185 (19.65%) words contain /e/. Similarly it is an unstable rhyme in the Baram language because no Baram root exactly resembles the PTB roots (see Table 5).

But there are some evidences to show that some other PTB rhymes have been changed into -e- in Baram. Two evidences shows *-i- changed in to -e- in Baram.

(5)      *dik      de         one
         *siŋ      seŋ-ma     tree

Similarly, the following evidences show that *ay/ya/ey have been changed into -e- in Baram (6).

(6)      *ŋay      iki-ne     small
         *ley      ce-le      tongue
         *byam     u-ble]     fly

### 3.1.3 -o-

-o- is a less prominent rhyme in Baram because out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 153 (16.25%) words contain /o/. Similarly, it is a less stable rhyme because only one root exactly resembles the PTB roots (see Table 5)

The examples (7) and (8) show some evidences that other PTB rhymes changed in -o- but it is very difficult to make any generalizatin about it. The following evidences in (7) show that *u/ow have been changed into -o- in Baram.

(7)      *ʔu       [wom]      egg
         *tsow     u-cho      fat

Similarly, there are two examples to show *a/*ay changed into -o- in Baram (8).

| (8) | *day | to | that |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *wa | keuwo | yellow |

### 3.1.4 -*u*-

-*u*- seems to be a prominent rhyme in Baram language because out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 310 (32.94%) words contain /u/. Similarly, it seems to be a more stable rhyme because four roots exactly resemble the PTB roots (see Table 5).

There are some clear evidences to show that other PTB rhymes have been changed into -*u*- in Baram as examplified in (9).

| (9) | *yəw | ayu | seed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *nəw | nə-nu | breast |
| | *hywəy | tsi-hwui | blood |
| | *hwaŋ | hyuŋ | arrive |
| | *məw | a-mu | cloud |
| | *kəw | is-ku | smoke |

The evidences show that the PTB rhymes containing -*əy*- and -*əw*- have been changed into -*u*- in Baram.

### 3.1.5 -*ə*-

-*ə*- is a confusing rhyme in Baram because some of the native speakers replace it with -*a*- in most of the situations but in some instances it clearly occures. It is difficult to say whether it is prominent rhyme or not. Its distribution is relatively high in the language. Out of 941 native Baram words included in Baram-Nepali-Ehglish Dictionary, 229 (24.33%) words contain /ə/. Similarly, it is very difficult to get a true minimal pair to show the contrastive distribution between /a/ and /ə/. On the other hand, none of the Baram roots in Barm Swadesh 100 wordlist contains the rhyme -*ə*- but it is available in the peripheral part of the words as in (10).

| (10) | *nəw | nə-nu | breast |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *sa | nə-sa | earth |
| | *nya | pʰə-ya | red |
| | *ŋa | nə-ŋa | fish |

| *bu | kə-pu | head |
|---|---|---|

It indicates that probably /ə/ was not a phoneme in Baram previously and it was a later development in the language. In the development of Baram from the proto-form, the syllable structure had been simplified. At present, the consonant clusters, Baram phonology permits is CG. So /ə/ occurred in the Baram for the purpose of cluster break during the resyllabification of the words.

## 4 Summary

Although Baram has retained nearly 25% of its native words in its overall vocabulary (Kansakar et al. 2011b), it has retained 85% of its native words in the basic words. A remarkable number (18) of Baram roots exactly resemble the PTB roots, 41 are very near in phonological shape and 15 are completely different.

The Baram rhyme -*a*- seems to be the most stable and prominent. Similarly, -*u*- and -*i*- seem to be prominent and less stable but their patterns of change are very clear and we can formulate -*e*- and -*o*- are both less prominent and unstable and it is difficult to trace their patterns of sound change from PTB to Baram. -*ə*- is the most problematic in the cases. There is no a single corresponding rhyme in the PTB roots. It shows that probably it was a later development in the Baram language.

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# Subordination in Baram

Laxman Chalise

*This paper analyzes the system of subordination in the Baram language[1] from two points of view; structural and semantic. Structurally, Baram subordinate clauses are classified into finite and non-finite under which there have been identified a number of semantic classes. Baram has both native and Nepali borrowed systems of subordination.*

## 1 Introduction

This paper presents the subordination processes found in Baram; an endangered language spoken in Takukot-8 of Gorkha district. This paper presents the subordinators that are used in the process of subordination in the Baram language.

In subordination, the dependent clause functions as an element of a sentence. It is in an asymmetrical relation. In subordination there are two parts: one is independent clause which is also called super ordinate clause and dependent clause also known as subordinate clause. The subordinate clause is said to be one of the constituents of the independent clause e.g. subject, adverbial, complement etc.

More than one subordination signal may co-occur in the same subordinate clause. Subordinate clauses may function as subject, object, complement or adverbial in a super ordinate clause. On the basis of their potential functions, there are major categories of subordinate clauses: nominal, adverbial, relative and comparative.

## 2 Finite clauses

In Baram there are found finite clauses with one independent and the other dependent clause in a sentence. The subordinators for finite clause are <hare>, <ki>, <zəbə>, etc. as illustrated in (1).

(1)  a. u mocho ŋiŋa hare u-e prəsəstə
         He thin NPT-be because he-ERG enough

---

mə-ca
NEG-eat
'He is thin because he does not eat enough.'

b. ŋə-e kira- ŋi-ya ki
I-ERG knowledgeable NPT-go that
naŋ kisan ŋi- ŋa
you farmer NPT-be.
'I know that you are a farner.'

In the examples (1a,b) <hare> and <ki> are subordinators and u-e prasasta mə-ca and naŋ kisan ŋi-ŋa are dependent clauses.

## 3 Non-finite clauses

Non finite clause refers to the clause which has non- finite verb.

 a) Infinitive clause
 b) Converb clause
 c) Participial clause

## 3.1 Infinitive clause

In Baram, infinitive is marked with <-ko/-go> following the verb stem. The former comes after voiceless sound and the latter after the voiced sound as in (2).

(2)  a. kisen lik-ko nə-e dherai paDhdi nepna
        Good be- INF you-ERG a lot read have to
        'To be good you have to read a lot.'

    b. məza tuk-ko    u-se man ŋi- lagDi
       Relax do-INF   he-DAT desire NPT-do
       'He likes to relax.'

    c. Dhoka   ughardi-go   yas- ŋo- nut
       Door open-INF   it-DAT-push
       'To open the door, push it.'

In the examples (2a-c), either<-ko> or <-go> is affixed to make the verb non-finite. <-ko> has come after the voiceless sound [k] in <lik-ko> whereas <-go> has come after voiced sound [i] in ughardi-go. Generally, a non-finite clause comes before the finite clause in a sentence.

Infinitive also can appear in the purposive construction as in (3).

(3) ŋa səbərəi nəŋa sat-ko ki-ya
I early fishes catch-INF PST-go
'I went early to catch some fishes.'

### 3.2 Converb clause

In Baram, a converb clause is marked with <-iŋ> as in (4).

(4) a. u ghãs lak-iŋ ki-təi
he grass cut-NOM PST-come
'He came after cutting grass.'
b. curot akbut-iŋ swasthya hani ki-lik
cigarette pull-NOM health injury PST-become
'Health was damaged by smoking.'

### 3.3 Participle clause

The participle in Baram is marked with <ki->. <ki-> is also the marker of past as in (5).

(5) a. pəisa kyahu (ki-ahu) bal ki-si
money PRT-steal man PST-die
'The person who stole money died.'
b. siŋ lak-ko bal ki-təi
firewood cut-PRT(NML) man PST-come
'Woodcutter came.'

### 4 The syntax and semantics of subordinate clauses

### 4.1 That clause

The nominal 'that clauses' is possible in Baram. It is formed of conjunction ki as illustrated in (6).

(6) a. ŋə-e kira ŋi-ŋa ki
I-ERG known NPT-be that
naŋ kisan ŋi-ŋa
you farmer NPT-be
'I know that you are a farmer.'
b. ni-həru khusi ŋi-ŋa ki
we-PL happy NPT-be that
nə -e visa gi-dum
you-ERG visa PST-get
'We are happy that you got a visa.'

Here the use of <ki> is the subordinator forming dependent clause. But it is optional.

### 4.2 Wh-interrogative clause

In Baram nominal wh-interrogative clauses can be formed of using question words like hai 'what', su 'who', kuni 'where', hare 'why', etc. Generally, a wh-interrogative clause comes before the main clause.

(7) a. ubə-e hai da-lem
they-ERG what tell- NML
ŋə-e da mə-thaŋ
I- ERG tell NEG-can
'He cannot say what they told.'
b. su-e naŋ-go biruwa-ge awa
who-ERG I-poss biruwa-DAT water
cun-go da-go səməsya ŋi-ŋa
put-INF tell-INF problem NPT-be
'Who waters the plant is my problem.'

In the examples (11a,b) <hai> and <su> are the wh-interrogative markers.

### 4.3 Exclamative clause

In Baram, to express exclamation the words <kəstakəsta> and <asərze> are used as in (8).

(8) u asərze ki-lik u kəsta kisen
he wonder PST-become she what beautiful
mamaca ŋi-ya
girl NPT-go
'I wonder what a beautiful girl she is.'

### 4.4 Nominal relative clause

Relative pronouns in Baram are <ze>' <zun>, etc which seem to have been borrowed from Nepali.

(9) a. ŋə-e ki - zyot ze ubə-e ki-pi
I-ERG PST-take what they-ERG PST-offer
'I took what they offer.'
b. ŋə-e tyo ni-ca zun ŋə-e man ŋi- pərDi
I-ERG that NPT-eat which I-ERG like-NPT-do
'I eat that which I like.'

In (9 a, b), <ze> and <zun> are relative pronouns which have been used to make nominal relative clauses. The clauses work as an object to the main verb of independent clause.

Without using relative pronouns, same sense can be expressed with a nominalized verb structure as given in (10).

(10) a. u  pəDhdi-go kotha  kya [ki-ya]
        he read-NML room     PST-go
        'He went to the room where he studies.'
   b. ŋa-gai manpardi-go papa u  ŋi-ŋa
        I-DAT like-NML    boy  he NPT-be
        'He is the boy whom I like.'

## 4.5 Clause of time

In the Baram language, time adverbial clauses not only appear in the sentence final position of adverbial clauses but also in the sentence initial position. The clause can be finite or non-finite.

(11) a. zəbə ŋə-e    pəchi ki-ni
        when I-ERG last    PST-see
        naŋ gorkha  ki-huk
        you Gorkha  PST-live
        'When I last saw you lived in Gorkha.'
   b. syau     gizyak    ŋi-ŋa    zəbə
        apple    delicious NPT-be when
        kyaksi  ki-ca
        dry      PERF-eat.
        'Apple is delicious when eaten dry.'

In (11a) has finite and (b) has non-finite converb and participle clauses respectively.

## 4.6 Clause of place

The subordinator showing 'clause of place' in Baram is <za>, a Nepali loan, as exemplified in (12).

(12) a. ŋa za    man ni-lagdi tigi ya-m
        I wherever want NPT-do there go-1
        'I go wherever I want.'
   b. za     zagir ŋi-dum   tigi ya-m
        where job    NPT-get  there go-1
        'Go there where you get job.'

In (12), <za man ni-lagdi>  and <za zagir ŋi-dum> are clauses of place as dependent clauses of the respective sentences.

## 4.7 Clause of condition

In Baram the conditional is marked with suffix<-le>.

(13) nə-e     pəDhdi-le    naŋ-pass likuŋ
     you-ERG   read–COND   you-pass  become
     'If you read you will pass (the exam).'

## 4.8 Clause of concession

In the clause of concession the situation of super ordinate clause is contrary to the expectation expressed in subordinate clause. In Baram a clause of consession is marked with suffixing <-lem> as illustrated in (14).

(14) a. aŋmat yu-lem  ŋa nam-ge kya (ki-ya)
        rain  do-CONC I  home-LOC PST-go
        'Although it was raining, I went home.'
   b. u dhəni ŋa-lem  nam    mə-ha
        s/he rich  be- CONC  home NEG-be
        'Although she was rich,she has no home.'

## 4.9 The clause of reason

In Baram the word <hare dale> is used to join the situation and reason clauses. <hare> is equivalent to English 'because' as exemplified in (15).

(15) a. wa-həru alma-iŋ ni-huk hare dale
        Chick-PL grow-PROG NPT-stay because
        ŋə-e     sarəi      ki-pan
        I-ERG   very well PST-feed
        'The chickens are growing well because I fed them very well.'
   b. u mocho   ŋi-ŋa    haredale
        He thin    NPT-be because
        u-e        prəsəstə    mə-ca
        he-ERG enough       NEG-eat
        'He is thin because he does not eat enough.'

<hare dale> joins the effect 'u mocho ŋi-ŋa and the reason u-e    prəsəstə    mə-ca..

## 4.10 The clause of purpose

In the Baram language, a clause of purpose is marked with the infinitive marker < -ko> or <-go> as exemplified in (16).

(16) a. ŋa səberəi nəŋa   sat-ko        ki-ya
        I  early   fish   kill-PURP      PST-go
        He went early to catch fishes.
   b. Dhoka ugardi-go    yəs-gəi nut-o
        door  open-PURP it-DAT push-IMP
        'To open the door, push it.'

<-ko> is used  after voiceless segment ending stem and <-go> is used after voiced segment ending stem.

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## 4.11 The clause of comparison and similarity

In Baram, <zəstak> expresses both similarity and comparison as in (17).

(17) a.  u-səi    dəbə-e    zəstak wa ŋi-thal
         she-ERG other-ERG like chicken NPT-cook.
         'She cooks chicken as other did.'

    b.  ŋə-e gi-da zəstak   tuk-o
        I-ERG PST-say as/like  do-IMP
        'Please do it as I said.'

    c.  u bihe      ki-lik      zəstak ŋi-ŋa
        She marriage PERF-do like    NPT-be
        'She looks as if she is married.'

## 4.12 The clause of preference

<vənda> is used to show the preference in Baram. But it seems to be a loan from Nepali.

(18) a.  kusya vənda  kok cin  zyot-o.
         Meat rather than vegetable-EMP take-IMP
         'Take vegetable rather than meat.'

    b.  tigi ya-go     vənda yigicin huk-a
        there go-INF rather than here sit-IMP.
        'Go there rather than sit here.'

## 4.13 Relative clause

The native system of relativization in Baram is the nominalization of the clauses. There are two nominalizers <ki-/gi-> and <-ko/-go> that noninalize a clause to give the meaning of relative construction. The first nominalizer expresses perfective sense and the second one expresses the imperfective sense as exemplified in (20a) and (20b) respectively.

(20) a.  ŋa-e  ki-ci      papa u ŋi-ŋa
         I-ERG NML-recognize boy   he NPT-be
         'He is the boy whom I have known.'

    b.  u  kisen səŋ pəDhdi-go papaca ho
        he well  with read-NML boy   COP.
        'He is the boy who studies well.'

Apart from the native system, Baram has a borrowed system of relativization which seems to have been borrowed from Nepali because Nepali relativisers <ze>, <zun>, <zəbə>, etc are used in Baram relative constructions. The relativizers are used as subordinators in the constructions.

(21) a.  ŋə-e  ki-zyot ze ubə-e   ki-pi
         I-ERG PST-take what thay-ERG PST-offer
         'I took what they offered.'

    b.  ŋə-e tyo ŋi-ca   zun ŋə-e man  ni-pardi
        I-ERG those NPT-eat which I-ERG like NPT-do
        'I eat that which I like.'

In (21) <ze> and <zun> are relative pronouns which have been used to make relative clauses.

## 5 Summary

This paper has tried to analyze the subordination in Baram language from two points of view; structural and semantic. Structurally Baram subordinate clauses can be classified into finite and non-finite. <hare>, <ki>, <zəbə>, <hai>, <kasta>, <zun>, <ze> function as the subordinators of finite clauses. Similarly, in non-finite clauses, participle form is marked with <ki->, -ing clause marked with <-ŋi> as a nominalizer and to-infinitive clause with <-ko> (before voiceless initial suffix) or <-go> (voiced initial suffix) respectively.

Semantically there are some Baram original subordinators like <hai> <su> <k∂sta>, <tigaŋ> <z∂sta cin>, <kaŋ>, <ugaŋ>, <dekhep>, <z∂iledalim>, <thai>, <cad∂icin>. But, there are some Nepali loan subordinators: <ki>, <ze>, <zun>, <dekhi>, <z∂b∂>, <z∂ile>.

### Abbreviations

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CONC | Concessive | NEG | Negative |
| COND | Conditional | NOM | Nominalizer |
| COP | Copula | NPT | Non-past |
| DAT | Dative | PERF | Perfective |
| EMP | Emphatic | PL | Plural |
| ERG | Ergative | PROG | Progressive |
| IMP | Imperative | PRT | Participle |
| INF | Infinitive | PST | Past |
| LOC | Locative | PURP | Purposive |

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# Coordination in Tharu

## Mahesh Chaudhary

*Tharu is one of the Indo-Aryan languages spoken by an ethnic nationality referred to as Tharu. The census of Nepal, 2001, shows out of 15,33,879 people. 1,33,546 (86.83%) can speak this language. These people are generally distributed in the different districts of Koshi, Sagarmatha, Bheri, Seti, Rapti, Mahakali zones in the central, eastern and western parts of Nepal. All the Tharus living in different places do not speak the same form of the language. There have been developed different dialects of Tharu because of geographical distance and language contact. Mainly it has been influenced by Hindi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Nepali and Avadhi.*

*This paper briefly discusses the coordination in Tharu spoken in Saptari, Sunsari, Siraha and Udaypur districts. In this paper, we have used primary data collected from the native speakers of Terhauta and sitapur VDCs of Saptari district.*

## 1 Introdunction

Coordination involves the linking of two (or more) categories of expression with the use of coordinators or coordinating conjunctions. The coordinators assign equal rank to the conjuncts. Tharu exhibits the following types of coordination occurring at the phrase as well as clause levels:

1. Conjunction: *əur* 'and',
2. Consecutive conjunction: *təb* 'then', *təkər bad* 'then after'
3. Adversative conjunction: *lekin* or *məgər* 'but'
4. Disjunction: *ki/ya* 'or'
5. Negative disjunction: *netə* 'neither...nor'
6. Exclusive conjunction *bahek* 'except'

Each of the coordination types and coordinators listed above will be discussed in detailed below.

## 2 Conjunction: *əur* 'and'

The coordinator *əur* permits coordination to occur at both the sentential and phrasal levels, e.g.,

(1) [ram ge-ləi əur həm  e-lie ]
Ram go-PST.3 SG M CONJ 1SG come-PST 1SG
'Ram went and I came.'

(2) u-sun [uth-ləi əur həm-ər
3-PL stand-PST 3 PL CONJ1SG.DAT
swagət kər-lkəi ]
welcome.N do-PST 3 PL
'They stood and welcomed me.'

(3) məiya  [didi-ke  əur  həm-ra
Mother E.sister-DAT CONJ  1SG-DAT
ekəTa ãm del-kəi]
one-CLF DUP mango  give-PST 3 SG
Mother gave me and (my) elder sister each a mango.'

(4) [babu  əur  məiya] Kathmandu ge-ləi
father CONJ mother Kathmandu go-PST-3 PL
'Father and mother went to Kathmandu.'

(5) sita [chhəngər əur tez] chə-i
Sita  beautiful CONJ  intelligent be-NPST 3
'Sita is beautiful and intelligent.'

Sentences [1-5] illustrate that two independent clauses as well as two verb phrases, adjective phrases, noun phrases and postpositional phrases may be coordinated with *əur*. However, sentential and phrasal coordinations by *əur* are permissible only if the two conjuncts exhibit similarity in topic and structure, as exemplified below:

(6) u  [timən əur daru nəi khai-chə-i
3 SG  meat  CONJ liquor NEG-eat-NPST 3SG
'He does not eat meat and liquor.'

(7) *[ram əur həba]  ãm  tor-lkəi
Ram-CONJ wind-mango  cause to fall-PST 3 PL
* 'Ram and wind made mango fall.'

(8) *[həm kail razbiraz zə-bəi əur
1SG tomorrow  Rajbiraj go-NPST 1SG  CONJ
pokhəra chəngər chə-i]
Pokhara beautiful  be-NPST3
*'I will go to Rajbiraj tomorrow and Pokhara is beautiful.'

The order of conjunctions may not be reversed if the conjunctive coordinator *əur* conveys a sequential or causal relationship as in (9).

(9) a.[bəzar zo əur cini an]
Bazaar go-IMP CONJ sugar bring-IMP
'Go to market and bring sugar.'

b.* [cini  an əur bəzar zo]
   sugar bring-IMP CONJ bazaar go-IMP
   *'Bring sugar and go to market.'
(10) a. u pain-me ghum-ləi əur
    3SG rain-LOC walk-PST 3SG CONJ
    bhiz-ləi]
    get soaked-PST 3 SG
    'He walked in the rain and got soaked.'
   b. * u bhiz-ləi əur pain-me
    3 SG. get soaked CONJ rain-LOC
    ghum-ləi]
    walk-PST 3 SG
    * 'He got soaked and walked in the rain.'

Otherwise the order of conjunctions may be reversed without destroying their meaning:

(11) a. [həm bazar-me rəhəi-ci-e əur
    1 SG bazar-LOC live-NPSt 1 SG CONJ
    həm-ər bhai zənəkpur-me
    1SG.GEN brother Janakpur-LOC
    rəhəi-chə-i]
    live- NPST 3 SG
  'I live in Rajbiraj and my brother lives in Janakpur.'
   b. [həm-ər bhai zənəkpur-me
    1 SG.GEN Y.brother Janakpur-LOC
    rəhəi-chə-i əur həm razbiraz-me]
    live-NPST 3 SG CONJ 1 SG Rajbiraj-LOC
    rahəi-cie
    live-NPST 1 SG
    'My brother lives in Banepa and I live in bazar.'
(12) a. [babu cai piəi-chə-i əur ]
    father tea drink-NPST 3SG CONJ
    'Father drinks tea and….'
   b. [məiya dudh piəi-chə-i əur
    mother milk drink-NPST 3SG CONJ
    babu cai piəi-chə-i]
    father tea drink-NPST 3SG
    'Mother drinks milk and father drinks tea.'

Occasionally, coordination of more than two conjuncts is achieved by a zero strategy:

(13) u [timən cura əcar]
    3SG meat flattened rice pickle
    lyak e-ləi
    bring-CNV come-PST 3SG

'She came bringing meat, flattened rice and pickle.'
(14) ətə həm-ər khəna [dal bhat sag] chi-e
    here 1PL-GEN meal lentils rice veg. be.IDE
    'Here, our (common) meal is rice, lentils and vegetable.'

In general, however, *əur* is used when more than two conjunctions are coordinated:

(16) [ram həri əur binod pas bhe-ləi]
    Ram Hari CONJ Binod pass be-PST 3PL
    'Ram, Hari and Binod passed (the exam).'

Negation of either or both conjuncts at the sentential level is possible, e.g.,

(17) a. [ram həi e-ləi əur
    Ram- come-PST-NEG CONJ
    həm ge-lie]
    1SG go-PST 1SG
    'Ram did not come and I went.'
   b. [ram e-ləi əur həm nəi e-lie]
    Ram come-PST3SG CONJ1SG NEG-go-PST
    'Ram came and I did not go.'
   c. [ram nəi e-ləi əur həm
    Ram NEG come-PST CONJ 1SG
    nəi ge-lie]
    NEG go-PST
    'Ram did not come and I did not go.'

Finally, a regular feature of coordinate conjunction is the deletion of shared items. Thus, for instance, the subject of the conjunct linked with the coordinator *əur* may be deleted if it is co-referential with that of the preceding conjunct, e.g.,

(18) [həm əkhni bəzar ze-bəi əur
    1SG now market go-NPST CONJ
    cini kin-ke e-bəi]
    sugar buy-CONV come-NPST 1SG
    'Now, I'll go to market and come having bought sugar.'
(19) [ram bhat khe-təi əur həm thari
    Ram- rice eat-NPST 3 SG CONJ 1 SG/ plate
    səpha kər-bəi]]
    clean do-NPST 1 SG
    'Ram will eat rice and I /* will clean the plate.'

The predicate deletion also occurs, e.g.,

(20) [həm ai bəzar ze-bəi əur kailo]
    1SG  today  market  go-NPST 1 SG CONJ
    tomorrow also
  'I will go to market today and tomorrow also (I
  will go).'

Adverb deletion may also occur, e.g.,

(21) [ai bhəiya bəzar ge-ləi
    today  E.brother  market  go-PST 3 SG M
    əur bəuwao]
    CONJ  Y.brother  also

 'Today elder brother went to market and younger
brother also (went to market today).'

### 3 Sequential conjunction: *təb* 'then' and *təkərbad* 'then after'

Sequential conjunctions *təb* and *təkərbad*

(22) [ai  həm puwar lyabke təkərbad
    today  1 SG  leaves for cows' bed  bring.INF
    go-PST 1 SG  then after
    sər-se gəgh Tharu bhəsa-me kər-lie]
    Sir-GEN-talk Tharu language-GEN do-PST 1SG
    'Today I went to fetch leaves for cows' bed,
    then after talked to the Sir for some time in
    Tharu language.'

(23) [beti ait u gai cərai-le zo
    daughter today 2SG cattle watcher go-IMP
    təkərbad ghãs lab liyeki]
    CONJ grass bring-IMP  ok
    'Daughter, today, you go to graze cattle, then
    bring grass, ok?'

### 4. Adversative conjunction *lekin* 'but'

When two conjuncts are coordinated by an adversative conjunction lekin, it is implied that a contrast or an opposition exist between the two conjuncts. Mostly, lekin permits the coordination at the sentential level, e.g.,

(24) [ok-ər beta iskul zai-chə-i lekin
    3SG.GEN son school go-NPST 3SG  CONJ
    səutin-ke beta khet-me  kam  kərai-chə-i]
    co-wife-GEN son farm-LOC workdo-NPST 3 SG
    'Her son goes to school but co-wife's son
    works in the farm.'

(25) [biməla chaŋgar chə-i lekin
    Bimala good be-NPST 3SG CONJ
    joti nəi chəŋgar chə-i]

    Jyoti NEG-good    be-NPST 3 SG
    'Bimala is good but Jyoti is bad.'

Sentences [24-25] express the notion of contrast or opposition.

(26) [həm timən khe-bəi  lekin ai
    1SG  meat eat-NPST 1SG CONJtoday
    ekadəsi ci-e]
    Ekadashi be.IDE
    'I eat meat but today is Ekadashi (so I do not
    eat meat).'

Negation of either conjuncts at the sentential level is possible but both conjuncts is not acceptable, e.g.,

(27) [ram nəi e-ləi lekin ok-ər
    Ram-NEG-come-PST CONJ 3SG.GEN
    beta e-ləi]
    son    come-PST 3SGM
    'Ram did not come but his son came.'

(28) [həm mach khai-ci-e lekin timən
    1SG  fish  eat-NPST CONJ meat
    nəi khai ci-e]
    NEG-eat-NPST 1SG
  'I eat fish but do not eat meat.'

(29) *[u  mach nai khe-lkəi lekin
    3SG fish NEG-eat-PST CONJ
    timan bhi nai khe-lkəi]
    meat also  NEG  eat-PST
* 'He did not eat fish but did not eat meat either.'

*lekin* also conveys a denial of expectation, e.g.,

(30) [ram patər che-ləi  lekin u
    Ram thin    be-PST 3SG M CONJ    3SG
    dəur zit lkəi]
    race win-PST 3SG M
    'Ram was thin but he won the race.'

(31) [u-sun dhənik chə-I lekin iskul-ke 3 PL  rich
    be.NPST.NEG CONJ school-DAT
    dəs həzar tsənda de-lkəi]
    ten thousand  donation give-PST 3 PL

'They are not rich but donated ten thousand (rupee) to the school.'

Similarly, lekin  conveys preventive meaning if the first conjunct contains a counterfactual conditional tiə, e.g.,

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(32) [həm to-ra pəisa de-tiəu lekin
1SG 2SG-DAT money give-PST C-COND CONJ
həm-ər sənge pəisa nəi chə-i]
1SG.GEN-COM money be.NPST.NEG
'I would give you money but I do not have money.'

(33) [həm ok-ra iskul pətha-tiə-i lekin
1SG 3SG.DAT school send-PST COND CONJ
u phel bhe-ləi]
3SG fail be-PST 3SG
'I would send him school, but he failed (the exam).'

So far we have dealt with the adversative conjunction at the sentential level. However, adjectival phrasal adversatives are also permissible in Tharu, e.g.,

(34) Sita [kari lekin chəngar} chə-i
Sita black CONJ beautiful be-NPST 3SG
'Sita is black but beautiful.'

(35) ita kera [hərihər lekin pakəl] chə-i
this banana green CONJ ripe be-NPST 3SG
'This banana is green but ripe.'

Occasionally, a few postpositional phrasal adversatives are formed by a zero strategy, e.g.,

(36) ham i kukur ok-ra nəi tora
1SG this dog 2SG.DAT NEG 3SG.DAT
de-bəu
give-NPST 1SG
'I will give this dog to him not to you.'

(37) u sita-ke nəi rita-ke biyah/bhoj
3SG Sita-DAT NEG Rita-DAT marriage
kər-ləi
do-PST 3 SG
'He married to Rita not to Sita.'

Note, however, that sentences [38-39] may be viewed as examples of reduced sentential coordination in that these are equally analyzable at the sentence level, showing the use of a separate strategy of *nəi ... lekin* 'not ... but', e.g.,

(38) ham ita kukur to-ra nəi
1SG this dog 2SG-DAT NEG
de-bəu lekin okra
give-NPST 1SG CONJ 3SG-DAT
de-bə-i

give-NPST 1SG
'I will not give this dog to you but give to him.'

(39) u gita-ke biyah kər-lkəi lekin
3SG Gita-DAT marriage do-PST 3SG M CONJ
sita-ke nəikər-lkəi
Sita-DAT NEG do-PST-3S
'He married to Gita but not to Sita.'

## 5 Disjunction *ki/ya* 'or'

The disjunctive particles *ki* as well as *ya* 'or' expresses the idea that at most one of the two alternatives can be realized, e.g.,

(40) u həm-ər ghər e-təi
3SG 1SG.GEN house come-NPST 3SG
ki/ya nəi e-təi
CONJ NEG come-NPST 3SG
'He will come or will not come to my house.'

(41) sita khe-təi ki/ya nəi khe-təi
Sita eat-NPST 3SG CONJ NEG-eat-NPST 3SG
'Sita will eat or not.'

(42) tu dudh ki/ya tsai khe-bihi
2SG milk or tea eat-NPST 3SG
'Will you drink milk or tea?'

Marked disjunctives consisting of iterated particles, ki...ki 'either...or' are usually used at the sentential level.

(43) tu ki/ya etə kucho kam
2SG CONJ here something work.N
kər ki bides zo
do CONJ abroad go-IMP
'Either you do something here or go to foreign country.'

(44) həm ki/ya murga pal-bəi ki
1SG CONJ hen rear-NPST 1SG CONJ
Kathmandu
Kathmandu
za-ke zagir kər-bəi
go-CONV job eat-NPST 1SG
'Either I will rear hens or do (some) job going to Kathmandu.'

Disjunctives are used to provide exclusive alternatives; nevertheless, they may also be understood as inclusive, i.e., more than two alternatives may be available.

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(45) tu dudh ki dəhi ki cai kəthi khe-bihi?
2SG milk CONJ curd CONJ tea what eat-NPST 2
'What will you have milk or curd or tea?

Negation of the second disjunct is possible with both the unmarked and marked disjunctive particles, e.g.,

(46)    ram ghər ge-ləi ki nəi?
Ram home go-PST CONJ NEG
'Did Ram go home or not?'

(47) tu həm-ra pəisa de-bihi ki nəi?
2SG 1SG.DAT money give-NPST 2SG CONJ NEG
'Will you give me money or not?'

As shown in [48-49], in interrogative sentences the verb of the second disjunct is deleted; however, the verb is not deleted, but rather repeated in the negative disjunct, e.g.,

(48)    tu pas ho ki nəi ho həm-ra
2SG pass be CONJ NEG be 1SG.DAT
kono mətləb nəi chə-i
nothing meaning NEG be .NPST
'Either you pass or do not pass- I do not have any interest.'

(49) u kam kər-lkəi ki/ya nəi kər-lkəi həm-ra 3SG
work.N do-PST CONJ NEG do-PST 1SG.DAT
thah nəi bhe-ləi
knowledge be.NPST-3SG
'I do not know whether he did or did not do the work.'

## 5  Negative disjunction

Negative disjunction is formed by the use of iterated particles *netə* 'neither...nor'; the iterated particles express the idea that none of the alternatives provided in the disjuncts is available, e.g.,

(50) ghər-me [netə babu netə bəhin]
Home-LOC CONJ father CONJ E.sister
koi nəi chə-i
nobody NEG. be .NPST-3PL
'Neither father nor sister, nobody is at home.'

(51) [netə kari netə lal] kono
CONJ black CONJ red nothing
mən nəi pər-ləi]
heart NEG-fall-PST
'I did not like any- neither black nor red.'

(52) u apən dhən [netə beta-ke
3SG.REFL- GEN property CONJ son-DAT
netə betii-ke kəkro nəi de-lkəi
CONJ daughter-DAT nobody.DAT NEG give-PST
'He did not give his property to anybody neither to son nor to daughter.'

(53) [netə həm-ər məiya e-ləi
CONJ1 SG-GEN mother come-PST 3SG
netə bəhin]
CONJ E.sister
'Neither my mother nor sister came.'

(54) [ai həm netə bhat khe-lie
Today 1SG CONJ rice eat-PST1SG
netə roti]
CONJ bread
'Today we ate neither rice nor bread.'

(55) ok-ər səŋge netə izzət əur tsikcha
3 SG.GEN-COM CONJ prestige be-NPST
netə bidya kin nup
CONJ education CONJ beauty
'He has neither prestige nor education nor beauty.'

## 5 Exclusive conjunction: *bahek* 'except'

For exclusion the conjunction bahek 'except' is used, e.g.,

(56) kaihl bəithək-me tu bahek
yesterday meeting-LOC 2SG CONJ
səib-gora e-ləi
all-CLF come-PST.2SG
'Everybody except you came to the meeting.'

(57) həm-ər beta tas khel-lai bahek
1sg.GEN son (playing)cards play-INF CONJ
kucho kam nəi kərəi-chə-i
nothing work.N NEG-do-NPST 3SG
'Except playing cards, my son does nothing.'

(58) Pəisa kəm-ai bahek to-ra kathi
money earn-INF CONJ 2SG-DAT what
mən lagəi-chəu
heart fall-NPST 3SG
'What do you like except earning money?'

## 6 Summary

In this paper, we examined the various types of sentences combination formed by employing various types co-ordinators at the phrasal as well as sentential levels in Tharu. According to research out so far the language does have the following

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types of co-ordinative conjunctions namely conjunction: *əur*"and" consecutive conjunction *təb*"then" and təkər bad"Then after" adversative conjunction *lekin* "but" as major, disjunction *ki/ya* "or", negative disjunction *netə* "neither nor" and exclusive conjunction *bahek* −"except", To make the analysis much more comprehensive and easily understandable, a descriptive approach is applied while interpreting and analyzing data taken during the field visit carried.

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| ACC | accusative case |
| COM | commutative case |
| CON | concessive |
| COND | conditional |
| CONV | converb |
| DAT | dative case |
| E | elder |
| GEN | genitive case |
| H | honorific |
| INF | infinitive |
| LOC | locative case |
| NEG | negative |
| NPST | non-past tense |
| PL | plural |
| PST | past tense |
| SG | singular |

Y             younger

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# Voice enabled electronic medical record management system

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*We explore the potential of Automatic Speech Recognition as an appropriate technology in the development of natural and user-friendly user interfaces for Health Information Systems. Using this technology doctors and nurses can make use of a Voice interface to create Electronic Medical Records at the Points of Care with enhanced efficiency.*

## 1 Introduction

Recent technological advancements have facilitated the emergence of innovative user interface designs aiding the workflow in the medical transcription domain. The most commonly used user interfaces are Mouse and Keyboard based which have their relative advantages according to the context of usability. In this paper, we explore the possibility of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) as an appropriate technology in the development of natural and user-friendly user interfaces used in Health Information Systems. Voice as an input modality, over the conventional keyboard based text entry approach, proves to be cost effective in terms of its ability to reduce substantially, the amount of time expended during Electronic Medical Record (EMR) creation. The time thus saved can be reallocated for serving other prioritized procedures in patient care and thus enhances the productivity of the medical practitioner. The system accepts continuous utterance from authenticated medical practitioners and automatically transcribes them verbatim to its textual format. System can be configured to operate in 'online' or 'offline' mode. Here offline mode refers to the transcription of pre-recorded speech data and 'online' mode refers to the transcription of real time speech data.

## 2 Motivation and need

Comparative evaluation of ergonomic modalities in the specific area of descriptive clinical documentation, reveal that conventional User Interfaces do not achieve full efficiency in translating the actual logical flow of the intended clinical practice due to high degree of object quantization. For example, Graphical User Control elements like 'Check Lists and Radio Buttons" fail to represent the sequential information inherent in the logical flow of clinical investigation. In these scenarios user interfaces designed over Natural Language Processing (NLP) principles prove to be appropriate candidates in mapping effectively, the practitioner's thoughts with respect to assessment and plan. Speech, being a natural language proves to be a promising alternative in capturing the mental model of the practitioner while making descriptive medical notes and thus aids in efficient knowledge representation of the practice domain. Speech mode also gives the freedom to use multiple commands for the same action i.e. it supports 'many to one mapping' property of the NLP logic.

## 3 System architecture

The speech recognition problem is formulated here as a supervised pattern classification task .In the proposed ASR system, the underlying speech recognition engine incorporates statistical based Hidden Markov Model for mathematically modeling the speech process. Medical dictation involves vocal participation by skilled or semi skilled personnel of varied age groups and gender .Hence the system is developed as a continuous speech, speaker independent ASR system .The proposed automatic medical transcription application was developed using the ASR Software Development Framework named Sphinx, which is made available in public domain by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) speech research consortium.
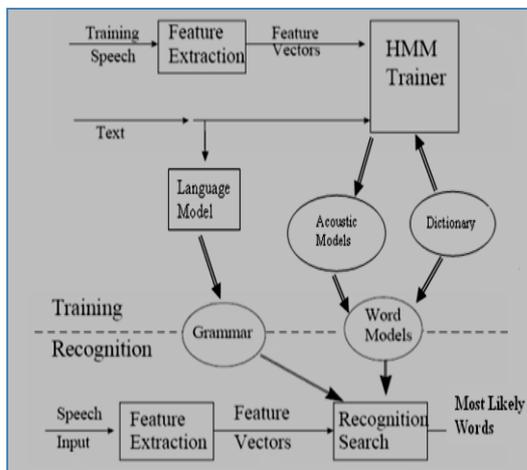
**Figure 1: Automatic speech recognition process: Block diagram**

The basic block diagram of the Automatic Speech Recognition Process is illustrated in Figure 1. Speech recognition system essentially involves two main components namely the 'Trainer' and the 'Recognizer'.

## 4  Trainer

The function of the 'Trainer' is to learn the characteristics or parameters of a set of predefined sound units defined for the vocabulary under consideration. The foremost criterion in Vocabulary Design is ensure that the relative frequencies of occurrence of basic sound units namely phones, tri phones or other sub word units in the training corpus  are proportionately balanced. This learning is supported by the evidences collected from the training data in terms of acoustic and syntactic knowledge latent in the vocabulary. An Acoustic Model and a Language Model are generated as result of the Training process.

## 5 Acoustic model

The system learns an Acoustic Model, which models the spectral properties of speech sounds. The speech signal is first transformed into a sequence of feature vectors that uniquely represent the characteristics of speech sound units present in the training data .These feature vectors are used to train an Acoustic Model. This is done by estimating the parameters of the Hidden Markov Model using maximum likelihood estimation algorithm.  An important prerequisite in Acoustic Modelling is to ensure that the sound units being modelled are adequately represented in the training data. This strategy helps in the reliable estimation of the HMM parameters.

## 6 Language model

The system learns a Language Model, which intends to capture the underlying lexical and syntactical knowledge of Medical Language. Statistical N-Gram models or Context Free Grammars are usually employed for building the Language Model. N-Gram models are used to estimate the probability distributions of different sequential patterns inherent in the vocabulary where as Context Free Grammars are used to convert a sentence into syntactic classes for task specific recognition contexts.

## 7 Pronunciation model

The pronunciation model of the Word unit is built using a Pronunciation Lexicon, which contains the pronunciation units or phone units corresponding to each grapheme unit contained in the Word. A widely used standard Pronunciation Lexicon available in public domain for English language is the CMU Pronunciation Lexicon, which can be used for preliminary translation of words into its phone units. Since the pronunciation rules applied in CMU lexicon are based on standard dialect of western English, in order to accommodate the regional dialectal variants inherent in the training set, the pronunciation model is validated by a post processing stage, where rules applying to local pronunciation context are applied to correct the first level of phone mapping  generated by the CMU lexicon. For the proposed system , training speech samples were designed to represent three prominent and dialectally distinct population from across the state of Kerala namely Travancore, Cochin and Malabar.

## 9 Recognizer

Once the Acoustic and Language models are created using the training data, the process of deducing the most probable sequence of sound units in a given signal is called recognition.In recognition stage, feature vectors are first derived

from the input speech data. Recognition is performed as a decoding operation on a graphical data structure. The search graph is constructed by using Acoustic and Language models. The sequence of feature vectors extracted from the input speech data is matched against different paths through the search graph and corresponding matching scores are generated for each path. The Acoustic Model provides the knowledge for translating frame of speech feature vectors into unit hypothesis .The unit mentioned here can be a full Word or a Sub Word unit like Syllable, Tri-Phone, Di-Phone, etc depending upon the application design. The Language Model provides the knowledge for mapping the unit sequences this obtained into word and word sequence hypotheses. The cumulative matching score is the sum total of both Acoustic score and the Language score. The path corresponding to the highest matching score is hypothesized as the best candidate and the word units corresponding to that path are returned as the recognized text.

## 8 Grammar design for medical dictation

Systematic analysis of the medical language in practice reveals the scope for classifying the Medical Dictation Language into broad semantic logical classes namely 'Diagnosis', 'Treatment', 'Follow-up', 'Discharge', etc.

A specimen clinical report is shown as example 1:

*"Complaint sudden onset vertigo and fall associated with headache , vomiting and altered sensorium. - History of syncope twice within 1 year associated with headache, not a known Hypertension/ Diabetic, O/E patient conscious , drowsy. Angina – Normal Appetite – Normal Bowels – Normal Tab. Digoxin 0.25mg 1-0-1, Tab. Cardivas 3.25mg 1-0-1, Tab. Envas 2.5mg 1-0-1 "*

It can be observed from Example 1 that the clinical report consists of a logical flow of terms formed out of a combination of  broad semantic groups namely 'Diagnosis'  and 'Treatment'. These high level semantic classes can still be divided into sub classes. e.g the class " Diagnosis" can be  divided into sub classes like Family History, Social History, Problem List, Allergies, etc.

Within each semantic class also, there exists definitive syntax of medical terms arranged in orderly sequence. We will take a particular case to illustrate this property. Look at the following example.

Example 2: " *Tab. Cardivas 3.25mg 1-0-1"*. Here it can be seen that the terms "Tab( for Tablet)", "Cardivas" , "3.25 mg", "1-0-1" can be grouped into the parental classes " Tablet", "Medicine Name", "Quantity of prescription" and "Frequency of Prescription" respectively.

Since we understand that there exists definite syntax for various domains in medical workflow, the concept of Context Free Grammars (CFG) can be suitably applied in the process of grammar design, which helps in modeling the constituent structure of language used. This is found useful in contexts where specific formats and report types are used by doctors practicing different specialty domains.

We adopt a scheme called Backus Normal Form (BNF), which is based on CFG grammar notation, for defining the syntax of medical phrases that are intended for specific tasks.

For illustration we take the following example to represent a dictation phrase

Example 3 : 'Tab. *Cardivas 3.25mg 1-0-1* ' which belongs to the high level 'Medication ' or 'Prescription' class. For this phrase the BNF grammar can be defined as

Tab <$Medicine Name> <$Quantity of prescription> <$Frequency of Prescription>, where

'$Medicine Name' denotes subset of the class named 'Medicine Name', which can have values like Cardivas , Protoxin, Digoxin ,etc

Likewise <$Quantity of prescription> denotes subset of the class named 'Quantity of prescription', which can have values like 1.25, 3.45, 2.75, etc and <$ Frequency of Prescription > denotes subset of the class named 'Frequency of Prescription', which can have values like 1-0-1,0-1-1,1-1-1, etc.

With the incorporation of appropriate grammar types like CFG for task specific workflow, the

system is aided with prior knowledge of the upcoming syntax and is thus able to predict the phrases in advance. This strategy in turn enhances the reliability of hypothesis search performed by the recognizer.

## 10 System performance evaluation

The standard metric used for evaluating the performance of speech recognition systems is the word error rate. The word error rate indicates the measure of similarity between the hypothesized word generated by the Recognizer and reference word.

Computation of Word Error Rate essentially involves the calculation of the minimum edit distance between the hypothesized and reference strings in terms of word substitutions, word insertions, and word deletions that have taken place during the recognition process. Considering these operations, the Word Error Rate (WER) is defined as follows:

Word Error Rate (in percentage) = [100] × [Insertions + Substitutions + Deletions] / [Total Words in Reference Transcript]

The system performance can also be defined in terms of Word Accuracy Rate, which is the complement of the Word Error Rate.

Word Accuracy Rate (in percentage) = [100] - [Word Error Rate (in percentage)]

As part of field assessment, a 1000 phrase ASR system was developed on the proposed architecture and was deployed at the Clinical Pathology Laboratory at the Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, to aid the routine workflow of the Laboratory with respect to the documentation of clinical test records. The system was found to render a mean word level accuracy of 80 percent

## 11 Conclusion

Technologies based on NLP such as Automatic Speech Recognition is proposed as an appropriate technology in the development of natural and user-friendly user interfaces made used in Health Information Systems. The speech interface finds its usefulness in the execution of a variety of Hospital workflows such as database searching, form filling, prescription charting, ward trial notes, clinical summary documentation, etc. The system being scalable and replicable over different workflow patterns in healthcare practice, proves to be a promising and cost effective alternative over existing peer input modalities. By realizing the concepts of 'Decrease paperwork' and 'increased user satisfaction', ASR based system aids in enhancing the overall efficiency of Health Information System management and thereby promoting wider Electronic Medical Record adoption in health care institutions.

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# Preliminary notes on Majhi cases[i]

## Dubi Nanda Dhakal

*This paper aims to account for the case marking pattern and case markers in Majhi. Majhi does not have one to one correspondence between case markers and grammatical relations. Nominative case, for example, appears in subject, or in object position. On the other hand, the subject may be in ergative, instrumental, or dative case. Additionally, Majhi is not a consistently ergative language. Preliminary observations suggest that Majhi exhibits a split ergative pattern based on nominal hierarchy.*

## 1 Case markers and postpositions

The dichotomy between case and postposition is problematic (Payne 1997:86). Payne (1997:100) maintains that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish case marking from adpositions because there is no necessary universal distinction between the two as these two categories describe extremes of a continuum. Similarly, Blake (1994:7) notes that adpositions can be considered to be analytic case markers as opposed to synthetic case markers.

Masica (1991) classifies the case markers into different layers. He further notes that the case markers which occur in layer III and are mediated by genitive marker are postpositions. The distinct postposions in Indo-Aryan (IA) languages are often mediated by some case markers[1]. Thus, case markers are more iconic to the noun as compared to the postpositions. Additionally, they behave like affixes rather than independent words.

Case markers which show phonological dependency when they are attached to nouns have been treated as case affixes whereas the words with independent phonological accent with longer syllable structure are considered postpositions for this purpose. Let's consider an example in (1).

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[1] Some criteria to differentiate case markers from postpositions are discussed in Genetti (2007) and Lilgegren (2008). They may be relevant to discuss this issue in Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman languages of this region.

(1) *kaʈhkərə lagi*
    kaʈh-kərə    lagi
    wood-GEN for
    'for wood (WFB.24)

The case markers are directly suffixed to the nouns or noun phrases. In example (1), for example, the case clitic -*kərə* 'GEN' is directly attached to the nominal stem *kaʈh* 'wood'. Some case markers such as *lagi* 'for' follow the genitive markers as in example (1). On the other hand, -*kərə* 'GEN' is directly attached to the nominal stem. This is a very clear case of case affix and postposition in terms of different layers of cases. This cannot be taken as a criterion to differentiate case markers and postpositions in all contexts.

It is to be noted that pronouns have oblique stems when some case markers, such as accusative-dative, genitive, ablative and ergative are attached to them.

## 2 Case marking pattern

Let's observe examples in (2-3). The subject of an intransitive clause does not code any case marker (2) but the subject of the transitive verb encodes the ergative case (3). When we compare examples (2-3), we see that the subject of the intransitive clause and the object of the transitive clause are aligned in one way whereas the subject of a transitive clause is marked differently. This suggests that Majhi is an ergative absolutive language.

(2) *hoi aile*
    hoi    a-le
    he     come-PST.3SG
    'He came.'

(3) *hoinin bərdei kinle*
    hoi-nin    bərdei    kin-le
    he-ERG     ox        buy-PST.3SG
    'He bought the ox.'

Examples given in (4-5) pose some problems. Unlike example (3) where the subject of the transitive clause is coded with ergative marker,

example (5) does not follow the same pattern. Despite being the subject of a transitive clause, the subject does not code any case marking (5) and this aligns with the subject of an intransitive clause. When we compare the examples (4-5), the subject of the transitive and intransitive clause have one pattern of case marking whereas the object of the transitive clause is marked differently.

(4)   *muĩ ghərə dzaitshũ*
    muĩ   ghərə   dza-tsh-ũ
    I      house   go-NPST-1SG
    'I go home.'

(5)   *muĩ tshoɖarilai dzal ditshũ*
    muĩ   tshoɖari-lai       dzal
    I      daughter-ACC     net
    di-tsh-ũ
    give-NPST-1SG
    'I will give the net to my daughter.'

We see that the object in (5) is marked with *-lai* 'ACC'. On the other hand, the subjects *muĩ* 'I' is null marked in examples (3-4). We know that example (5) is a transitive clause. In other words, the subject of the intransitive clause and the agent of the transitive clause is marked similarly whereas the object of the transitive clause is marked differently. This suggests that Majhi is a nominative-accusative language. The examples presented so far show that the case marking in Majhi is not consistent (see section 3.6).

The case marking pattern is further complicated when we compare examples (6) and (7). The patient in (7) is marked with the accusative case whereas the object in (6) is null marked.

(6)   a. *muĩ masu khaile*
     muĩ   masu   kha-le
     I     meat   eat-PST.1SG
     'I eat meat.'

    b. *madzhilkai muĩ kəɖa sədzaẽ ditshai*
     Madzhi-l-kai  muĩ  kəɖa
     Majhi-PL-DAT I     severe
     sədzaẽ     di-tshai
     punishment   give-NPST1SG›3PL
     '(I) will punish the Majhis severely.'
     (MAW.17)

Some objects are marked with accusative-dative case whereas others are not (see 3.1-3.3).

## 3 Cases

There are case markers for dative-accusative, locative, genitive, commitative and ergative-instrumental in addition to some postpositions in Majhi.

### 3.1 Nominative case: Ø

Nominative case in Majhi appears unmarked or has no inflection. Nominative is used here to refer to a noun or a noun phrase without a case marker. The nominative case may appear in subject position, and object position (both direct and indirect). Generally, all intransitive subjects and inanimate objects of transitive verbs are marked nominative. Notice the split ergativity in section (3.6).

(7)   *radza ələməllə pərle*
    radza ələməllə       pər-le
    kingconfusion       happen-PST
    'The king was confused.' (PR.199)

Example (7) shows that the subject of the intransitive clause does not encode any case marker. Similarly, the objects, if they are inanimate, do not encode any case marker (10). Similarly, the subject of a copular clause or complement is also in nominative case. Neither the subject nor the complement is marked in example (8).

(8)   *muĩ madzhi ho*
    muĩ       madzhi       ho
    I         Majhi       be.NPST
    'I am Majhi.'

Indirect objects in Majhi do not encode any case marker (9). The object is *dzal* 'net' in (9) which has not coded any case marker. In example (11), the animate object (patient) has hosted the case suffix *-lai*.

(9)   *muĩ tshoɖarilai dzal dinai*
    muĩ   tshoɖari-lai       dzal
    I      son-ACC         net
    di-nai
    give-PST.1SG›3SG
    'I gave a net to my son.'

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## 3.2 Dative-Accusative case: *-lai, -kai*

Primary objects in Majhi bear *-lai* or *-kai* if the object is animate or specific. They are generally the patients. Notice the nominative case we have just discussed in (7-9). An example follows.

(10) *matshəlkin bintipətrə təjar parilkəi*

matshə-l-kin    bintipətrə       təjar
fish-PL-ERG     petition         ready
par-ikəi
make-SEQ
'Having prepared the petition… (MAW.8)

Only animate objects of transitive verb appear to be able to get the accusative case marking. This is common across IA languages in south Asia (Masica, 1991: Mohanan 1990). If there is an animate argument that is being causally affected, then that argument would receive the dative-accusative case. Therefore, dative-accusative case should apply to animate 'theme' objects of ditransitive verb as in (9) and (11)

(11) *tsorlai tə kaʈnar tsələn*

tsor-lai    tə       ka -nar
thief-ACC   severe   cut-PROS
tsələn
tradition
'(There was) a tradition of killing the thief by stabbing.'(PR.62)

The patient in (11) is marked with dative-accusative case. In example (10), for example, *bintipətrə* 'petition' does not encode any case marker. The same holds true with *pani* 'water' in example (12).

(12) *sebbe pani phohor partshət*

sebbe pani    phohor par-tsh-ət
all     water  dirty  make-NPST-3PL
'(They) make all water dirty.' (MAW.38)

The pronouns when appear in object position receive the dative-accusative case as a rule. Consider the examples from discourse data in (13-14).

(13) *əlikəti puni hailai məjã bəigərtshət*

əlikəti       puni     hai-lai   məjã
little        also     we-ACC    love
bəi-gər-tsh-ət
NEG-do-NPST-3PL

'They do not love us even a little.' (MAW.17)

(14) *holai pəkɖau gərnisəi*

ho-lai    pəkɖ-au        gər-ni-səi
he-ACC    arrest-NOMLdo-PST-EVID
'(He) arrested them.'(PR.59)

Majhi presents a number of instances where dative subject constructions are used. Some examples follow.

(15) *bərmalai madzhil dekhikəi sare ris uʈhlətisəi*

bərma-lai      madzhi-l     dekh-ikəi
Brahma-DAT Majhi-PL        see-SEQ

sare    ris      uʈh-ləti-səi
very    anger    stand-PST.3SG-EVID
'Having seen Majhis, Brahmaji was very angry.'(MAW.20)

(16) *keti həkljas tuilai*

keti hək-lja-s              tui-lai
what become-PST-2SG       you-ACC
'What happened to you ?' (PR.178)

(17) *toralkai ketir tsaso*

tui-l-kai      keti-r           tsaso
you-PL-DAT what-GEN          concern
'Why do you have your concern ?' (WFB.19)

When subjects are in dative case, they are experience subjects (Masica 1991:346). The subjects in (15-17) are in dative case and they include psychological state as in (15), physical sensation (16) and so on.

## 3.3 Locative: *-ka, -nai*

Locative *–ka,* and *-nai* are directly attached to the nominal stems. The locative of place is exemplified in (18-20).

(18) *mənthəlika ekdzən dhəni madzhi rəile*

mənthəli-ka ek-dzən           dhəni
Manthali-LOC one-CLF          rich
madzhi     rə-le
Majhi      remain-PST
'There was a rich Majhi in Manthali.' (MAR.1)

(19) *radzkumar ghərnai aile*

radzkumar    ghər-nai          a-le
prince       house-LOC         come-PST
'The prince came home.' (PR.219)

(20) *brinda bənnai ghər rəiləsəi*

brinda bən-nai       ghər
Brindaforest-LOC    house

rə-lə-səi
remain-PST-EVID
'There was a house in Brindaban.' (PR.108)

## 3.4 Genitive: -rə, -kərə

Genitives are marked with -rə with both nouns and pronouns. The genitive suffix -r is common throughout the IA languages (Masica 1991:242). The genitive construction in Majhi consists of the juxtaposition of the *possessor* and *possessed* in that order and the possessor appears in the genitive case. The possessed noun sometimes hosts the pronominal possessive suffixes.

(21) *euʈa burra baunkərə euʈa beʈak rəiləsəi*

 ek-ʈa  burra baun-kərə  ek-ʈa
 one-CLF old  Brahmin-GEN one-CLF
 beʈa-k   rəi-lə-səi
 son-POSS.3SG remain-PST-EVI
 'There was a son of a Brahmin.' (PR.2)

(22) *tsutja radzarə nokəri bəilagəi*
  tsutja   radza-rə nokəri
  mean   king-GEN   job
  bəi-lag-əi
  NEG-be involved-INF
  'Don't work with a mean king.' (PR.17)

(23) *morə bwa gərip*
  muĩ-rə  bwa  gərip
  I-GEN   father poor
  'My father (is) poor.' (PR.231)

In addition to this, the possessed items sometimes host the pronominal possessive suffixes. For example, in (23), the noun *bhai* 'brother' also takes the pronominal possessive suffix -r. Similarly, the pronominal possessive suffix -k agrees with the third person singular possessor. Besides, the suffix -khjan in example (25) is also a pronominal possessive suffix that agrees with the third person pronoun.

(24) *torə bhaer*
  toi-rə  bhai-r
  you-GEN brother-POSS.2SG
  'Your brother…' (PR.186)

(25) *tshwaikhjankai khai bəimanləsəi*
  tshwai-khjan-kai    kha-i
  child-POSS.3PL-DAT   eat-INF
  bəi-man-lə-səi
  NEG-agree-PST-EVI

'His children (chicks) did not agree to eat.' (WFB.14)

It is to be noted, however, that the pronominal possessive suffixes do not always occur in genitive construction (see Dhakal, 2012). In addition to the suffixes listed above, the pronominal possessive suffix which agrees with the first person singular is -m. Some variations of pronominal possessive suffixes are mentioned in Majhi (n.d.) based on different dialects.

## 3.5 Comitative: -sin

The comitative function is served by the case marker -sin. This encodes accompaniment.

(26) *bərmasin udzur gərəi dzaila*
  bərma-sin  udzur gər-əi
  Brahma-COM complaint  do-INF
  dza-la
  go-PST.3PL
  '(They) went to Lord Brahma to complain with him' (MAW.8)

(27) *bəllə pətshi məɖwarisin mit lailəsəi*

  bəllə   pətshi məɖwari-sin
  finally  later  Marwari-COM
  mit   lai-lə-səi
  friend  make-PST-EVI
  'Later, he made Marwari his religiously bonded friend.' (PR.120)

## 3.6 Ergative-instrumental case: -n/-nin

The ergative and instrumental share the same the case clitic -n, -nin in Majhi. Consider examples in (28-29).

(28) *pathərin tsəri marəlte*
  pathər-in  tsəri mar-əlte
  stone-INST bird  kill-PST.3SG
  'A stone killed a bird.'

(29) *tshə̃uɖarin ləurin kukəl piʈəlte*

  tshə̃uɖar-in  ləuri-n  kukəl
  son-ERG   bird-INST  dog

  pi -le
  beat-PST.3SG
  '(My son) beat the dog with a stick.'

The instrumental and ergative marker are same in a number of languages. Garret (1990: 264) notes "It

has been noticed before that ergative and instrumental case marking are identical in many languages, and it seems natural enough to speculate that in such situations ergatives have originated in old instrumentals."

Let's see the pattern of ergative marking in Majhi. As noted in section (2), Majhi is not a consistently ergative language. Some south Asian languages exhibit split-ergative systems. Although ergative system in south Asian languages is conditioned by aspectual split, such as Nepali (Li, 2007), split ergativity built on nominal hierarchy is also characterized in some other languages like Darai (Dhakal, 2012). The split system in Majhi is conditioned by nominal split (speech act participants). Ergative case requires some details in Majhi language since the language exhibits a split ergative system.

As we see in examples (3), the third person singular pronoun hosts the ergative case even in the present tense if the clause is transitive. On the other hand, if the subject is the first person pronoun singular (5), it does not host the ergative marking. It is thus obvious that some pronouns take ergative marking whereas others do not. In order to illustrate the same case, let's take examples with the second person pronouns.

(30) *tui ghərə dzaitshəs*
   tui    ghərə   dza-tsh-əs
   you    house   go-NPST-2SG
   'You go home.'

(31) *tui bhat khaitshəs*
   tui    bhat   kha-tsh-əs
   you    rice   eat-NPST-2SG
   'You eat rice.'

(32) *tora ghərə dzaitshə*
   tui    ghərə   dza-tsh-ə
   you    house   go-NPST-2PL
   'You (PL) go home.'

(33) *tora bhat khaitshə*
   tui    ghərə   dza-tsh-ə
   you    house   go-NPST-2PL
   'You eat rice.'

The subjects of transitive clauses in (31, 32) manifest that the second person pronouns, both singular and plural, do not code ergativity even in transitive clauses. Irrespective of tense, aspect and mood the first and second person pronouns do not

encode ergativity. Although the examples given are in the present tense, the same is true in the past tense as illustrated in example (34-35).

(34) *tui keti khaile*
   tui   keti   kha-le
   you   what   eat-PST.3SG
   'What did you eat ?'

(35) *muĩ gai phukainai*
   muĩ gai   phuka-i-lai
   I   cow   untie-ABS-PST
   'I untied the cow.'

It is relevant to mention examples of the perfect aspect with the first person and second person pronouns. Examples (36-37) show that the first and second person plural pronouns do not code ergative marking even in perfect aspect.

(36) *hai lədipudza gərlai atshe*
   hai lədipudza    gər-lai
   I   Koshi worsip   do-PRF
   atsh-e
   be.NPST-1PLSG
   'We have done Koshipuja.'

(38) *tora sori pallai atshə*
   tora   sori     pal-lai
   you   pig      rear-PRF
   atsh-ə
   be.NPST-1PL
   'You have reared the pigs.'

A split ergative language is one in which some transitive clauses, but not all, are ergative construction (DeLancey, 1979:626). Therefore, the ergative languages are inclined to exhibit one kind of split than others among these patterns: (i) The empathy-hierarchy pattern (SAP) (ii) The aspectual split and (iii) The active/stative split. They are also referred to as the nominal split, aspectual split and syntactic split respectively. This kind of split we've discussed is also called nominal (personal) split DeLancey (1981).

Figure 1: Personal split (DeLancey 1981:644)

SAP's > 3rd pronouns > human > animate > natural forces > inanimate

In this continuum the split begins between the second and third person pronouns in Majhi. For this reason the ergative phenomenon in Majhi language is analogous to Darai in which the ergative marker does not occur with the first and second person pronouns (Dhakal, 2012).

DeLancey states that SAP > 3rd is the most natural possible split (1981:645) and the examples discussed in this paper justify (agrees with) his claim. This also shows that the ergative and the instrumental marker in the Majhi language are identical. Thus, the Majhi language can typically be described as a split ergative language in which ergativity is conditioned by nominal hierarchy (Speech Act Participant). The case marking pattern in Majhi is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Case marking pattern in Majhi

| subject of intransitive clauses | agent of transitive clause | patient of transitive clause |
|---|---|---|
| 1 2 pronouns | -Ø | -lai |
| 3 pronouns | -n,-nin | -Ø(-lai) |
| noun phrases | -n,-nin | -Ø(-lai) |

The third person pronouns and all other noun phrases with transitive clauses operate on an ergative/absolutive basis. Thus, the type of nominal split is not conditioned by the perfectivity but by the nominal hierarchy.

The analysis shows that the case marking pattern with the first and second person pronouns is nominative-accusative whereas it is ergative absolutive with the third person pronouns and other noun phrases.

### 3.7 Ablative: *baʈe*

Source is expressed by ablative. The postposition to express is *ba e* 'from'. Some examples follow.

(38) *dziu baʈe pəsina aile*

dziu baʈe pəsina a-le
body ABL sweat come-PST
'(My) body sweated.'

(39) *hoi khet baʈe aile*

hoi khet baʈe a-le
he field ABL come-PST.3SG
'He came from field.'

### 3.8 Allative: *səmmə*

The case marker for the ablative is *səmmə*. Examples follow.

(40) *muĩ bhoʈli səmmə dzaitshũ*

muĩ bhoʈli səmmə dza-tsh-ũ
I Bhatauli ALL go-NPST-1SG
'I will go upto Bhatauli.'

(41) *kalu səmmə tshoɖari aitə*

kalu səmmə tsho ari son
tomorrow ALL
a-tə
come-POSB
'Perhaps (my) son will come by tomorrow.'

### 3.9 Vocative

The vocative case is not morphologically marked and therefore does not participate in morphosyntactic process. This is however realized with vocative calling *e* 'eh' as in (42).

(42) *e tshuneni dzunkan*

e tshuneni dzun-kan
VOC daughter PROH-weep
'Eh, daughter, don't weep.' (PR.205)

### 4 Summary

Case syncretism is found only with ergative and instrumental in Majhi. Majhi has case markers for dative-accusative, locative, comitative, and ergative cases. The other grammatical relation is shown by postpositions. Majhi has a fairly mid-sized case suffixes based on Iggesen (2008). The head noun in genitive phrase is also accompanied by pronominal possessive suffixes. Although Majhi is often described as an 'eastern' IA language, this does not share the dative-accusative case -*ke* which is common in eastern IA languages (Grierson 1904). The dative-accusative case -*ke* is found in eastern IA languages spoken in Nepal, such as Maithili (Yadav 1997[1996]) and Rajbanshi (Wilde, 2008). Although some eastern IA languages do not possess ergative marking, Majhi characterizes it. The split ergativity in Majhi is conditioned by nominal hierarchy.

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**Abbreviations**
1 first person
2 second person
3 third person

| | |
|---|---|
| ABL | ablative |
| ALL | allative |
| CLF | classifier |
| COM | comitative |
| DAT | dative |
| ERG | ergative |
| EVI | evidential marker |
| GEN | genitive |
| IA | Indo-Aryan |
| INF | infinitive |
| LOC | locative |
| NEG | negative |
| NOM | nominative |
| NOML | nominalized noun |
| NPST | non-past |
| PL | plural |
| POSB | possibility |
| POSS | pronominal suffix |
| PRF | perfect |
| PROH | prohibitive |
| PROS | prospective |
| PST | past |
| SG | singular |
| SEQ | sequential converb |
| SIM | simultaneous converb |
| VOC | vocative |

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[i] Majhi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Sindhuli and Ramechhap district in eastern Nepal. CBS (2002) records that 21,841 Majhi speakers speak this language as their mother tongue. Yadava (2003) classifies this as an eastern Indo-Aryan language. The initial work for the study of Majhi was supported by Nepal Sanskrit University. This study is largely based on elicited data which was also accompanied by the interlinearized texts of about 380 sentences. The main language consultant for this article is Dhan Bahadur Majhi

inhabitant of Bhautali Village Development of Ramechhap district. I am grateful to him for the data he provided.The references provided in some examples refer to the texts they are taken from. For example, the text *Prince* is abbreviated as PR; *Majhi and Water* as MAW; *Majhi and Bank* as MAB; and *Wood for Boat* as WFB.

# Contact Nepali in Kathmandu valley: Convergence between TB & IA languages

Bhim Lal Gautam

*Nepali being the official language as well as lingua franca in Kathmandu has got a very long history and relationship with other languages mainly spoken in the Kathmandu valley and other places. Contact Nepali has become the part of daily lives of all the people in the Kathmandu valley these days because of the heavy migration of various people from various linguistic groups. Most ethnic people migrating into the capital city use their native language for domestic as well as religious and cultural purpose but speak Nepali for business as well as social formal activities. Kathmandu is now a multilingual city where we find people speaking at least 3 or more languages. Because of urbanization a large number of other language speaking communities like Indo-Aryan (Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu etc.) and Tibeto-Burman (Sherpa, Tamang, Gurung, Rai, Limbu etc.) are migrating in the capital day by day. This article presents a brief outline of language contact situation in Kathmandu valley focusing on the possible sociolinguistic features of contact Nepali like code switching/mixing, borrowing etc. of the two groups, Tibeto-Burman and Madhesi (IA) speaking Nepali as language of wider communication along with their domains of Nepali language use. The data is collected informally from different sources like interview, conversation, speech and social gatherings like religious and cultural festivals.*

## 1 Introduction

Nepal is a multilingual, multi-ethnic and multicultural country situated between two big countries i.e. India and China in south Asia. The capital city Kathmandu has a very long linguistic and cultural history. In the

ancient time many Lichhabi (250 A.D.) and Malla kings (1400 A.D.-1500 A.D.) ruled the Kathmandu valley which was popularly known as Kantipuri Nagari. Malla and Lichhabi kings used Newari for their official and contact purpose, Sanskrit for religious purpose and Maithili for entertainment i.e. in drama and cultural activities. The concept of multilingualism and language contact was very popular since the early days.

Ancient Nepal got various ups and downs in its history. The impact of Aryan and Mugal invasion of Indian continent affected the Nepal's historical, cultural and linguistic history.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah, a Shaha king from Gorkha with his brother ,Bahadur Shah and brave Gorkha armies started the unification movement (1769 A.D.) and entered the Kathmandu valley from outside .Before the unification movement, Kathmandu was the pure cultural and ethic city dominated by Newars. When Prithivi Narayan Shah came Kathmandu with Nepali language (then Khas Bhasa) he made it the capital city of big unified country. This is probably the first entry of Nepali language in the valley with lots of political and economical support .He wrote 'Dibyopades' a book of various quotations and instructions that sketched the social and political condition of Nepal then .After the establishment of Shah Dynasty in Nepal, Ranas came into the power (104yrs)when Jung Bahadur Rana finished all the supporter of Shah Kings through Kot Massacre(1845) and Bhandarkhal massacre (1846A.D.) We also can see the impact of Nepali language entering through various administrative and socio-cultural activities in those days when Poet Bhanubhakta translated

Balmiki Ramayana into simple Nepali. It was recited and read every where as a morning prayer by most of the Hindu people in Nepal. Consequently, Nepali becomes the major language for the administration, power and politics in Nepal.

Jung Bahadur visited England for one year (1949-1950) when there was British Empire in India and knew the importance of English language in order to know the politics and influence of British Rulers. After returning back to Nepal , he classified Ranas into 3 classes i.e. A, B and C and started English education for A grade Ranas by inviting British teachers. This is the formal entry of English language in Nepal though many Nepali who worked in India during British Rule learned and used English words and culture when they returned to Nepal. During 104 years of Rana rule of Nepal English became the language of elites and powerful people.

Nepal's political revolution (1950) against Rana rule with the strong support of Delhi (then Independent India) brought new dimension in linguistic movement. People became aware of their language and culture when they entered the new political Era (1950-1960) People and existing political parties exercised on constitutional assembly and formed the elected government. The impact of Hindi and Maithili Language entered Nepali society because of the new political movements. In 1960 king Mahendra arrested all the elected ministers and political leaders of various political parties and established Panchayat system in the country. Panchayat system released the constitution in 1962 focusing one government, one country one language i.e. Nepali language policy in all social, cultural, Political and administrative activities. Sanskrit became the sacred language for religious activities by the pundit and educated people and Nepali became the

language of power, education and other activities. The NESP (New Education System Plan) 1971 focused and implemented Nepali as the compulsory subject for all system and level of Nepali education.

Nepal turned into another political revolution in 1990 against Panchyat System and multiparty democracy was established in the country. Because of the impact of 1990 revolution, other dominated and minority linguistic group emerged out by establishing their linguistic and cultural rights. Kathmandu became the main administrative centre for all these activities. In 1996 Maoist revolution brought new linguistic movement in Nepalese history. Most of the rural areas were captured by Maoist rebellions and the people who were anti-Maoist left the villages and migrated to the urban area (i.e District headquarters and Kathmandu) for security, employment and educational opportunities. On the other hand the families of British and Indian Armies (i.e. Gurkha Rifles) also migrated to big cities like Kathmandu, Pokhara , Biratnagar, Nepalgung etc . The flow of migration in capital city Kathmandu became so fast when Maoist revolution influenced the whole country in the later days (2004-5). Another impact of migration influenced the Kathmandu valley when lots of Nepali workers went to Golf countries like UAE, Oman, Malesiya, Kuwait, Qatar for employment and began to settle in the capital in order to educate their children.

After2006/7 political revolution, Kathmandu became the cosmopolitan city for all kinds of people i.e. politics, administration, employment etc. Though, people and ethnic groups are coming with new political feelings for the development of their ethnic, cultural and linguistic rights, Nepali plays the vital role as a vernacular language in the Kathmandu valley.

## 2 Language contact and Nepali language

Language contact is the historical feature of South Asian region. Because of the various social and political reasons, the role of language contact is changing day by day. Nepali became the language of power and prestige for over two centuries in Nepal. Various other factors are responsible for the use of Nepali language in wider perspective. The following are the main reasons for the use of Nepali Language in the Kathmandu valley.

a) Migration of the ethnic people from various corners of the country for employment and better job opportunities in the capital city.
b) Increasing ratio of urbanization and the changing life style of the people.
c) Various political movements and existing political instability of the country.
d) Changing economical condition and labor migration in the city centers, construction areas and the factories from the villages.
e) Various ups and downs of the social and economical status of the people, etc.

In all these situations the Nepali language plays the vital role in contact situation among the various people migrating to the capital city i.e. the Kathmandu valley. The status of Nepali language as the national and official language is the main reason for this situation. People use Nepali as a lingua franca and status marker in various domains. Some important domains are listed below.

a) Nepali is used for inter-ethnic dialogues/ conversations.
b) It is the language for intergenerational conversations, i.e., grandparents to grandchildren.
c) Nepali is the language for official and formal activities.

d) Various academic and economical activities are conducted in the Nepali language.

## 3. Nature of migration

By observing the Nature of Migration in the capital city we find people coming from two main linguistic families i.e. Indo-Aryan and Tibeto Burman.

## 3.1 Indo Aryan nature

Mostly the Terai/Madhesi people are migrating to the capital for various purposes are the native speakers of Maithili ,Bhojpuri, Tharu and Awadhi. They live in the Terai region of Nepal bordering to India especially Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. When they settle in the capital, they use Nepali with the people of various races and cultures. Mostly vegetable vendors , barbers, construction workers are the people who are the main sources of language contact situation in the valley. Most of these people are located in Balkhu, Kalimati, Kupondol, New Bhaneshwor and Maitidevi areas of the city. While observing their activities is the morning or evening in these areas, they are found using both languages i.e. Nepali and their mother tongues with their friends and relatives.

Some examples of lexical change between Maithili and standard Nepali are as follows:

**Maithili Nepali standard Nepali meaning**
asthaniya        - isthaniya        'permanent'
garilinu         -garnu            'to do'
khai linu        - khanu           'to eat'
mari linu        - marnu           'to die'
maari linu       - maarnu          'to kill'
paai linu        -paaunu           'to get/achieve'

The word '*asthaniya*' means permanent in Maithali Nepali but standard Nepali has another meaning i.e temporary not permanent.

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## 3.2 Tibeto-Burman nature

Tibeto- Burman language speaking people are migrating from the hilly and mountainous regions of the country.They are the Gurung, Magar, Tamang, Sherpa, Rai and Limbu people who settle in the city after getting retired from their service in army (Nepal, Indian and British) or earning lots of money from foreign countries. Their main motivation of migrating in the capital is finding better life style, employment and educational opportunities. Most of the Tibeto- Burman people are located in Boudda, Jorpati, Satdobato, Maharajgunj, Gongabu and Kapan-Mandhikhatar areas of the Kathmandu valley.

These people use their mother tongue in their cultural gathering like 'Lohsar', 'Arghau', 'Udhauli-Unvauli' etc. to some extent but they use Nepali with other ethnic people and their children. In the market places, Nepali is frequently used even among their own groups. Some examples of Tamang-Nepali are as follows:

| Tamang Nepali | standard Nepali | meaning |
|---|---|---|
| haajaar | hajaar | 'thousand' |
| baajaar | bajaar | 'market' |
| maalai | malaai | 'to me' |
| ghaar | ghar | 'house' |
| baasyo | basyo | 'sat' |

While observing this lexical change we see *aa* changed *a* into Standard Nepali. Let's see some Tamang sentences spoken by a lady.

1. aabui      bas- ma sit    na-rai-ca
  Oh!         Bus-LOC seat   NEG- be-3Sg
  'Oh! There is no seat available in the bus.'

Analysis of 'be' verb

  na- rai-ca (Tamang Nepali)
  NEG-be-3Sg
 rahe-na-cha ( Standard Nepali)
  Be EXIST-NEG-3Sg

2. Sir! maathi ciya khana aai-za
  Sir   upstairs tea   have   come-3Sg
 'Sir please come upstairs to have tea'

Analysis of the verb 'come'

  aai-za (Tamang- Nepali)
  Come-3 Sg NH
  aau-nu-hos (Standard Nepali)
  Come-3Sg-HH

While analyzing these two sentences we find lots of change in verb formation. In these first sentence the negative marker **na** has been shifted to the initial position in Tamang Nepali and **cha** becomes **ca**. In the same way Nepali verb **aaunu-hos** with high honorific has become **aai-za** because of the influence of Tibeto- Burman lingustic feature.

## 4. Summary and conclusion

Contact Nepali in the Kathmandu valley is unique because of the convergence between various Tibeto- Burman and Indo- Aryan languages. Substratum interference is a subtype of interference that results from imperfect group learning during a process of language shift. That is, in this kind of interference a group of speakers shifting to a target language (TL) fails to learn the TL perfectly.' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). The new language contact situation has created various possibilities to study the areas of sociolinguistics and sociology of language.' Both the direction of interference and the extent of interference are socially determined; so to a considerable degree, are the kinds of features transferred from one language to another.' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

Abbreviation
LOC    Locative
NEG   Negative
EXIST  Existential
Sg      Singular
NH     Non-honorific
HH     High-honorific

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# Phonation types of Balami consonants: An acoustic analysis

Bhoj Raj Gautam

*This paper presents the acoustic features of the different phonation types of Balami consonants. There are voiceless vs. voiced distinction in plosives, fricatives and affricates, inaspirate vs. aspirate distinction in plosives and affricates and modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction in bilabial nasal, alveolar nasal, bilabial glide and alveolar lateral. Voiceless vs. voiced distinction is analyzed in terms of VOT, voice bar and preceding vowel duration. Inaspirate vs. aspirate distinction is analyzed in terms of VOT and aspiration noise. Finally, modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction is analyzed in terms of $F_0$, periodicity, spectral tilt and acoustic intensity and overall clarity of the spectrogram.*

## 1 Introduction

The term Balami is both an ethnonym and a glottonym. According to the *Rastriya Balami Samaj* (National Balami Society), the Balami people are scattered in about 21 districts of the country and the estimated population in Nepal is about 1, 07,000. The major settlements of people are in the parts surrounding Kathmandu valley including Nuwakot, Dhading, Makanwapur and Sindhupalchok districts. They are also found in Kathmandu, Dolakha, Baglung, Kavre, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and in a few scale in many other districts.

The Balami language is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Nepal and it is genetically closer to the Newar. The present study is based on the Balami spoken in the Kagati gaun of Okharpouwa V.D.C. in Nuwakot district.

In Balami, there are altogether twenty seven consonant phonemes i.e. ten plosive, six nasal, three affricate, two fricative, one trill, three approximant and two lateral approximant and they are produced with the five places of articulation i.e. bilabial, alveolar, palatal, velar and glottal. The different glottal states which are contrastive for consonants are voicing, aspiration and breathiness. Voiceless vs. voiced contrast is found in the plosive, fricative and affricate consonants. Likewise, aspirate vs. inaspirate contrast is also found in plosive and affricate consonants. The modal voice vs. breathy voice contrast is found in bilabial nasal, alveolar nasal, bilabial glide and in alveolar lateral.

## 2 Methodology

In the present paper, a list of monosyllabic words with consonant phonemes was collected and put in the utterance context so that the nasal phonemes occurred in the VCV cannon i.e. i-i, u-u, ʌ-ʌ and a-a contexts. The recording was done with the Sony ECM-MS908C Electret Condenser Microphone and EDIROL R09HR recorder. The target utterances were recorded with three male and two female speakers.

The voiceless vs. voiced distinction is analyzed for both plosives and affricates in terms of VOT, voice bar and preceding vowel duration. The aspirate vs. inspirate distinction is analyzed for plosives and affricates in terms of VOT and aspiration noise. The modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction is analyzed for bilabial nasal, alveolar nasal, bilabial glide and alveolar lateral in terms of $F_0$, periodicity, spectral tilt and acoustic intensity and overall clarity of the spectrogram. The acoustic displays for the analysis are oscillogram, spectrogram and spectral slices.

## 3 Voiceless vs. voiced

Voicelessness is the state of nil phonation in which there will be zero acoustic input to the vocal tract either with the vocal folds wide open or with the vocal folds making a complete closure (Laver, 1994). While the vocal folds are wide apart there is enough space for the airflow to pass through without any obstruction. In the glottal stop, no air is passed from the sub-glottal area to the transglottal area since vocal folds are in complete

closure. Thus, the acoustic input to the vocal tract is zero in both cases.

But, in voicing, there is a pulsed input of energy from the larynx to the vocal tract. The vocal folds show the regular pulsing with the interactive product of the muscular and the aerodynamic factors.

In Balami, there is the distinction of the voiceless vs. voiced in the obstruent sounds and the both types of voicelessness are found.

### 3.1 Plosives

In plosives, the voiceless vs. voiced distinction can be correlated to different acoustic cues i.e. VOT in the oscillogram, voice bar in the spectrogram and the relative duration of preceding vowels. Figure 1 is an oscillogram and spectrogram of bilabial plosives in Balami.

In figure 1, the oscillogram shows that the positive short VOT is the acoustic correlate of the voiceless plosive while the negative VOT is the acoustic correlate of voiced plosive. For Balami male speaker, the VOT for the voiceless plosive is 16ms while for the voiced plosive the negative VOT is 69ms. For the voiceless plosive, there is complete silence in the oscillogram during the closure portion. This is the zero acoustic energy. But, for the voiced plosive, there is the presence of small regular vibrations in the oscillogram during the closure.

In the spectrograms, the voiceless plosive is seen with the absence of voice bar during the closure portion while for the voiced plosive there is the presence of the voice bar during the closure portion.

Figure 1: oscillogram and spectrogram of bilabial plosives
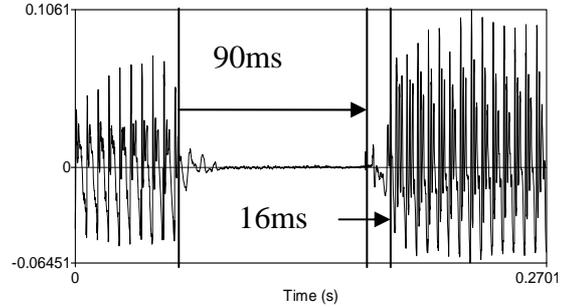


(a) [apa]



(b) [apa]



(c) [aba]



(d) [aba]

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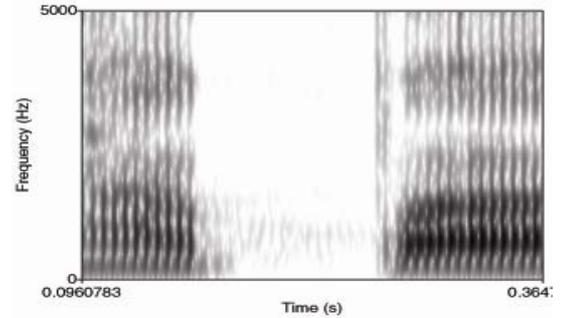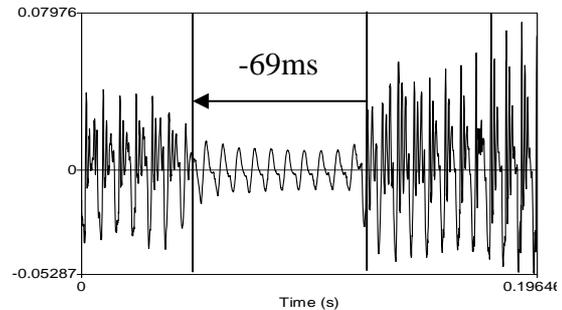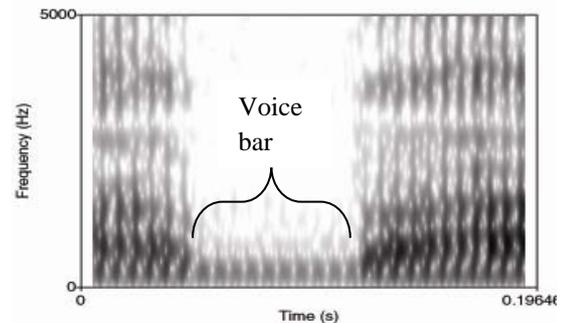
The voiceless vs. voiced distinction is also cued by the relative duration of the preceding vowels. The relative duration of vowel [a] preceding the Balami plosives is given in table 1.

| | [p] | [pʰ] | [b] | [t] | [tʰ] | [d] | [k] | [kʰ] | [g] | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Puspa | 85 | 75 | 95 | 64 | 67 | 99 | 75 | 76 | 90 | 65 |
| Hira | 97 | 82 | 110 | 85 | 85 | 107 | 100 | 75 | 106 | 93 |
| Jit | 104 | 134 | 171 | 209 | 168 | 211 | 150 | 169 | 181 | 102 |
| Sapana | 72 | 86 | 116 | 81 | 75 | 99 | 82 | 83 | 100 | 99 |
| Saraswati | 90 | 91 | 120 | 99 | 102 | 118 | 113 | 99 | 123 | 98 |
| Average | 89 | 93 | 122 | 107 | 99 | 126 | 104 | 100 | 120 | 91 |

Table 1: The duration (in millisecond) of the vowel [a] preceding the Balami plosives

In table 1, the duration of the preceding vowel varies corresponding to the voiceless vs. voiced distinction of the plosive sounds. The duration of vowel [a] before the voiceless plosive whether it is aspirate or inaspirate is shorter than the duration of the vowel before voiced plosives in all of the places of articulation. Here, the intrinsic duration of the vowel [a] is low because the consonant preceding this vowel is voiceless aspirated alveolar plosive [tʰ].

### 3.2 Fricatives and affricates

For the both fricatives and affricates, the acoustic feature distinguishing the voiceless vs. voiced is the absence vs. presence of voiced bar.

Figure 2: Oscillogram and spectrogram of Balami voiceless fricative and voiced fricative



(a) [asa]



(b) [asa]

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(c) [aɦa]



(d) [aɦa]       Voice bar
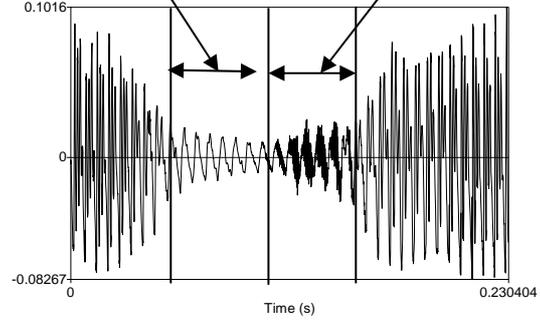
In Balami there are two fricatives i. e. voicelss alveolar fricative and voiced glottal fricative.The oscillogram and the spectrogram of these sounds in a-a context are in figure 2. The figure shows the presence of voice bar in voiced fricative with regular vibrations in oscillogram and with the presence of low vertical striations in spectrogram while it is absent in the voiceless fricative.

Figure 3: Oscillograms and spectrograms of Balami voiceless and voiced affricate



Closure    (a)  [atˢa]    Noise



(b)  [adᶻa]



(c) [adᶻa]

(d) [adᶻa]　　Voice bar



(a) [apa]
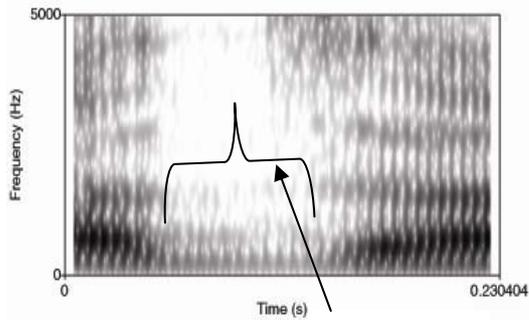
The oscillogram and the spectrogram of the voiceless alveolar affricate and the voiced alveolar affricate are given in figure 3. In the figure, voiceless affricate has the silence during closure and there are small regular vibrations in the voiced affricate in oscillogram. Likewise, voiceless affricate has no voice bar while voiced affricate has the voice bar in spectrogram.

## 4 Inaspirate vs. aspirate

The aspiration is a glottal function. It is the extra puff of air which is generated by the fact that the vocal folds are not together at the release of the constriction and there is a period when air flows through the open glottis and through the unconstricted oral cavity (Reetz & Jongman, 2009). Ladefoged (1971) says that aspiration is a brief period of voicelessness during and immediately after the release of an articulatory stricture. Thus, there will be the brief delay in the onset of the vocalic voicing and this is accompanied by the release of the air.

In Balami, aspirate vs. inaspirate distinction is found in plosives and affricates.

### 4.1 Plosives

In plosives, the aspiration is marked by the longer VOT in the oscillogram and by the aspiration noise in spectrogram which is absent in the inaspirate plosives.



(b) [apa]

Figure 4 is the oscillogram and spectrogram of voiceless inaspirate bilabial and voiceless aspirate bilabial.

Figure 4:Oscillogram and spectrogram of voiceless inaspirate bilabial and voiceless aspirate bilabial.



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(c) [apʰa]
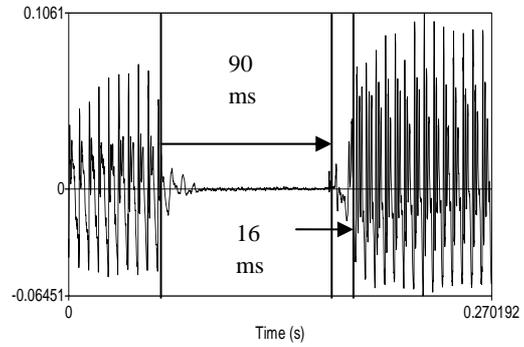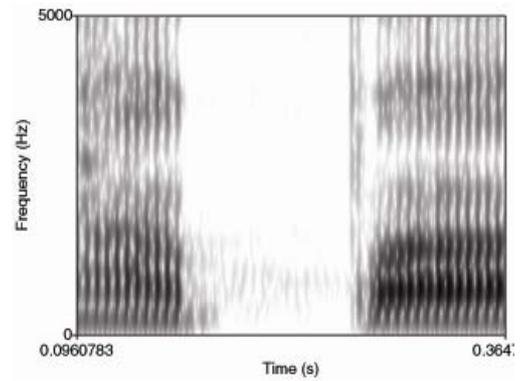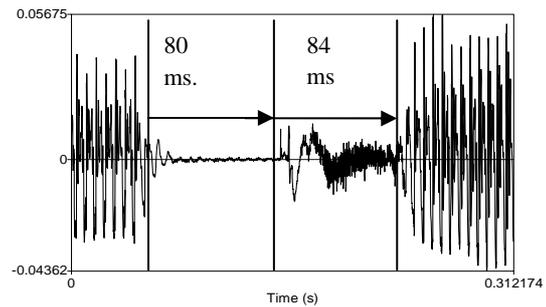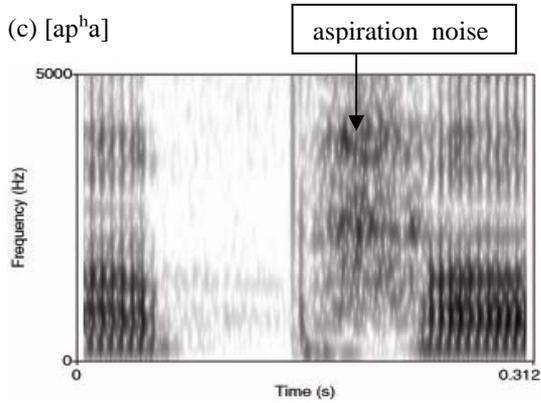


aspiration noise

(d) [apʰa]

Figure 4 shows that inaspirate bilabial has shorter VOT than the aspirate bilabial plosive. Likewise, in the spectrograms, there is not aspiration noise in inspirate plosive whilei it is present in aspirate plosive after the release burst.

### 4.2 Affricates

In affricates, the aspiration is marked by the absence or presence of aspiration noise after the friction noise.

Figure 5 is the oscillogram and spectrogram of voiceless inaspirate alveolar affricate and voiceless aspirate alveolar affricate. It shows that the aspirate alveolar affricate has the aspiration noise after the noise portion of the sound while it is absent in the inaspirate alveolar affricate.

Figure 5: Oscillogram and spectrogram of voiceless inaspirate affricate and voiceless aspirate affricate



a) [atˢa]

Closure   Noise   Aspiration

(b)[atˢʰa]



(c) [atˢa]

Aspiration noise



(d) [atˢʰa]

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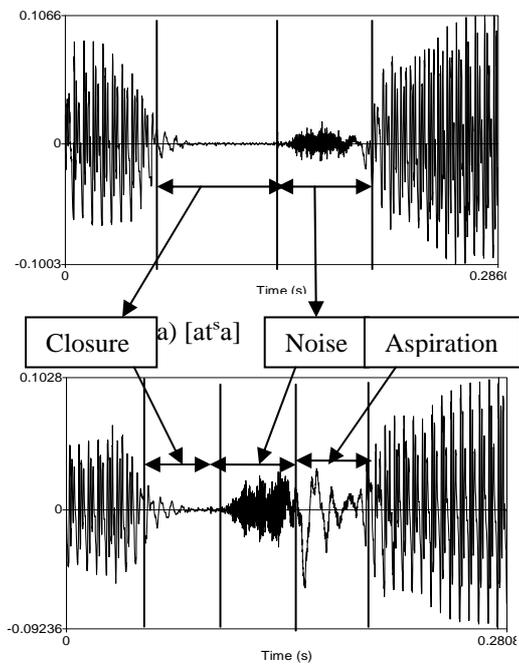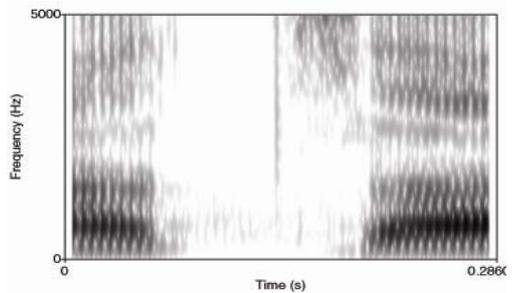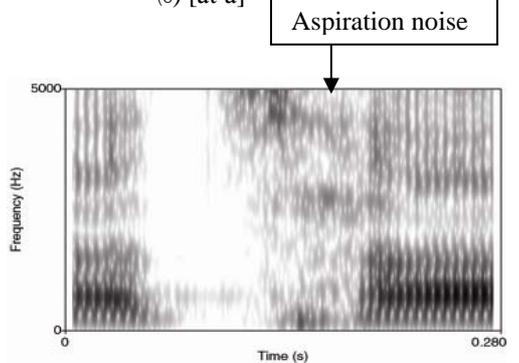
| 1. Modal voice vs. breathy voice | [m] | [m̥] | [n] | [n̥] | [l] | [l̥] | [w] | [w̥] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Puspa | 170 | 155 | 175 | 156 | 176 | 150 | 179 | 152 |
| Hira | 151 | 132 | 147 | 130 | 147 | 126 | 146 | 128 |
| Jit | 135 | 120 | 138 | 120 | 137 | 118 | 134 | 116 |
| Average | 152 | 135 | 153 | 135 | 153 | 131 | 153 | 132 |
| Sapana | 225 | 207 | 227 | 210 | 225 | 205 | 227 | 211 |
| Saraswati | 227 | 210 | 226 | 206 | 225 | 204 | 227 | 209 |
| Average | 226 | 208 | 226 | 208 | 225 | 204 | 227 | 210 |

Table 2: The fundamental frequency ($F_0$) of Balami sonorants with modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction

Voice is a glottal state in which the vocal folds vibrate regularly. But, there are different modes of vibration of the vocal folds. In the normal voice, average amount of the air escapes in each opening of the phonation cycle. This type of the vibration of the vocal folds is the default and it is called the modal voice. But, in another mode of vibration of the vocal folds more than average amount of air escapes either because of not complete closure of the whole length of the vocal folds or because of the longer open phase in the cycle and this mode of vocal fold vibration is called the breathy voice (O'connor, 1973). Breathy voice is a compound phonation type with the combination of the breath phonation and the voice phonation (Laver, 1994). Ladefoged (1971) regards breathy voice as brief description of the phonetic term murmur in which arytenoids are apart and the ligamental vocal cords are vibrating.

In Balami, there is modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction in bilabial nasal, alveolar nasal, bilabial glide and the alveolar lateral sounds.

Modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction can be correlated to the number of acoustic features like fundamental frequency, periodicity, acoustic intensity, spectral tilt and the overall clarity of the spectrogram.

### 5.1 Fundamental frequency ($F_0$)

The fundamental frequency of the sound with breathy voice is lower than the fundamental frequency of the sound with modal voice.

The $F_0$ measurement of bilabial nasal, alveolar nasal, bilabial glide and alveolar lateral with modal voice and breathy voice is given in table 2.

In Table 2 Puspa, Hira and Jit are male speakers while Sapana and Saraswati are female speakers. The table shows that the modal voice has higher $F_0$ than the breathy voice. The $F_0$ of Balami modal voice is more than 15Hz compared to the F0 of the breathy voice. The F0 difference for modal voice and berathy voice for male and felame speakers shows similar range of difference.

### 5.2 Periodicity

The periodicity is concerned with how regularly the pitch pulses occur in the production of the sound and with the presence of higher frequency components in the waveform which is correlated with the spectral noise.

The periodicity can be quantified by measuring the jitter value. The jitter value represents the variation in the duration of the successive cycles. High jitter value is correlated with the high degree of aperiodicity in the glottal source and the low jitter value represents the higher degree of periodicity of the glottal source.

Table 3 is the jitter value measurement of the Balami sonorants with modal voice vs. breathy voice distinction. It has been measured in sounds spoken by Puspa Balami.

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Table 3: The jitter measurement (in %) of the Balami sonorants with modal voice and breathy voice.

| [m] | [m̥] | [n] | [n̥] | [l] | [l̥] | [w] | [w̥] |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 0.6 | 4.7 | 0.7 | 3.2 | 0.6 | 4.0 | 0.3 | 4.2 |

Table 3 shows that the jitter value for the modal voice is very low and it is below one percent. But, the jitter value of the breathy sonorant is higher and it is above three percent.

## 5.3 Spectral tilt

Spectral tilt is the degree to which intensity drops of as the frequency increases. The spectral tilt can be observed in the spectral slice of the sounds with modal voice and breathy voice. It can also be calculated with the amplitude difference of the first and second harmonic in the spectral slice of the sounds.

The spectral slice of alveolar lateral with modal voice vs. breathy voice is given in figure 6.

Figure 6: Spectral tilt of the Balami alveolar lateral with modal voice (a) and breathy voice (b). The amplitude difference of H1 and H2 in (a) is [A(H1)-A(H2) = (35-29)dB = 5dB] and in (b) it is [A(H1)-A(H2) = (35-32)dB = 3dB].
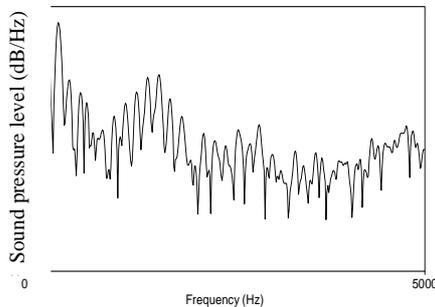


(a) [l]
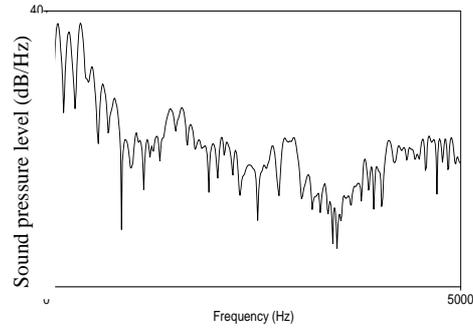


(b) [l̥]

Figure 6 shows that the amplitude increases for the higher frequencies in breathy voice [l ] but it doesn't increase in the same degree in the modal voice [l]. This can be calculated with the difference between the first and second harmonic of the spectral slice of the modal voice [l] and breathy voice [l̥]. The difference between first and second harmonic in modal voice [l] is 5dB and it is 3dB in breathy voice [l̥].It shows that the amplitude of the higher frequencies drops off rapidly in the spectral slice of the modal voice [l] than in the spectral slice of the breathy voice [l̥]. The amplitude of the higher frequencies is higher in the breathy voice [l̥] than in the modal voice [l].

## 5.4 Acoustic intensity and the overall clarity of the spectrogram

The acoustic intensity in the modal voice is greater than the acoustic intensity of the breathy voice sound. Likewise, the overall clarity of spectrogram of modal voice is greater than that of breathy voice.
Figure 7 is the oscillogram and spectrogram of lateral with modal voice and breathy voice. It shows that there is greater amplitude of the waveform of the lateral sound with modal voice than amplitude of the breathy lateral. Likewise, in the spectrogram of the sounds, the spectrogram of the modal [l] is clearer than the spectrogram of the breathy [l̥]. The spectrogram of breathy voice sound is whiter than the spectrogram of modal voice. The reason for this is that the breathy voice sound has the presence of more noise than in the modal voice sound. The acoustic intensity is

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greater in the spectrogram of the modal voice [l] than in the breathy voice [l̤].

Figure 7: Oscillogram and spectrogram of Balami lateral
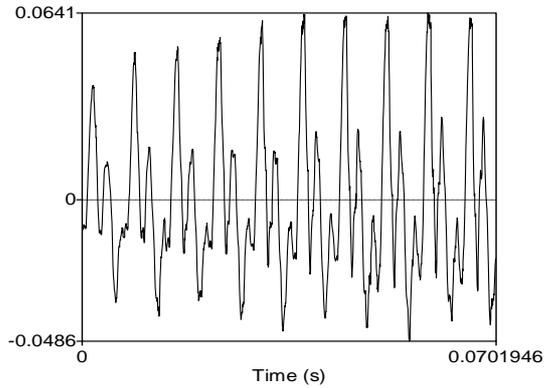


(a)   la]
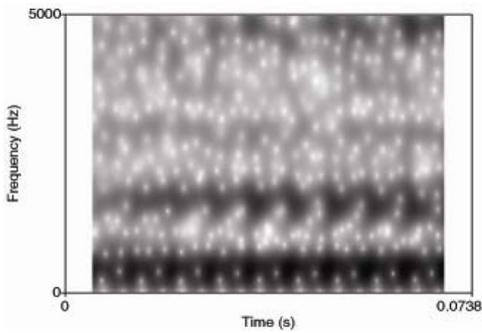


(b) [la]
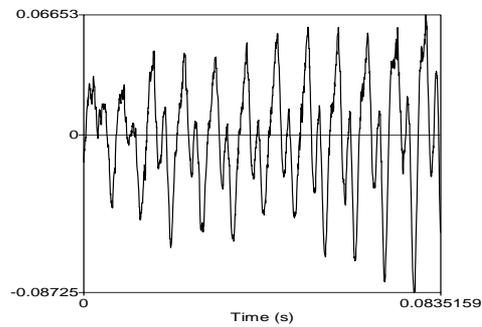


(c)  l̤a]
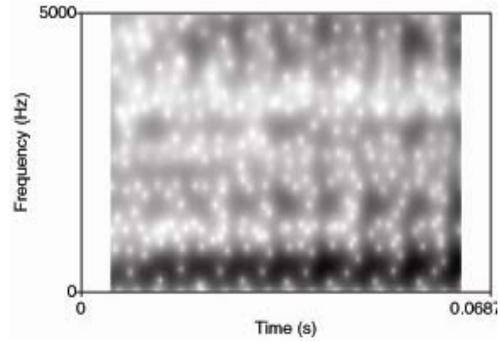


(d) [l̤a]

## 6 Conclusion

In the acoustic analysis of the phonation types of Balami consonants, voicelessness can be correlated with the short positive VOT, absence of voice bar in the spectrogram, and shorter preceding vowel duration. Voicing can be correlated with negative VOT, presence of voice bar during closure and longer preceding vowel duration. Likewise, inaspirate is cued by the shorter VOT and absence of aspiration noise after the release burst in plosive and after the friction noise in affricates while in aspirate the VOT is longer and aspiration noise is present. For the modal voice, the $F_0$ is higher than for the breathy voice. There is more aperiodic component in breathy voice then in the modal voice. Higher frequencies are more amplified in the breathy voice than in modal voice. The acoustic intensity of the modal voice is higher than the acoustic intensity of breathy voice. The spectrogram of modal voice is clearer than spectrogram of breathy voice.

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# Mother tongue instruction in multilingual schools of Nepal

## Laxman Ghimire

*Monolingual instruction (instruction in a mother tongue of one language group) is inappropriate in most schools of Nepal because the schools are multilingual with students from several languages and require an appropriate model of instruction in the context of multilingual classrooms.*

## 1 Background

The linguistic diversity and multilingualism of the country has been represented in the schools of Nepal. Most schools have students from diverse language backgrounds, usually a language with majority number of students and many languages with few numbers of students. The languages of minority students in the classroom are not recognized and these students are misinterpreted as proficient in the dominant languages and are forced to learn in the alien languages. The dominant language of the majority students usually dominates the languages of few students in the classroom.

While many factors are involved in delivering quality education, language is clearly the key to communication, understanding and eventual achievement in the classroom and beyond (World Bank, 2010). Mother tongue instruction is important to enhance the learning opportunities as well as to improve the quality of education (UNESCO, 1953; Yadav, 1992; Malone, 2005; Hornberger, 2009 and UNESCO, 2007).

UNESCO (2003) highlights three basic principles to support mother tongue instruction as follows;

a. As a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers.

b. As a means of promoting both social and gender equality and as a key element of linguistically diverse societies.

c. As an essential component of inter-cultural education in order to encourage understanding between different population groups and ensure respect for fundamental rights.

Use of mother tongues during the early basic level can improve the quality of education as it bridges the home world to the outer world and the prior knowledge of children can become instrumental for learning (Malone, 2005). A child comes to school with knowledge about the life and the world around him/her, but the schools underestimate this prior knowledge and begin teaching in vacuum.

## 2 School language situation in Nepal

Nepal is a home of about one hundred languages. However, the majority of the populations speak few languages and few populations speak the majority of the languages. CBS (2001) reports that about eighty percentages of the population in Nepal speak five major languages, while the population to speak fifty-eight minority languages is less than one percent. The proportion of language population in Nepal is presented in the following table.

Table No.: 1 Languages of Nepal

| Population | Languages | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1000000 and above | 5 | 80% |
| 100000-1000000 | 11 | 17.5% |
| 10000-100000 | 18 | 2.5% |
| 10000 and below | 58 | 0.5% |

Source: CBS (2001)

As presented on the table above, many languages of Nepal are spoken by few populations. The lower number of speakers in proportion to the competitive languages is one of the indicators to push the language at the margin and increase their vulnerability. The primary reason to put a threat upon the vitality of these minority languages is the decreasing number of speakers.

The Linguistic diversity of the country is well represented at the grass root levels, i.e. local communities. Most of the local communities are linguistically diverse, mostly characterizing with the majority population speaking a languages and minority population speaking several languages. The presence of several languages at the local

communities (village development communities) is presented in the following table.

Table No.: 2 Linguistic diversity in the selected VDCs (village development committees) of Nepal

| District | VDCs | Languages |
|----------|------|-----------|
| Kathmandu | Gangabu | 16+ |
| Kathmandu | Ichangunarayan | 9+ |
| Sunsari | Pakali | 17+ |
| Sunsari | Varaul | 20+ |
| Myagdi | Arthunge | 9+ |
| Myagdi | Darbang | 5+ |

Source: CBS, 2001

Many language groups in Nepal are settled together and make up a different character of language diversity. The representative communities (VDCs) in table 2 show the presence of multiple languages. Communities in Sunsari and Kathmandu districts are highly diverse while the communities in Myagdi are less diverse. However, the less diverse communities also present the existence of several languages.

The linguistic diversity of the local communities indicates that the schools in Nepal also present the similar diversity and require appropriate instructional strategies in the context of multilingual classrooms.

Language diversity in the schools does also represent the similar character. Among the multilingual schools, the composition of students belonging to different language groups from Kapilvastu is presented on the table below.

Table No.: 3 Languages at Shree high school, Hariharpur, Kapilvastu (grade one)

| Languages | Students |
|-----------|----------|
| Awadhi | 19 |
| Tharu | 14 |
| Nepali | 12 |
| Magar | 2 |
| Rai | 1 |
| Total | 48 |

In a classroom (grade one) there are students from five languages. However, the formal instructional language of the school is Nepali and Awadhi is used for informal communication in and out of the classroom. Tharu and Nepali speaking students are believed able to communicate in Awadhi, but the Rai and Magar students in the classroom are seriously ignored in regard to their ethnicity and language backgrounds. These students are misinterpreted as Nepali speakers. Ignoring the linguistic identity of the minority students is very common in the schools of Nepal. Similar example is found at a school with mother tongue-based multilingual education program in Kapilvastu.

Table No.: 4 students in grade one at Janakalyan higher secondary school, Barkulpur, kapilvastu

| Languages | Students |
|-----------|----------|
| Tharu | 31 |
| Nepali | 6 |
| Awadhi | 4 |
| Gurung | 2 |
| Total | 43 |

The school employs three languages (Tharu, Awadhi and Nepali) as instructional medium. The textbooks are in three languages. But the Grurung students are categorized as Nepali speakers.

This tendency is common in other schools, too, employing mother tongue instruction policy. It is believed that the minority students might have developed necessary proficiency in the local dominant language and are not required instruction in the medium of their first language.

A mother tongue medium school in Kathmandu has students from more than one language background. But, the school employs a locally dominating language as instructional medium. Along with the Newar students, Nepali, Tamang and Magar students are also taught in the medium of Newar language. More serious point is the school administrators and teachers believe that the Tamang, Magar etc students could have enough proficiency in Nepali and the alternative interpretation in Nepali can help them to understand well.

The following table presents the language composition of Newar medium school in Kathmandu.

Table No.: 5 Students in grade one at Jagat sundar school in Kathmandu (grade one)

| Ethnicity | Ethnic L1* | Non Ethnic L1** |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Newar | 4 | 8 |
| Chhetri | 1 | |
| Tamang | 2 | |
| Magar | | 1 |
| Total | 7 | 9 |

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*=Speaking the ethnic language as first language
**=Speaking non ethnic language as first language

The observation has explored that language shift is in acceleration among Newars as more young population is shifting to Nepali. Among the grade one Newar students, only four speak Newar as first language at home, while eight speak Nepali as first language at home. It reflects the severity of the problem, language loss.

Language of instruction plays the key role in pedagogy and the use of students' first language during the early basic education can enhance learning opportunities, academic success and cognitive development as well. But, employing the appropriate language for instruction in the multilingual classroom is a big challenge at the schools of Nepal. Development of appropriate model in the linguistic context of particular schools is crucial for the success of educational programs.

## 3 Medium of instruction

The language of instruction in or out of school refers to the language used for teaching the basic curriculum of the educational system (Ball, 2010). One's mother tongue is important as language of instruction because it is a person's natural means of self expression, and one of his or her first needs is to develop his/her power of self expression to the full (UNESCO, 1953).

Mother tongue is a vague term and needs to define specifically. Ball (2010) presents definitions of mother tongue as the language(s) that one has learnt first; the language(s) one identifies with or is identified as a native speaker of by others; the language(s) one knows best and the language(s) one uses most. Skutnabb-Kangass & Dunbar (2010, 33) also presents the definition of mother tongue as follows;

Table No.: 6 Definition of mother tongue

| Criterion | Definition |
|---|---|
| Origin | The language learnt first |
| Identification Internal (own) | The language one identifies with |
| External (by others) | The language one is identified as a native speakers by others |
| Competence | The language one knows best |
| Function | The language one uses most |

Source: Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar (2010)

These definitions are significant in the context of Nepal because of the presence of significant number of population speaking languages other than their ethnic language at home (Ghimire, 2004, 2011b & 2012). The language one uses most frequently at home can be the best language of instruction in pedagogy. Mother tongue, in this article, refers to the language of ones' ethnic group as more and more people are conscious to preserve their ethnic language and vitality of the existing languages is important for the language ecology.

Use of mother tongues (local languages) in education has been recognized, first, in the constitution of Nepal (1990). However, the number of mother tongue medium schools could not be extended in the country as expected (Shrestha and Hoek, 1995). The importance of mother tongues in education has been realized seriously only after the country agreed to achieve the goals of EFA (Education for All) and the use of students' mother tongues has been supposed instrumental to achieve the goals.

The government of Nepal has developed necessary policy, laws and regulations to encourage the use of mother tongues during the early basic education. The interim constitution of Nepal (2007), Education law (amended in 2006), EFA national framework of action (2003), National curriculum framework (2005), School sector reform plan (2009) and Multilingual education implementation guidelines (2010) are some important legal or policy documents to promote mother tongue medium of instruction at school.

## 4 Mother tongue-based multilingual education in Nepal

Mother tongue based multilingual education (MTB MLE) program was initiated in Nepal in 2006 with the technical support of Finnish

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government. Besides the pilot program, some national and international non government organizations have also initiated the program. However, the model of instruction applied in the schools does not appear quite appropriate in the context of linguistic pluralism in the classrooms.

The pilot program was initiated in eight languages of seven schools of six districts, covering all ecological belts and major language families. The program also covers the linguistically homogeneous and heterogeneous schools.

Acharya et al. (2009) points out that implementation of multilingual education are more challenging in the context of lack of well trained teachers to teach in non-traditional method and in mother tongues. The models applied in the linguistically heterogeneous schools can also be criticized on its pedagogical aspect, as it does not address the learning need (right?) of those students who are linguistic minorities in the classrooms. The program either is implemented at monolingual schools or ignores the languages of minority students.

The models employed in various pilot schools are presented in table 7.

Table No.: 7 Models of MTB MLE

| District | Model |
| --- | --- |
| Dhankuta | Athpahariya Rai Both MoI and Subject in grade 1-3 Uraw and Tharu/Maithili both MoI and Subject |
| Sunsari | Uraw in a combined class of grade 2 & 3 and Tharu/Maithili & Nepali in a combined class of grade 2 & 3 |
| Jhapa | Santhal both as MoI and Subject and Rajbansi only MoI/Santhal in a combined class of grades 1 & 2 (half day in Rajbansi and the second half in Nepali |
| Palpa | Magar both as MoI and subject in grade 1-3 |
| Kanchanpur | Rana Tharu both MoI and subject in grade 1-3 |
| Rasuwa | Tamang both MoI and subject in grade 1-3 |

Source: UNESCO (2011)

The pilot schools employ monolingual model of teaching except in Sunsari and Jhapa. However, the model applied in the schools in Jhapa and Sunsari is not out of criticism. There are Uraw, Tharu, Maithili and Nepali speaking students at the pilot school in Sunsari. Uraw speaking students in both grade one and two are taught together, whereas the students speaking Tharu, Maithili and Nepali of grade one and two are taught together. Students from grade one and two can not be taught together because they have separate curriculum and textbooks and this model does not improve the pedagogical quality. Similarly, the pilot school in Jhapa also employs multiple languages as language of instruction. Students from grade one and two under MTB MLE program are taught in Santhal language for a half time and in Rajbansi for the second half.

The mother tongue instruction is recommended for pedagogical advantages as well as to support for the vitality of one's ethnic language and the use of others' mother tongues cannot replace the need of education in own mother tongue.

The model employed in the schools of Nepal is a transitional model and is considered as weak model. Studies show that six to eight years of education in a language are necessary to develop the level of literacy and verbal proficiency required for academic achievement in secondary school (Ball, 2010). However, the policy of mother tongue-based multilingual education recommends the use of mother tongues up to grade three. The model applied in the mother tongue based multilingual education program in Nepal is more appropriate in the linguistically homogenous classrooms and is less effective in the multilingual classrooms. Since most of the schools in the country are linguistically heterogeneous, an alternative model has to be developed for the more effective teaching and learning in the multilingual schools.

## 5 Language of instruction in multilingual classrooms

While the multilingual classroom presents ample and creative openings for effective language learning and intercultural understanding, these opportunities are frequently lost (Helot and Laoire, 2011). School administrators and teachers

usually underestimate the language difficulties of language minority students in the classroom. Teachers seem unaware that language skill for basic communication is not enough to learn abstract concept and to talk on decontextual evidences, which requires good proficiency at the cognitive and academic field.

Cummins (1984) states that educational success depends upon the degree of cognitive academic language proficiency level in the mother tongue. Once the mother tongue has been developed at the cognitive and academic level then the language skill can easily be transferred into the additional languages. Research increasingly shows that children's ability to learn a second or additional languages (e.g., a lingua franca and an international language) does not suffer when their mother tongue is the primary language of instruction throughout primary school (Ball, 2010), but support learning in these languages.

Ghimire (2011a) argues that the major language ideologies, assimilation and pluralism, have remain dominating over the educational language policies of Nepal. The misinterpretation and underestimation of the languages of minority students in the classroom even in the mother tongue medium schools connote to the anti-pluralism ideology. Helot and Laoire (2011) also states that when individual teachers' endeavor to support and develop holistically an inclusive approach in the classroom, including their students' various languages in their pedagogical activities, they may generally be working out an individual positioning or belief set (.

There are several models of instructional medium ranging from absolute use of dominant language to the mother tongue only instruction for several years in the school. Baker (2006) presents the types of bilingual education as follows;

A. Monolingual forms of education for bilinguals
   a. Mainstreaming/submersion
   b. Mainstreaming/submersion with withdrawal classes
   c. Segragationist
B. Weak forms of bilingual education for bilinguals
   a. Transitional
   b. Mainstream with foreign language teaching
   c. Separatist

C. Strong forms of bilingual education for bilingualism and biliteracy
   a. Immersion
   b. Maintenance/heritage languages
   c. Two way/dual language
   d. Mainstream bilingual

The model applied in Nepal is a transitional bilingual (multilingual) program and is a weak model. Similarly, Ball (2010) presents the continuum of instructional medium from full use of dominant language to the full use of mother tongue as follows;

   a. Mother tongue based instruction
   b. Bilingual education
   c. Mother tongue based bilingual education
   d. Multilingual education
   e. Transitional bi/multilingual education
   f. Maintenance bi/multilingual education
   g. Immersion or foreign language education
   h. Submersion

Mother tongue-based instruction requires mother tongue only instruction and rejects the use of other languages, while submersion refers to the dominant language only instruction. Skutnabb-Kangass (2010) criticizes the weak models and non models as being harmful and discusses on the following types of programs;

   a. Completely dominant-language medium education from grade 1;
   b. Early-exit transitional programmes, with MTM education for the first 1-2 years, followed by using a dominant as the teaching language;
   c. Late-exit transitional programmes where the transition from a MTM programme to a dominant language medium programme is more gradual but is mostly completed by grade 5 or 6; and
   d. Programmes where the mother tongue is the main medium of education at least for the first eight years, or even longer.

The models discussed above present the possibility of language use in different intensity and proportion aiming either to develop good proficiency in the mother tongue or easy transition to the dominant language or dominant language only proficiency. A model is required to

address the multilingual classroom situation recognizing all languages and supporting to deliver quality education to all in the classroom as well as to support the language proficiency goal of the state. Monolingual teaching (use of mother tongue of one language group) cannot be appropriate in many schools in Nepal that excludes many languages. The more appropriate model in the context of multilingual classroom should consider the following characters.

a. Multilingual teachers with proficiency in local languages (students' languages) and training on multilingual class management
b. Multiple teachers from different languages to teach a subject
c. Instruction in multiple languages to address the language development need of every students
d. Textbooks and learning resources in the local varieties of multiple languages
e. Aiming to develop oral and written proficiency in the mother tongues of all students
f. Community involvement
g. Use of mother tongue to scaffold and transition to the language of wider communication, but teaching languages as subjects for those who like to develop higher level of proficiency in the respected languages.

## 6 Conclusion

Use of mother tongues during early basic education has more pedagogical advantages. The model appropriate in monolingual schools is inappropriate in the multilingual schools. The model employed in the MTB MLE pilot schools of Nepal are inappropriate because many schools are multilingual and require an alternative model for the use of mother tongues of all students in the classroom.

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# Role of language in nation building in Nepalese context

Jivendra Dev Giri

## 1 Background

Nepal is a multilingual country. Many factors like politics, natural resources, human resources and others play vital role in nation building. Among them, language is one and very important. More than a hundred languages belonging to the Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic, and Dravidian. These families have 29, 70, 2, 1 and 1 languages and 79.1%, 18.4 %, 0.2 %, 0.1 % and near about 0 % speakers respectively. (Pokharel and Rai). Therefore, linguists have named Nepal as a linguistic museum. These languages are the significant cultural heritage of Nepal. There is collection of the peculiarities of the Nepalese culture in them. The influence of the diversity of the natural geographical features of Terai/Madhes, hills and snowy mountains can easily be observed there. That is why, the linguistic diversity is a significant identity of Nepal.

The primary function of language is to make communication possible but its role is not limited. In addition, it serves as a means of national unification, social contact and solidarity, promoting education, commerce and mass media, tourism, arts and literature, disseminating political thoughts and modernizing the nation. So, it is necessary to provoke thoughts and discussion on what role a language can play in these genres and how far it contribute to nation building in Nepal, the paper is aimed at.

## 2 Nation and nation building

Prior to the discussion of the role of language in nation building, it is essential to be clear about nation and nation building. Pokharel et al. ( 1983) has defined nation as the country  with people, government and  sovereignty  on the one hand, and as citizens as a whole in a country attached with a single culture and economy. Really, a nation means people who have been affiliated to an aspirate unity coming up of the situation of race and ethnicity through processes of contact, struggle, harmony, assimilation and merger; as

well as a sovereign country of such people. When the nation is defined in this way, what role a language can play in national construction is our common concern. In reality, the language has been consolidating strength to accommodate peoples of different tongues, religions, ethnicities, cultures and geography and upraise them in favour of national integration and sovereignty being always ready to sacrifice. Therefore, the linguistic heritage has a greater importance to promote nationality with mental unity creating common psychology and common economic relations.

## 3 What role language plays in nation building?

There are mainly two factors for nation building : to build up a situation among nationals to work in a unified way with whole-heartedness and mutual harmony, and to work for physical development in favor of overall prosperity of the country. In this regard, enormous strength of the people is at one side and the government is on the other side. The role of language in nation building can also be accomplished from both sides. Going through such reality, the role of the language in nation building mainly can be considered as follows:

### 3.1 Language for social harmony

Mutual contact and social harmony can be promoted from the very means of the language. Cordiality and keenness can only be obtained when people participate in joy and sorrow with mutual realization of aspiration and experience of each other. It also helps create environment for open dialogue. The language can only accommodate peoples of different races, caste, and creed and mother tongues for coming together. The people meet each other at market, fair, celebrations, industries and several common occupations. They work together at various places. Wedding procession in life and funeral at death, affinity through visits and partition through isolation reflect significance of mutual contact and social harmony.

As Nepalese society is full of diversities, practice of multilingualism can foster social harmony. So, an individual should extend knowledge of different languages and grammars and dictionaries should be compiled and published in those languages. Such activities can establish communal harmony. It can promote common psychology and common culture. Thus, the multilingual context of the pluralistic Nepalese society should be materialized as a power of social harmony.

## 3.2 Language for national unity

There is no doubt, the nation building can only be possible through national unity and the language plays special role in this regard. Either in the time of national crisis or in materializing a special national campaign, only the language has been raising awareness and unity by disseminating proper messages. The role of the lingua franca and the other languages must be taken under consideration and be utilized well in such crisis.

As Nepal had long been under a monolingual state policy, little attention was paid to promote all the languages equally. Now the situation has been changed and a new era has started. The constitution has adopted all languages as national languages. (Government of Nepal (2006:2). All linguistic communities want to see whether their languages are being properly utilized and to maintain their identities with self-morale. If languages go hand in hand with each other to fulfill their needs, all will mutually be benefitted. Our efforts should continue to make all languages the carrier of national unity. All patriots should have an aspiration that none of the languages be extinct from our soil, rather they should be developed so that the respective linguistic communities should be enlightened to strengthen national aspiration.

We know, all the languages do not have the same physical condition. Some have more speakers and the others has very less, some are spoken in larger regions and the others in very limited areas, some are limited in oral traditions and the others are in well-written forms. In such diverse situation a linguistic survey should be performed to formulate a concrete language policy to plan what to be done in all those languages. The policy must not be formulated to suppress a language in favor of the other, rather to uplift each other.

## 3.3 Language for education

The role of language is crystal clear as vernacular of education. If one's own language is not developed enough to educate in the field of knowledge and science, another language is sought for help. English, Chinese, Japanese, German, and Spanish languages have developed themselves to run education in primary and higher education. They provide education of science and technology in the same vernacular. So, they have an ease to acquire knowledge of science and also transfer it to others. Most of the subjects in higher education in Nepal are taught in English and primary education is also inclined towards the English medium. If Nepali medium education is still facing isolation, what would be the situation of other languages? It can easily be assumed. As one can express his feelings and acquires feelings of the others in the mother tongue as clearly as possible, it is not possible in other language. As Maithili and Newar as well as English, Sanskrit and Hindi except Nepali are taught upto post-graduate and doctorate levels, other languages are even not in education till graduation. Though primary education in mother tongue is one of the fundamental children's rights, most of the languages do not have such opportunities till date (Yonjan–Tamang,2006 : 53). The expected progress has also not been seen in the schools where mother tongue education has started. To produce nation-friendly manpower, mother tongue education is significant. Textbooks and other teaching materials are also essential in this context. In this way, role of the language is significant for promotion of education and expected result as well as education is one of the basic factors for nation building.

## 3.4 Language for upliftment of literature, art and culture

Promotion of literature and art is identical with promotion of human civilization. Mental enrichment of the populace is as essential as same as the physical development of transportation, schools, hospitals, drinking water, and irrigation and so on. The national prosperity cannot be measured in without evaluating its literature and art. Literature and art can be developed by means

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of languages. Language has played an important role in promotion of the *Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharat, Iliad, Odyssey , Shahanama* etc. Either the genres of poetry, songs, fictions, essays, dramas and criticism or different genres of folklore; all become influential with skilful use of the language. Voices of *Sakewa dance* from eastern Nepal and *Deuda* from the western region have come to be echoed in Kathmandu only by means of the particular languages. Likewise Bhojpuri has now been influencing film production both in Nepal and India. These genres of languages must be spread nationwide and that can be possible only by promotion of languages. The language provides them in different styles. Description, dialogue, address, expression, logic, analogy, analysis, intonation, rhymes and rhythm can only be get shape through language. Several folk singers and folklore presenters as well as litterateurs and artists have touched our hearts through presentation of our prestigious history, beauty of nature and our prosperous cultural heritage, but only by means of language. Creation and presentation of literature and art are both inseparable components of nation building and the language plays important role in this regard.

## 3.5 Language for promotion of mass media

Promotion of mass media sector is directly related with nation building activities. The current time is the era of the electronic media of the computer, telephone, cellular mobile, telex, wireless telegraph etc. Newspapers and magazines are also associated to the electronic media. There is a situation worldwide these days to communicate via e-mail, SMS and chatting within a moment. By using e-library, all genres of knowledge can be circulated from one's own abodes. In these activities special languages are being used to communicate messages and acquire knowledge. All languages of the world have a compulsion to be used separately in these media. At the same time the use of achievements in media sector is essential for nation building. The spread of cellular mobiles in all hands has created compulsion of both, how to use the language of communication as well as how to promote languages to be used so. In this situation, it is a compulsion to promote languages in the field of technical vocabulary and brief expression.

## 3.6 Language for promotion of industry and commerce

Industry and commerce should be fostered to avail prosperity in the nation. Language is such a means that establishes contact among customers, business personnel and industrialists. Business and industrial activities also run through language to establish national and international contact. So, the concerned people can select an appropriate language of contact in the sector of industry and commerce. The language in which the industry and commerce run is used widely.

It also includes the language for advertisement of the industries and commerce. Better the advertisement wider sale of the commodities. So, the commercial activities depend upon the language of communications among customers and service seekers. In this way, preferring the role of industry and commerce for nation building, selection and development of the appropriate language in this context is also important.

## 3.7 Language for promotion of tourism

Nepal is also identified as a garden of languages. The natural beauties of mountain peaks, streams, rivers, lakes, plateaus, forest, wildlife reserves and low land stretches can attract the tourists at one side and the languages can attract linguists to carry out research. The presence of more than a hundred languages of five language families in Nepal is not a joke. So, Nepal is a significant place in the world for linguistic studies.

At the same time, our languages should be promoted to the standard level so as to attract the tourists also. Some languages spoken in Nepal are also spoken elsewhere. Even Nepali native speakers live in India and abroad in a sizable number. Likewise, mother tongue speakers of Maithili, Bhojpuri, Lepcha, Limbu, Tamang and other languages also live elsewhere. So, it is a burning question how to promote languages here so that the tourists can have feeling of warm reception. The languages should be promoted considering this view point also, which can help national development.

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### 3.8 Language for politics

It will not be exaggerated saying that the role of politics supersedes the others in nation building. The national politics can only be meaningful through a strong dissemination of thoughts. Whether we talk about democracy or communism, socialism or republicanism, revolution or movement, struggle or peace, equality or freedom we need an effective language. Language is essential for ideological expression. The expression of statesman can only be influential by skilful use of language. Either clap or slap can be obtained as per the use of language. The language can only be a means of making agreement in favour of a particular political ideology. Linguistic poverty is always harmful if right choice is not made while disseminating thought by oral or written expression. The political leadership can bring an enormous mass to reach an agreement through convincing thought by the use of attractive language. Confidence of people in expression of the political leadership is compulsion in nation building process and language has a wider role to do so.

### 3.9 Language for modernization of the nation

To drive the country towards the same place where the rest of the world exists, the role of language is significant. We can feel the burst of knowledge and new invention and research everyday. Brain-warming fresh achievements are being made in the field of science and technology, geography, history, psychology, economics, culture, philosophy and so on. The language should be modernized so as to express those achievements. If not, a kind of dependency is continued. Nepali is said to be the most developed language in our country but it is under compulsion to have loan of the technical vocabularies from English and other developed languages. There is a high tendency of code-mixing in Nepali from English and it is being considered prestigious. Formulating vocabulary is also not sufficient and those formulated are not in use. On the contrary, our educated mass is seen curious towards a slavery in the use of loanwords from the other language for code-mixing in Nepali rather than using our own words. This tendency will grow if we cannot formulate the new ones. But it doesnot mean that we never use the loanwords as it's stupidity to talk about a strict purity of any language these days. But at least we should prioritize using the words from our language and from languages of Nepal if they help lessen borrowing words from abroad. If they don't work, then only we should borrow words from other languages.

To make our expression influential, vocabulary in our languages should be enriched and their use should be encouraged, stylist genres of language should be developed, process of standardization should be continued and our languages should be capable to express all sorts of complexities in our society. In this way, the language can be modernized and if so, no sector of the society can feel isolation.

## 4 Conclusion

Though language is a means of communication, several norms and values in social, political, economic, cultural, educational, scientific and technical fields are incorporated in it. That's why, its significant role cannot be denied in nation building process. Language is used in different manners to strengthen modern society and its foundation of national prosperity. The language can contribute specifically to foster communal harmony, appropriate thoughts and strengthen national unity among the populace of different races, caste and creed, genders, regions, communities, cultures and languages. This reality is going to be realized gradually by both, the government and the language community. The Report of National Languages Policy Recommendation Commission (2050), running Linguistic Survey of Nepal (LinSuN) and various activities of other institutions, language communities and organizations are its evidences .But they are like a drop in the ocean because a lot of things are to be done through language in the process of nation building .

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# Grammatical Number in Newar: A second look

Tej R. Kansakar

## 1. Number Markers

Newar nouns can be divided broadly into animate and inanimate. The animate nouns can be further sub-grouped into human and non-human nouns. All nouns can be inflected for singular and plural, where the singular is unmarked and the plural may be marked with morphological suffixes <-pĩ> or <-tə>, while the inanimate nouns are normally unmarked for singular and plural, as can be seen in examples (1a-c):

|     |    | Sg    |            | Pl        |          |
|-----|----|-------|------------|-----------|----------|
| (1) | a. | pasa  | 'a friend' | pasa-pĩ   | 'friends' |
|     | b. | khica | 'a dog'    | khica-tə  | 'dogs'   |
|     | c. | səphu: | 'a book'  | səphu:-ø  | 'books   |

These however do not account for all the facts about the distribution of number markers in the language. The plural suffix <-tə> can be attached not only to non-human nouns but also to some human nouns as well. Further, the inanimate nouns are not pluralized, but when <-tə> is affixed to a certain class of inanimate nouns, they imply 'a group of / kind of' rather than simple plural formations. The examples (2a-c) are some illustrative forms:

|     |    | Sg    |              | Pl        |          |
|-----|----|-------|--------------|-----------|----------|
| (2) | a. | mənu: | 'a man'      | mənu:-tə  | 'men'    |
|     |    | jyapu | 'a farmer'   | jyapu-tə  | 'farmers' |
|     | b. | phəi  | 'a sheep'    | phəi-tə   | 'sleep' Pl |
|     |    | kisyi | 'an elephant' | kisyi-tə  | 'elephants' |
|     | c. | syima | 'a tree'     | syima-tə  | 'groups of trees' |
|     |    | nəsa  | 'food item'  | nəsa-tə   | kinds of food' |

A plural meaning can also be conveyed by reduplication of the wh-question markers or reduplications in pronouns and demonstratives. The examples (3a-b) are the illustrative forms:

|     |    |      |             |           |              |
|-----|----|------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| (3) | a. | chu  | 'what?'     | chu-chu   | 'what items' |
|     |    | su   | 'who?'      | su-su     | 'who all?'   |
|     |    | gwə  | 'where is it?' | gwə-gwə | 'where are they?' |
|     | b. | thwə | 'this/it'   | thwə-thwə | 'these'      |
|     |    | wə   | 'that'      | wə-wə     | 'those'      |

In Newar, most nouns also require classifiers when quantified by a numeral. There are many classes of nouns, each of which requires quantification by means of a different classifier. The following (4a-c) are some typical examples which have Noun-Numeral-Classifier constructions:

|     |    |             |                            |
|-----|----|-------------|----------------------------|
| (4) | a. | pasa chə-mhə | 'one (person) friend'     |
|     |    | khica nyi-mhə | 'two (animal) dogs'      |
|     | b. | səphu: chə-gu | 'one (object) book'      |
|     |    | bica chə-gu | 'one (concept) idea'       |
|     | c. | syima-chə-ma | 'one (wood-plant) tree'   |
|     |    | lakã cha-ju | 'one (pair) shoes'         |
|     |    | cosa nyi-pu | 'two (long object) pens'   |
|     |    | de:ma swə-pa | 'three (flat object) plates' |
|     |    | khẽ nya-gə | 'five (round object) eggs'  |
|     |    | swã khu-phwə | 'six(round /flat object) flowers' |
|     |    | chẽ pye-kha | 'four (structure) houses'  |

It may be noted from (1-2) that the alternate uses of /pĩ/ and /-tə/ appear to be unpredictable since

these suffixes are not strictly restricted to [+human] and [-human] nouns respectively. We thus have /i-pĩ/ 'they',/jəhan-pĩ/ 'families', and /paju-pĩ/ 'uncles' etc along-side other [+human] nouns such as /mənu:-tə/'men', /guthyar-tə/ 'members of social organization', /misa-tə/ 'women' etc. We cannot make a generalizaton on what appears to be an idiosyncratic alternation in /-pĩ/ and /-tə/ since they are by no means in free variation and cannot be attached to any noun indiscriminatively. Shresthacarya (1995) makes the plausible suggestion that nouns which have the classifier /-mə/ or /-mhə/ as an implicit singular marker (as in 4a) can take /-pĩ/ or /-tə/ in the plural, and the nouns which have underlying /-gu/ or other classifiers as the singular marker (as in 4b-c) can optionally take /-tə/ as the plural suffix. The examples in (1-2) fully support this fact since all nouns with /-pĩ/ as the plural suffix can have /-mhə/ in the singular form, e.g. /kija-mhə/ - /kija-pĩ/ 'the one who is / those who are younger brothers', /kae-mhə/ - /kae-pĩ/ 'the one who is / those who are sons', /tə:mi-mhə/ - /tə:mi-pĩ/ 'the one who is / those who are rich' etc, but we cannot have */lakã:-mhə/, */syima-mhə/ or */chẽ-mhə/ in any context. Hale (1971: 1) distinguish three classes of nouns which he claims "can be defined in terms of differences in affixation, where affixation is taken to include both the classifiers which are affixed to the numerals which quantify the noun and the affixes which attach to the noun stem itself". Hale's clasification is similar to Shresthacarya's in that Class 1 nouns take /-pĩ/ and Class 2 nouns take /-tə/ as the plural marker, while Class 3 nouns manifest numerous singular classifiers and marginal occurrences of the plural marker /-tə/. As a general rule, Hale classifies Class 1 nouns as 'honored animate nouns', Class 2 as 'non-honored nouns', and Class 3 as 'inanimate nouns'. Malla (1985:49) also recognizes the animate / inanimate distinction in the classification of nouns, and regards only 'the animate nouns as pluralizable and the inanimates, normally, are not'. The facts as described by Shresthacarya (1995), Hale (1971) and Malla (1985) seem to concur on the three classes of nouns which trigger the uses of /pĩ/ and /-tə/ in Newar. There may, however, be more

interesting linguistic and pragmatic factors involved in the distribution of plural markers that deserve further investigation, as outlined in the following section.

## Distribution of <-pĩ> and <-tə>: A Second Look

Section 1 above provided a basic framework for showing number distinctions in Newar nouns. There are however a number of problems in deciding which plural marker is obligatory or optional, under what condition/s <-pĩ > alternates with <-tə>, and why a particular noun or a class of nouns allows or disallows one or the other plural marker. In other words, what constitutes an acceptable combination of a noun and a plural suffix cannot be explained by its phonological or morphological environment alone but is bound by certain social and pragmatic factors of discourse. For the purpose of the present analysis, we shall retain the two broad classes, namely animate and inanimate nouns, together with the human and non-human sub-classes.

The following thus is an attempt to establish six categories of nouns based on the distribution of <-pĩ > and <-tə> in human, non-human and inanimate nouns. These categories will be established on the basis of three criteria, namely (a) class name, (b) membership to the class, and (c) function or behaviour of the plural marker.

### I. Human nouns

*Category 1a*: Nouns denoting kinship only take <-pĩ > as a plural marker, and cannot take <-tə>, for example:

(5)  kae-pĩ          'sons'

     daju-pĩ         'elder brothers'

     kija-pĩ         'younger brothers'

     təba-pĩ         'elder uncles'

     kəka-pĩ         'younger uncles'

     təta-pĩ         'elder sisters'

     kehẽ-pĩ         'younger sisters'

     mhyae-pĩ        'daughters'

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| | |
|---|---|
| nyini-pĩ | 'aunts (father's sisters)' |
| cã:-pĩ | 'aunts (mother's sisters)' |
| paju-pĩ | 'maternal uncles' |
| məle-pĩ | 'wives of maternal uncles' |
| chəe-pĩ | grandchildren' |
| bhinca-pĩ | 'nephews' |
| jilajə -pĩ | 'sons-in-law' |
| bhəu-pĩ | 'daughters-in-law/wives of younger brothers' |

(Hale & Shrestha 2006: 34) state that non-kin relation requires the anti-deictic <-mhə>, such as *ma:-mhə* for one who is not my mother, But there are other contexts when <-mhə> can be used with kin terms where examples like *E: ma: -mhə* or *əji-mhə* can refer to one's own wife; or *ba: mhə* to one's own husband, as husbands and wives do not normally use each other's proper names.

In a question form or in a noun phrase preceded by a numeral as in (6a-b), <-pĩ > is optional in (6a) because the speaker does not know if the person has one or more sons. In the answer (6b) however, the noun-classifier construction already indicates plurality, and so /-pĩ / is not required.

(6)  a.  chi        kae(-pĩ) dula ?
         you.hon  son (-s)   is Q
         'Do you have sons?'
     b.  ji-mi swə-mhə  kae du
         I-Plu three-Clf son is/are
         'We have three sons.'

*Category 1b*: Nouns denoting honorific persons or friends also take <-pĩ > and do not normally allow the use of <-tə>:

(7)  pasa-pĩ          'friends'
     bhaju-pĩ         'gentlemen'
     məeju-pĩ         'ladies'
     juju-pĩ          'kings'
     acaju-pĩ         'Hindu priests'
     gəbhaju-pĩ       'Buddhist priests (Vəjracaryəs)'
     dyə: bərhmu-pĩ   'Brahmin priests with Newar clientale'

However, in the absence of the honorific persons, one is permitted to use <-tə>, e.g. *gəbhaju-tə wən-ə* 'The Buddhist priests have left.'

*Category 1c*: This category consists of Proper names that do not take a 'normal' plural formation, and occur alone or compounded with other nouns and followed by the plural suffix <-pĩ>. A pluralized proper noun refers to members of a group related to the head noun and can also take <-pĩ > although the person named may be assigned a lower status (in position or age) by the use of a dimunitive suffix <-ca>:

(8)  ram dai-pĩ          'elder brother Ram and his family or close associates'
     bhəgət sahu-pĩ      'merchant Bhagat and his family'
     kəsa daju kija-pĩ   'Kansakar (elder and younger) brothers'
     shyam-ca-pĩ         'Shyam and his family or his close associates'

The examples in (8) falsify the generalization made by Malla (1985: 31) that "Proper nouns are not pluralizable". The phrases here are neutral like kinship nouns.

*Category 2*: Physically or mentally handicapped persons, where <-pĩ > is neutral and <-tə> is a low form. The neutral plural form, however, does not imply any change in the degree of respect of the person:

|  | Neutral form | Low form | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (9) | kã:-pĩ | kã:-tə | 'blind persons' |
| | khwaẽ-pĩ | khwaẽ-tə | 'deaf persons' |
| | lata-pĩ | lata-tə | 'dumb persons' |
| | khu:-pĩ | khu:-tə | 'lame persons' |
| | pakə:-pĩ | pakə:-tə | 'dim-witted persons' |
| | dhwadə:-pĩ | dhwadə:-tə | 'inefficient persons' |
| | gwajyə/ hwajyə-pĩ | gwajyə-tə | 'foolish persons' |

*Category 3a* :   Professional people, where <-tə> is neutral and <-pĩ > is a high form :

|  | Neutral form | High form |  |
|---|---|---|---|

<div style="display:flex">

**Left column:**

|  | Neutral form | High form |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (10) | məntri-tə | məntri-pĩ | 'ministers' |
|  | doctor-tə | doctor-pĩ | 'doctors' |
|  | thəkali-tə | thəkali-pĩ | 'elders' |
|  | naya:-tə | nayə:-pĩ | 'head persons' |
|  | noku-tə | noku-pĩ | 'assistant heads' |
|  | soku-tə | soku-pĩ | 'associate heads' |
|  | chyanjəe-tə | chyanjəe-pĩ | 'secretaries' |
|  | mastər-tə | mastər-pĩ | 'teachers' |
|  | professor-tə | professor-pĩ | 'professors' |
|  | director-tə | director-pĩ | 'directors' |
|  | hakim-tə | hakim-pĩ | 'officials' |

For professional people such as doctors or professors, speakers usually add an honorific such as 'sahib' (loan) before <-pĩ > is attached, e.g.

| (11) | doctor-sahib-pĩ | 'respected doctors' |
|---|---|---|
|  | professor-sahib-pĩ | 'respected professors' |
|  | director-sahib-pĩ | 'respected directors' |
|  | hakim-sahib-pĩ | 'respected officials' |

*Category 3b*: In Newar and other T-B languages, <mi> actually means a person, and it occurs in many words as a part of the word itself and not as a suffix. In professions of lower status, <-tə> is the norm and <-pĩ> is optional:

| (12) | tə:mi-pĩ | tə:mi-ø | 'rich persons' |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | cwə:mi-pĩ | cwə:mi-tə | 'writers' |
|  | kə:mi-(pĩ) | kə:mi-tə | 'carpenters' |
|  | dəkə:mi-(pĩ) | dəkə:mi-tə | 'builders' |
|  | jyami-(pĩ) | jyami-tə | 'workers' |
|  | ləmi-(pĩ) | ləmi-tə | 'marriage match-makers' |
|  | saymi-(pĩ) | saymi-tə | 'Manandhars' (oil pressers) |

*Category 4*: Caste / class or group nouns which generally take <-tə>:

| (13) | mənu:-tə | 'men' |
|---|---|---|
|  | lyaemə-tə | 'young men' |
|  | misa-tə | 'women' |
|  | lyashe-tə | 'young women' |
|  | məca-tə | 'children' |
|  | dwĩ:-tə | 'Duyiä: people' |
|  | guthyar-tə | 'members of guthi' |
|  | bəre-tə | 'Shakya caste' |

**Right column:**

| mastər-tə | 'teachers' |
|---|---|
| nəu-tə | 'barbers' |
| newa:-tə | 'Newars' |
| kəu-tə | 'blacksmiths' |
| khəẽ-tə | 'khas people' |
| shesyə:-tə | 'Shrestha caste' |
| khũ-tə | 'thieves' |
| bərhmu:-tə | 'Brahmins' |
| nae-tə | 'butchers' |
| mərsya-tə | 'Tarai people' |
| jyapu-tə | 'farmers' |
| dhami-tə | 'shamans' |
| urae-tə | 'urae people' |
| twae-tə | 'bond friends' |
| pwərya-tə | 'fishermen' |
| awa-tə | 'roof-layers' |
| phuki:-tə | 'paternal kins' |
| jogi-tə | 'musicians caste' |
| japaniz-tə | 'Japanese people' |
| phwəgĩ-tə | 'beggars' |
| cinya-tə | 'Chinese people' |
| kəsa-tə | 'Kansakārs' |
| ə̃greji-tə | 'English people' |
| pũ:-tə | 'painters' |

</div>

There are, however, some nouns of this class which can take <-pĩ > when definite persons or groups are referred to, or the noun refers to a in-group member where <-pĩ > may convey the meaning of *definiteness, solidarity* or *emphasis*. Consider the following examples (14-17):

(14) a. misa-təe-sə̃ imi-tə ja nə-kəl-ə
 woman-Plu-Erg they-Dat rice eat-Caus-Pd
 'The women fed them rice.'

 b. chi-pĩ misa-pĩ ju:-gulĩ thəthe
 they woman-Plu be-Adv like.this
 ya-e mə-jyu:
 do-Npc not-be
 'Because you are women, you should not do it like this.'

(15) a. guthyar-tə bhwəe nə-ya: wən-e dhũ-kəl-ə
 guthi.member-Plu feast eat-Ptp go-Npc
 Perf-Caus-Pd
 'The guthi members have left after eating the feast.'

 b. guthyar-pĩ səkəlẽ jha-ya di: mal-ə
 guthi.member-Plu everyone come.Hon-
 Pc stay need-Pd

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'All the guthi members need to come.'

(16) a. thəu-kənhəe-ya lyase-tə nyasi əpwə:
today-tomorrow-Gen young.woman-Plu
fickle.minded very
'The young women nowadays are very
fickle-minded.'
b. jhi: lyaemha-pi-sẽ
we young man-Plu-Erg
səmaj sewa-ya jya ya-e ma:
social service-Gen work do-Npc need
'We young men should do social service
work.'

(17) a. kipu:mi-tə julusə-e mə-wə:
kirtipur resident-Plu procession not-
come.Stat
'The residents of Kirtipur did not
participate in the procession.'
b. ji-pĩ kipu:mi-pĩ khə:
I-Plu kirtipur.resident-Plu is/are
'We are the residents of Kirtipur.'

There is however considerable freedom in the
choice of <-pĩ > or <-tə> in non-final constituents
of a noun phrase when the plural suffix is followed
by a case marker. As seen in the examples (14-
17), the plural marker <-tə> conveys a general
meaning while <-pĩ> is more specific or definite
and may also suggest social closeness of speaker to
the referents. The following examples (18a-e) are
illustrative:

(18) a. misa-təe-sə̃ / misa-pi-sə̃
'by the women'
woman-Plu-Erg
b. məca-təe-tə / məca-pin-tə
'for the children'
child-Plu-Dat
c. guthyar-təe-ke / guthyar-pĩ-ke
'with the guthi members'
guthi.member-Plu-Asso
d. jyapu-təe-gu / jyapu-pini-gu
'of the farmers'
farmer-Plu-Gen
e. phuki:-tə-lise /napə / phuki:-pĩ-lise/napə
'together with paternal kins'
paternal.kin-Plu-Com

**II. Animate: Non-human nouns**
*Category 5*: The animate non-human nouns
generally take <-tə> as a plural marker (as in 19a)
but there is also a class of such nouns where <-tə>
is either optional (19b) or non-occurant (19c):

(19) a. khica-tə        'dogs'
phəi-tə        'sheep (pl.)'
dhwə̃-tə        'wolves'
jhə̃gə:-tə        'birds'
dyə:-tə        'gods/idols'
bhəu-tə        'cats'
bəkhũ-tə        'pigeons'
dwə̃:-tə        'bulls'
həẽ-tə        'ducks'
kwə:-tə        'crows'
sa-tə        'cows'
makə:-tə        'monkeys'

b. kishi (-tə)        'elephants'
mye: (-tə)        'buffaloes'
khəsi (-tə)        'goats'
sərpə (-tə)        'snakes'
byãca (-tə)        'frogs'
billi (-tə)        'cockroaches'

c. nya        'fish/pl.'
sələ        'horse/es'
khəraca        'rabbit/s'
khaca        'chick/s'
cəkhũca        'sparrow/s'
ikhũca        'swallow/s'
maebili        'gecko/s'
ki:        'insect/s'
imu:        'ant/s'
dhəẽ        'bed bug/s'
kimi        'intestinal worm/s'
dəmbi        'earth worm/s'
həi        'centipede/s'
nhəebi        'millipede/s'

Despite the examples in (19a), the plural suffix <-
tə> appears to the native speaker to be more
natural for human nouns than for animate non-
human nouns. The plural marker can thus be
deleted in all the examples of (19a-b) without any
ambiguity in meaning. The following (20 a-d) are
some typical examples :

(20) a. yẽ-e        khica yekwə du
Kathmandu-Loc dogs many is/are

'There are many dogs in Kathmandu.'

b. jhwə-jhwə səməe-dyə: bwə-ya   təl-ə
row-row samek.guthi-idols exhibit-Pc put-Pd
'Several rows of samek.guthi idols were kept on display.'

c. thənə uli.məchi makə: du dhəka: mə-syu:
here that many monkey is/are Comp not-know
'(I) did not know that there are so many monkeys here.'

d. wə-ə̃ bəkhũ ləhina   tə:-gu   du
s/he-Erg pigeon take.care keep-Stat is
'S/he keeps pigeons as pets.'

## III.   Inanimate nouns

*Category 6*: There are a large number of nouns in the language which do not as a rule take the <-tə> plural marker, as can be seen in (21) :

(21) de:ma        'plate/s'
ghədi        'watch/es'
ə gu:        'finger ring/s'
jhya:        'window/s'
cəsma        'spectacles'
cwəsa        'pen/s'
lwəhə        'stone/s'
chẽ        'house/s'
bũ        'field/s'
kebə        'garden/s'
twa:        'locality/ies'
bəha:        'courtyard/s'
ə :        'mango/es'
mewa        'papaya/s'
kera        'banana/s'
alu        'potato/es'
pyaj        'onion/s'
məri        'pastry/ies'
degə:        'temple/s'
cyi:ba        'stupa/s'
dheba        'money'
kapi        'notebook/s'

There is however a limited set of nouns which, as indicated in examples (2c) above, can take <-tə> with the meaning 'groups/kinds of' rather than a simple quantification of the noun.

The data presented in this section show that plural marking in the language does not follow a simple pattern but is subject to many kinds of possibilities

and constraints. Joshi (1984: 67-68) has, in this connection, pointed out that" <-tə> is optionally added to these nouns when the noun is preceded by a numeral" in Bhaktapur Newar, and this is also true for the Kathmandu dialect, as can be seen in (22):

(22) khica        'dog'
khica-tə        'dogs'
khica(-tə)        'two dogs'
məca        'child'
məca-tə        'children'
swə-mhə məca(-tə)        'three children'
mhəe        'tenant'
mhəe-tə        'tenants'
pye-mhə mhəe(-tə)        'four tenants'
jhə̃gə:        'bird'
jhə̃gə:-t        'birds'
nya-mhə jhə̃gə:(-tə)'five birds'

In line with this argument, it has been shown in examples (6a-b) that even kinship nouns can be used with optional plural marker <-pĩ > in questions, and in noun phrases with numeral-classifier constructions (4a-c).

## 3 Conclusion

A general conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that the majority  of nouns in the language can be pluralized without plural suffixes. This seems to be the natural process which can potentially apply to most categories and sub-categories established above on the basis of how each noun class is quantified.  It is therefore possible that at least some of the plural markings in our data (especially in non-human and inanimate nouns) are redundant in actual discourse situations.  We have thus attempted in this section to account for the optional and alternating uses of <-pĩ > and <-tə>, and the non-occurrence of <-tə> in a large  number of animate and inanimate nouns.  These analyses are thus based primarily on lexical and social factors.  For example, the relationship of <pĩ > or <-tə> to <-mhə> is lexical, and <-pĩ > suffixed to personal names may be grammatical, and when used on women and respectable persons is related to the social conventions of honorific address.

Another conclusion is related to the lack of definitizers in the language in the form of definite / indefinite articles. This fact may indeed be typologically relevant to T-B languages in particular and other language groups of South Asia in general. Such languages often have to employ various other strategies to specify definiteness in nouns, pronouns and their anaphoric relations in discourse. These strategies may involve permutations in word order, and the ways by which numerals, classifiers and plural markers are used to convey the notions of definiteness and referentiality. However, the uses of plural markers in the language will need to be discussed more fully in a discourse context which is beyond the scope of this paper and will be an area for further research.

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# I am a linguist

Sajan Kumar Karn

*Linguistics today is different from that of influential era of Saussure or even heyday of Chomsky. Critiquing against the linguistic activity devoid of society and human life, this paper advocates for the promotion of social and applied side of linguistics for its sensible existence and vibrancy as other social sciences.*

## 1 Background

'I am a linguist'. I do not like to make a bogus claim like this. Four years back, I had an opportunity to befriend a dozen of participants in the 28th Annual Conference of Linguistic Society of Nepal. I do not remember all but there was one whose remark stimulated me to develop this paper. He was in his early 20's and had freshly accomplished his M.A. in linguistics. He introduced himself with the phrase 'I am a linguist' simply for the reason that he had done his post-graduation in linguistics. His claim had an intense inkling in my mind. Nevertheless, this would have faded away, had not the ebb and flow of the similar conversations of other participants of identical age and level of education haunted my mind over and over again. It was reinforced further when I heard them being addressed as 'young linguists'. All this surprised me utterly. I brainstormed -'has the post of linguist become so cheap these days that …….?' A dozen of other similar queries cropped up into my head such as, what does it mean to be a linguist? What merits does a person need to possess in order to be called a linguist? Is there a specific degree of education that qualify someone to be a linguist? Does a person necessarily require the degree of linguistics to be called a linguist? Does a linguist have any social obligations to meet? Is the job of a linguist done if he/she carries out research activities? Is the part of a linguist merely confined to morphological, syntactic and computational analysis of language? Does he/she have any role to play in social and national uplifting? Like other social scientists such as historians, economists and political scientists, do linguists have any space to make their existence felt in the society? All these questions coaxed me to dig deep into the discipline of linguistics aiming chiefly on *what linguistics is in actuality* and *what it means to be a linguist today.*

## 2 Linguist: a polyglot?

Let me start voyaging with the dialogue that I have borrowed from Crystal (2009:1).

A: what do you do?

B: I am a linguist.

A: Ah, how many languages do you speak?

B: Do you mean really fluently?

A: Of course.

B: Just one.

A: But you said you were a linguist.

The intent expressed here does not need any further elucidation. However, I have read, heard about and encountered a number of well known linguists who know/knew a single language, merely their mother tongues. Therefore, basic inference should be that a linguist must have a profound interest in knowing and/or knowing about as many languages as possible. More languages you know/study, better understanding you have of language and linguistics in totality and lesser degree of racism you develop for other languages. The statement "Maithili is very refined but Bhojpuri is too rude" does not seem to fit the size of a linguist's mouth. For linguists, Language A should be as beautiful as Language B, C and others.

Nevertheless, multilingualism and linguistic egalitarianism were not enough to quench my thirst; my further quest led me to browse the pages of various dictionaries online and offline.

## 3 Etymologically a linguist

Consulting lexicons expanded my horizon of understanding which had ever been stuffed with

the customary definitions of the terms-"Linguistics is the scientific study of language" (Crystal, 1990:9; Lyons, 2005:1) and 'a linguist is someone who possesses a body of knowledge about language' and that's all. Now I realized that claiming oneself as a linguist is awfully easy but being a responsible linguist is truly a hard nut to crack. The following different definitions of the term interpret different responsibilities of a linguist.

- a specialist in language,
- a person who speaks more than one language
- a person who is skilled in foreign languages
- a person who works in the field of curriculum development or teacher training or in the area of language arts,
- a person who is qualified to work as translator or interpreter
- a person who works as a writer or editor for publishing houses
- a person who seeks to address language implicated issues in the society, e.g. language policy and planning issues, literacy problems, language inequality problems, language endangerment and death issues etc.

Now I was contented to some extent that I had come to know a number of accountabilities a linguist is supposed to abide by but the point that led to exercise my mind over and over was the last one. It was because this description infuses life into the discipline. Nobody would deny that linguistics is not merely a cognitive science but a social science as well. This made me infer that linguistic activities must be geared towards reconciling the language implicated issues that we are challenged with.

## 4 Linguistics: a science?

For me, the scientific aroma of linguistics seems to have turned it more formal, mechanical and computational today. Unfortunately, for many, linguistics has still remained a matter of morphological, syntactic and computational analysis and that's it. They seldom consider social and interdisciplinary nature of the discipline with due gravity. This would merely alienate 'the highly humanized subject' from mankind (Subedi, 2007: 33). Moved by the recent wave in linguistics Abhi Subedi rightly argues that 'Linguistics that students learn as the scientific study of language has experienced ruptures of unscientific nature in recent year (ibid: 30). This deconstructed my long established perception and gave me a fresh and fascinating insight into the discipline but the exploration did not stop here.

## 5 Applied (not just theoretical) linguist

Knowledge for the sake of knowledge does not seem to fine-tune with my intellect. It is the practical worth of a discipline that makes it lively and vibrant, I believe. I am not alone in this standpoint. Many linguists including Van Lier (1997:103) argue that linguistics, a discipline which intersects with many others, must not run off applications. Further, he maintains "I think that it is the applied linguist who works with language in the real world, who is most likely to have a realistic picture of what language is, and not the theoretical linguist who sifts through several layers of idealization, Furthermore, it may well be the applied linguist who will most advance human kinds' understanding of language, …" (Cited in Grabe, 2002:6). Likewise, Widdowson (2001:3) confirmed Van Lier when he stated "Formalist linguists are not certainly dealing with the real language as normally experienced in the context of use as a means of communication, as a means of social identity and so on". This might lead others to argue that "with the extension of descriptive scope to take in E-language there is no reason for distinguishing between linguistics and applied linguistics at all …." I contemplated and deduced that a linguist, at present time, if confines himself to his traditional subject matter of language in isolation, the activities would just remain outmoded and lifeless. This directs one to prioritize applied linguistics which is inherently social. So, what is applied linguistics? Wilkins(1999:7) maintains "applied linguistics is concerned with increasing understanding of the role of language in human affairs and thereby with providing the knowledge necessary for those who are responsible for taking language related decisions whether the need for these arises in the classroom, the workplace, the law court or the

laboratory"(Cited in Schimmit &Celce-Murcia,2002:1). The definition clearly states that language is so much implicated in human life and there are numerous language related issues which can be addressed with the inputs and insights from applied linguistics.

## 6 Being a mediator

Sinclair (1998:84) maintained "applied linguists see themselves as mediators between the abstract and heady realms of the linguistic theory and humdrum practical side of language teaching" (Cited in Widdowson, 2001:8). Backing Sinclair, Grabe (2002:9) in his article *Applied linguistics: An emerging discipline for the 21st Century* asserts that applied linguistics is "a mediating discipline and applied linguists are mediators". McCarthy (2001:2) had maintained the same when he had claimed that the job of applied linguistics is "to mediate (and teach linguistics) and to suggest applications. In the era of globalization, terrorism and economic rationalism, academics of many disciplines are still making their presence felt in the community. Political scientists, historians, and economists are the examples (Clyne, 2006). What about linguistics? I shrugged my shoulders "is it apt for an academic to engage in political bargaining?"

I rethought about it and realized that in theory, it is fine to say that any academic discipline must distance from politics. However, a question arises "Can linguistic issues be addressed with no political intervention?" Politics is everywhere, whether be it an academia or a non-academic sector. Though it is rational to state that an academician must not involve in party politics, for policy formulation related to language teaching, language planning, literacy etc. political bargain seems imperative. There is no denying that researches themselves cannot cope with linguistic issues. "Inevitably, decision making also involves both political evaluation and moral judgment (Cook, 2002: 75). Additionally, every discipline has grown critical today and "critical applied linguistics abandons its neutral stance and aligns itself more explicitly with political actions" (ibid.).

## 7 Linguist: an agent for social reform

A small booklet by Cook (2002) inducted me that a linguist is supposed to play an agent for social reform. They need to play a role in shaping and improving society. They "should be engaged with social change and action, and combat injustice and inequality" (p.76). Now I surmised that the issues pertaining to linguistics cannot be divorced from social, political and cultural ones and therefore society must be the lens for linguists.

## 8 Linguist: a savior

'Save languages' is the cry of the day. This made David Crystal (2000) spend a volume on *Language Death* which guesstimates that 90 % of world languages will face extinction by the end of 21st century. It is again upon the shoulders of linguists who should form a collaborative partnership with communities to maintain and revitalize endangered languages. Donna Gredts (1998) advocates that "Linguistic expertise is not sufficient for successful participation in a language program. The linguist must develop social and political skills to be effective members of language revitalization program" (Cited in Crystal, 2000: 147). It was truly illuminating for me to go through *Language Death* which likens linguistic diversity with cultural diversity and biodiversity and loss of one forecasts that of other too.

## 9 Language: a national agenda?

Nepal's despondent linguistic landscape worries one and all, let alone language aspirants. It is evident that the country has long been caught in the grip of the monolingual mindset which promises to take it to nowhere but to irretrievable linguistic and cultural thrashing which ultimately leads to loss of identity. Though the interim constitution of Nepal promises to care for all languages evenly, substantially Nepali is still encountered with killer characteristics owing to its use in virtually all formal domains avoiding all other languages. Giri (2010) has rightly maintained that this is merely a sketchy provision based on wishful thinking which is not going to make any difference in the existing linguistic landscape. Deliberately, language planning has never been made a national agenda in Nepal which is, according to him, 'the politics of unplanning of

languages' (ibid.). Linguists need to collaborate and coordinate efforts through the professional societies like Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN), NELTA and others to put languages on the national agenda and make efforts to conquer the monolingual outlook. Two surveys namely *Linguistic survey of Nepal* and *ELT survey* which have already embarked on are the prerequisites for language planning of any sort in the country and therefore, they must be accelerated.

## 10 A postmodern linguistics

"Postmodernism is in air. Whether it be philosophy or education, arts or architecture, trade or craft, dance or music, literature or linguistics, post modern wave must have either renovated it promptly and utterly or if not, it must have begun to break the typical crust of the field belatedly and tenderly" (Karn, 2011:III). How could I conclude this essay without the mention of the most uttered paradigm today? I overviewed literature on postmodern linguistics and found that it is highly humanized, social, responsive, cross disciplinary and eclectic in nature.

In postmodern view, "applied linguistics should not be an autonomous discipline seeking to formulate, independently, principles of general applicability and relevance, It should become instead a responsive discipline, assembled occasionally as it were, for a specific purpose"(Cook, 2002:77). Postmodern applied linguistics adopts interdisciplinary approach to address language implicated issues. It is concerned with most emotive and most important issues: the education of children, the rights of the disadvantaged, the changing balance of cultures and languages, the effects of technology on communication. It is at the interface between academic enquiry and professional practice. Weidman (2003:10) states "The notion of applied linguistics as a multidisciplinary field did much to pave the way for a postmodern perspective. Brumfit (1997) links "postmodernism in our field to feminism, subjectivity and relativity…." (ibid: 11). Postmodern linguistics adopts critical approach to the study of language. "Critical applied linguistics might be viewed as an approach to language related questions that springs from an

assumptions that we live amid a world of pain" (Pennycook, 2004: 979).

## 11 A final yearning

Thank you very much Mr. Linguist, you have made me understand what linguistics is and what roles are linguists supposed to play. You have enabled me to understand what it means to be a linguist at the time when the country faces a pressing linguistic mess. May others including you understand it too! May one and all concentrate on responsibilities rather than on degrees and claims! May we not involve merely in linguistic and computation analyses but also find the relevance of our work in society! May we all join hands together and develop interdisciplinary approach to address our language issues! May we overcome the monomania and leap into a diversified linguistic landscape! And may we be victorious in making Nepal language aware and fare nation!

Thank you Mr. Linguist. Thank you very much again for your claiming remark that made me accomplish this enlightening academic voyage!

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# Moods and modality in Dhimal

## Karnakhar Khatiwada

*Dhimal is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in the far eastern Terai region of Nepal. Dhimal exhibits morphological as well as syntactic mood and modality. This paper deals with the moods and modality in Dhimal language.*

## 1 Background

Dhimal is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken by the Dhimal people residing in the far eastern terai region of Nepal. The main settlements of Dhimal are in Jhapa and Morang districts. Some Dhimals are also found in the west Bengal of India (Cooper, 1999). According to the census report of Nepal (2001), the total number of Dhimal is 17,308. King (2008) reports the number to exceed 20000. The Dhimal language has two mutually intelligible dialects separated by the river *Kankai* in Jhapa district (King, 1994). Pronominalization is one of the characteristics of Dhimal though it is a simple pronominalized language (Khatiwada, 2003, King, 2008). This paper deals with the moods and modality of the western dialect of the Dhimal language.

## 2 Moods in Dhimal

There are three morphologically marked moods in Dhimal. They are declarative, interrogative and optative. The declarative and interrogative moods are inflected for all tenses, persons and numbers.

The optative mood can be sub-divided into imperative, optative and hortative. Imperative mood is restricted to the second person, optative mood is confined to the third person and hortative mood shows the relation only with the first person dual and plural.

There are other periphrastic ways to express the modality in Dhimal. This means different modal verbs and modal particles are used to express the modality. In this section a short description of morphologically marked moods, and the modality expressed by the different modal verbs and modal particles will be discussed.

## 2.1 Declarative

Declarative mood in Dhimal indicates the type of assertion that is made by the speaker towards the situation. The declarative mood is unmarked. In this case the verb allows the inflection for person, number and for the tense, for example,

(1)  a.  ka          hate          hane-kha
         1SG        market      go-PRES.ISG
         'I go to the market.'

     b.  na          hate          hane-khe-na
         2SG        market      go-PRES.2
         'You go to the market.'

(2)  a.  ka          um          ca-gha
         1SG        rice        eat-PST.1SG
         'I ate rice.'

     b.  na          um          ca-nha
         2SG        rice        eat-PST.2
         'You ate rice.'

(3)  a.  kelai                dhawa        phe?t-aŋ
         1PL                  cloth         wash-FUT
         'We shall wash clothes.'

     b.  nelai                dhawa        phe?-su-a-na
         2PL                  cloth         wash-2PL- FUT -2
         'You  will wash clothes'

 Dhimal verbs are negativized with the prefix *ma-*, e.g.

(4)  a.  wa          hate          ma-hane-khe
         3SG        market      NEG-go-PRES
         'He does not go to the  market'

     b.  ka          um          ma-ca-ŋ-ka
         1SG        rice        NEG-eat-FUT-1SG
         'I shall not eat rice'

c.
| nelai | dhawa | ma-pheʔ-su-nha |
|---|---|---|
| 2PL | clothe | NEG-wash-2PL-PST.2 |

'You did not wash clothes'

## 2.2 Interrogative

The declarative sentences can be changed into interrogatives by means of question words or with rising intonation. The yes/no type of questions are marked by the intonation given to the part of a sentence where the speaker wants to be clear about the information required e.g.

(5)  a.
*na*  *um*  *ca-khe-**na***
2SG  rice  eat-PRES-2
'Do you eat rice?'

b.
hari  hate  **hane-hi**
*Hari*  market  go-PST
'Did Hari go to market ?'

(6)
na  meʔsa  **col-nha**
2SG  goat  buy-PST.2
'Did you buy the goat ?'

The parts of the sentences (5a, b and 6) in bold face are marked by the intonation denoting to the interrogative mood. Sometimes, both the positive and negative forms inter-mediated by the alternative particle *na*, e.g.,

(7)  a.
na  gora  am-a-na  na
2SG  wine  drink-FUT-2  part
ma-am-a-na
NEG-drink-FUT-2
' Will you drink wine or not ?'

b.
wa  um  ca-hi
3SG  rice  eat-PST
na  ma-ca-hi
PART  NEG-eat-PST
'Did he eat rice or not?'

The referential interrogatives are formed by adding different question words before the verb. The question words used to make an interrogative are:

(8)  hai  'what'  hasu  'who'
hiso  'what'  helau  'when'

hethe  'how  he mi  'how
much'  many(people)'

The question words presented in (8) are used in the following examples:

(9)  a.
na-ŋ-ko  miŋ  **hai** 0/ko
2SG-EMPH–GEN  name  what is
'What is your name?'

b.
wa-ko  sa  **hiso**
3SG-GEN  house  where
'Where is his house?'

c.
anji  na  hai  kam
yesterday  2SG  what  work
pa-doŋ-khe-na
do-PROG-PRES -2
'What were you doing yesterday?'

d.
nelai  helau  lo-su-nha
2PL  when  come-2PL-PST .2
'When did you come?'

e.
na-ŋ-ko  aba-ko
2SG-EMPH-GEN  father-GEN
heʔ-mi  can  hi
how.many-CLF  son  is
'How many sons does your father have?'

f.
ita-so  Kathmandu  hethe
here-ABL  Kathmandu  how
dure  hi
far  is
'How far is Kathmandu from here?'

The examples (8a-f) show the type of question words used in Dhimal interrogative sentences.

## 2.3 Imperative

The imperative mood in Dhimal is restricted to

the second person. The verb root equals to the imperative singular form. The imperative, though tense-less, shows the number agreement and honorificity. The honorificity in the imperative verb form is indicated by the suffix *-du* irrespective of the number of the referent. The

honorific imperative form is restricted to the in-law relations. The imperative mood in Dhimal with honorific distinction and number agreement has been shown in the table 1.

Table: 1 Dhimal imperative verb forms with number and honorific suffixes

| Verb stems | Sg | Du |
|---|---|---|
| ca | ca ! | ca-se ! |
| khaŋ | khaŋ | khaŋ-se ! |
| kha?t | kha? | kha?-se ! |
| gak | ga: | ga:-se ! |
| am | am | am-se ! |
| cek | ce: | ce:-se ! |
| lo | lo | lo-se |
| Verb stems | Pl | hon |
| ca | ca-su ! | ca-du 'Eat !' |
| khaŋ | khaŋ-su | khaŋ- du 'See !' |
| kha?t | kha?-su | kha?-du 'Run way!' |
| gak | ga:-su | ga:-du 'Cook !' |
| am | am-su | am-du 'Drink ' |
| cek | ce:-su | ce:-du 'Cut !' |
| lo | lo-su | lo-du 'Come !' |

The dual suffix -*se* is restricted to the imperative dual forms, whereas plural suffix -*su* appears in imperative plural as well as in other second person plural paradigms.

The honorific morpheme -*du* appears in the honorific imperative forms, irrespective of the number agreement.

The imperative verb forms are negativized by the prefix *ma*- added to the verb stem, e.g.

(10) a. ca-su
eat-PL
'Eat !'

b. ma-ca-su
NEG-eat-PL
'Do not eat !'

(11) a. am-du
drink-HON
'Please drink !'

b. ma-am-du
NEG-drink-HON
'Please do not drink !'

## 2.4 Optative

Optative mood in Dhimal is marked by the suffix -*ako* which is attached to the bare stem. There is no person/number agreement. The optative mood is restricted to the third person referents, e.g.,

(12) a. wa     um     ca-ko (ca-ako)
3SG    rice    eat-OPT
'He may eat rice.'

b. wa     na-seheŋ     khan-ako
3SG    you-DAT     see-OPT
'He may see you.'

(13) a. odhinhemi     kha?-ako
2DU     run-OPT
'They ² may run.'

b. odhinhemi     um     kha -ako
2DU     rice    cook-OPT
'They may cook (rice).'

(14) a. obalai     ka-seheŋ     taka     pya-ko
                              (pi-ako)
3PL     1SG-DAT     rupee     give-OPT
'They may give me money.'

b. obalai     gora     am-ako
*3PL*     drink     drink-OPT
'They may drink wine.'

The optative suffix is initiated with a vowel. So, the stem final segments have been altered according to the stem alternation morphophonemic rules.

## 2.5 Hortative

Hortative mood in Dhimal is marked by the suffix -*aine* which is restricted to the first person dual and plural referent, e.g.,

(15) a. caine (ca-aine)
eat-HORT

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'Let's eat (rice).'

b. gak-aine
cook-HORT
'Let's cook (rice)'

c. kah t-aine
drink-HORT
'Let's run away.'

d. am-aine
drink-HORT
'Let's drink.'

e. khan-aine (khaŋ-aine)
see-HORT
'Let's see.'

f. ca-paine (ca-pa-aine)
eat-CAUS- HORT
'Let's feed.'

Like the optative suffix *-ako* the hortative suffix is also initiated with a vowel. So, the stem finals are altered according to the stem final sound and the following segment.

### 3. Modal verbs and modal particles

Apart from the moods discussed above the Dhimal language has some modal verbs and modal particles to express the intention of the speaker towards the proposition.

### 3.1 Modal verbs

Modality in Dhimal can be expressed by different modal verbs. The modal verbs modify the assertion of the main verb. The addition of the modal verb to the main verb results in a compound verbal stem and inflects for the tenses and other inflectional categories. The modal verbs in Dhimal are *hoi* 'finish' (completion) *do* 'ability' and *goi* 'must' (compulsion).

a. The modal verb *-hoi* imparts the meaning of the termination of the action to the main verb, e.g.,

(16) a. wa um ca-hoi-hi
3SG rice eat-finish-PST
'He finished eating.'

b. ka wa-seheŋ taka pi-hoi-gha
1SG he-DAT rupee give-finish-PST.1SG
'I have already given him rupee (I finished giving )'

c. wa ka-seheŋ dusu-hoi-hi
3SG 1SG-DAT visit-finish-PST
'He has already visited me'

d. kidhiŋ jim-hoi-nhiŋ
1DU sleep-finish-PST.DU
'We have already slept'

b. The modal verb *do-* imparts the meaning of ability to the main verb, e.g.,

(17) a. ka idoi kam
1SG this work
pa-li -do-kha
do-INF-able-PRES.1SG
'I can do this work.'

b. na wa-ko sa-ta
2SG he-GEN house-LOC
hane-li-do-khe-na
go-INF able-PRES-2
'You can go to his house'

The modal verb *goi-* imparts the meaning of 'compulsion' to the main verb, e.g.,

(18) a. ela kelai hane-li goi-khe
now 1PL go-INF must-PRES
'We must go now'

b. na ka-seheŋ taka
2SG 1-DAT rupee
pi-li goi-khe-na
give-INF must-PRES -2
'You must give me money'

c. jumni idoi kam
tomorrow this work
pa-li goi-khe
do-INF must-PRES
'This work should be done tomorrow.'

d. anji wa-seheŋ
yesterday 3SG-DAT
danai-li goi-hi
beat-INF must-PST
'He had to be beaten yesterday (we were compelled).'

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## 3.2 Modal Particle

Sometimes, the modality of the verb is expressed by the particle following the main verb. The particle -*wala* expresses the probabilative mood in Dhimal. e.g.

(19) *a.*

| wai | lo-aŋ | wala |
|-----|-------|------|
| rain | come-FUT | PROB |

'It may rain.'

b.

| hari | um | ca-ŋ | wala |
|------|-----|------|------|
| Hari | rice | eat-FUT | PROB |

'Hari may eat rice.'

c.

| can | sa-ta | hi | wala |
|-----|-------|-----|------|
| son | house-LOC | be | PROB |

'The son may be in the house.'

## 4 Conclusion

Indicative, imperative, optative and hortative moods in Dhimal are exhibited morphologically. Different modal concepts are expressed by different modality verbs; mainly, '*hoi*', '*goi*' and '*wala*'. The '*hoi*' is used to express the modal meaning 'finish', '*goi*' is used to expresses obligation and possibility is expressed through a particle '*wala*'.

## Abbreviations

| 1 | First person |
|------|--------------|
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |
| ABL | Ablative |
| CAUS | Causative |
| CLF | Classifier |
| DAT | Dative |
| DU | Dual |
| EMPH | Emphatic |
| FUT | Future |
| GEN | Genitive |
| HON | Honorific |
| HORT | Hortative |
| INF | Infinitive |
| INST | Instrumental |
| LOC | Locative |
| NEG | Negative |
| NOML | Nominalizer |
| OPT | Optative |

| PART | Particle |
|------|----------|
| PL | Plural |
| PRES | Present |
| PROB | Probabilitative |
| PROG | Progressive |
| PST | Past |
| SG | Singular |

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# Negativization in Raji

## Ramesh Khatri

*This paper presents the morphological negation system in Raji. There are two ways of forming negation: (i) prefixing and (ii) suffixing negative markers to the root of the verb or to nouns, pronouns or adverbs in sentences in case of copula deletion.*

## 1 Introduction

It is to be noted that *\*ta* or *\*da* (negative imperative) and \**ma* are reconstructed as negative elements in Proto-Tibeto-Burman (Benedict, 1972:97; Matisoff, 2003:162).

## 2 Negation in Raji

### 2.1 Negation of the finite verbs

Raji forms the negative of all finite verbs by using negative suffix *-ma* to the fully inflected verbal forms. Following are the examples:

(1) a.  *ŋa thʌmsakĩma*

ŋa   thʌm-sa-k-ĩ-ma
1SG speak-PROG-SD-NPST.1-NEG
'I am not speaking.'

b.  *ŋa bʌtaŋ dzatĩma*

ŋa      bʌtaŋ    dza-tĩ-ma
1SG    rice      eat-PERF -NEG
'I have not eaten rice.'

c.  *ʌŋlʌi nʌŋi fĩã sʌtama*

ʌŋ-lʌi    nʌŋ-i    fĩã sʌt-a-ma
hat-INT   2SG-ERG fish kill-PST-NEG
'Didn't you kill fish?'

d.  *sʌllafia tsyalu yoki kʌmʌŋ tsʌĩ*

sʌllafia  tsyalu   yo-k-ɨ   kʌmʌŋ
talk       only     do-SD-NPST work
*yokɨma*

yo-k-ɨ-ma
be-SD-NPST-NEG
'Only talk, no work.'

e.  *kuya ŋaki joŋ nʌmfia*

kuya        ŋa-kɨ joŋ    nʌm-fia
yesterday  1SG-POSS brother house-LOC
*woŋama*

woŋ-a-ma
come-PST-NEG
'Yesterday, my brother did not come home.'

f.  *nho kwaĩ rhʌikɨ kwaĩ*

nho  kwaĩ  rhʌi-k-ɨ kwaĩ
now some   live-SD-NPST
*rhʌikɨma*

rhʌi-k-ɨ-ma
live-SD-NPST-NEG
'Now, some live here and some do not.'

g.  *tʌni deu rwaka dzhʌnʌu*

tʌni       deu      rwa-k-a    dzhʌnʌu
today     rain      fall-SD-PST if
*nʌmbu swãma*

nʌm-bu          swã-ma
house -LOC      go -NEG
'If it rains today I will not go home'

h.  *nʌŋi manoktɨnʌŋkɨ mareu*

nʌŋ-i      ma-nok-tɨnʌŋ-kɨ mareu
2SG-ERG   NEG-call-NFNT -POSS call
*ŋa woŋkãma*

ŋa        woŋ-k-ã-ma
1SG       come-SD-PST.1-NEG
'I did not come since you did not call me.'

Sometimes, the negative suffix *-ma* is attached to interrogative words instead of verbal forms. For example:

(2)      *uilai aŋma gʌrkasi*

ui-la-i   aŋ-magʌr-k-a-si
3-PL-ERG what-NEG say-SD-PST-PL
'Didn't they say anything?'

In example (2), the negative marker *-ma* is suffixed to the interrogative word *aŋ*.

The negative marker *–ma* can either precede or follow the number marker (Khatri, 2008:58). Consider the following examples:

(3) a.  *ŋʌdzi kuja rjauãmatsi*

     ŋʌ dzi kuja    rjau-ã-ma-tsi
     1-DU yesterday swim-PST.1-NEG-DU
     'We (two) did not swim yesterday.'

   b.  *ŋʌdzi kuja rjauãtsima*

     ŋʌ-dzi   kuja rjau-ã-tsi-ma
     1-DU      yesterday swim-PST.1-DU -NEG
     'We (two) did not swim yesterday.'

In example (2a), the negative marker *–ma* precedes the dual marker *–tsi* whereas it follows the dual marker *-tsi* in example (2b).

However, the negative prefix *da-* is attached to the verb even in finite verbs in Naukulya, a geographical dialect of Raji. Following are the examples:

(4) a.  *ŋa nʌmɦa daswakɨ̃*

     ŋa       nʌm-ɦa    da-swa-k-ɨ̃
     1SG      house-LOC NEG-go-SD-NPST.1
     'I do not go home.'

   b.  *naŋ boŋgaɦa datsʌswakɨ̃*

     naŋ boŋga-ɦa da-tsʌswa-k -ɨ̃
     2SG jungle-LOC NEG-go-SD-NPST.1
     'Don't you go to the jungle?'

   c.  *ŋa kuja nʌmɦa daswaã*

     ŋa kuja nʌm-ɦa da-swa-ã
     1SG yesterday house-LOC NEG-go-PST.1
     'I did not go home yesterday.'

## 2.2 Negation of the non-finite verbs

All non-finite verb forms take the negative prefix *ma-*. Consider the examples below:

(5) a.  *madʌstɨnʌŋ aŋe aŋe*

     ma-dʌs-tɨnʌŋ           aŋe    aŋe
     NEG    know-NMLZ what        what
     'Unskilled people do not know.'

   b.  *daktʌr sʌmʌiɦa matoŋpitɨnʌŋ*

     daktʌr    sʌmʌi-ɦa ma-toŋpi-tɨnʌŋ
     doctor time-LOC NEG-arrive-NFNT
     *beramya sika*

     beramya si-k-a
     patient     die-SD-PST
     'The patient died since the doctor did not
       come on time.'

   c.  *sʌmʌsya sʌmʌsya marhʌinyaŋ*

     sʌmʌsya sʌmʌsya ma-rhʌi-nyaŋ
     problem problem   NEG-be-NINF
     *watʌlma*

     watʌl-ma
     matter-NEG
     'There are problems.'

   d.  *madzʌktɨnʌŋ noknʌŋ yokɨ*

     ma-dzʌk-tɨnʌŋ noknʌŋ      yo-k-ɨ
     NEG-put-NFNT    good      be-SD-NPST
     'Is it good not to put?'

In examples (5a, b, c, d), *ma-* is prefixed to *dʌstɨnʌŋ, toŋpitɨnʌŋ, rhʌinyaŋ* and *dzʌktɨnʌŋ*.

## 2.3 Negation of the imperative sentences

The negative imperative is not formed with ma, but with *tha-*. It expresses prohibitive meaning. For examples

(6) a.  *thathʌm*

     tha-thʌm
     NEG.IMP-speak
     '(You) do not speak.'

   b.  *thadza*

     tha-dza
     NEG.IMP-eat
     '(You) do not eat.'

   c.  *dhurʌŋ dhurʌŋ thaswa*

     dhurʌŋ dhurʌŋ tha-swa
     far        far      NEG-go
     '(You) do not go far away.'

## 2.4 Negation of the copula

A negative copula *daːma* occurs at the end of the sentence. For example,

(7) a. *uiɦa  gulla pʌni damani*

    *ui-ɦa      gul-la    pʌni   da-ma-ni*

    there-LOC  person -PL  also   COP-NEG-PST
    'No one was there.'

  b. *in kʌlʌm dama*

    *in kʌlʌm   da-ma*

    this pen    COP-NEG
    'This is not a pen.'

But, in case of copula deletion, the negative marker *-ma* is suffixed to either nouns or adverbs or pronouns. Following are the examples:

(8) a. *ui tsorʌma*

    ui        tsorʌ-ma

    3SG       thief-NEG
    'He is not a thief.'

  b. *inma*

    in-ma

    this-NEG
    'This is not.'

  c. *inma rhʌiti*

    in-ma      rhʌi-ti

    here-NEG             live-PERF
    'Being unable to live here.'

### 3 Summary

The verb forms its negative by negative affixes depending on mood and 'finiteness' of the verb. The negative prefixes are *da- tha-* and *ma-* which are affixed to finite verbs, imperative sentences and non-finite verbs, respectively. The suffix *-ma* is affixed to the root of the verb in finite verbs or other sentences except imperative ones. The negative suffix *-ma* can either precede or follow the number marker in sentences. In case of copula deletion, the suffix can be attached to nouns, adverbs and pronouns.

### Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | First person |
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |
| COP | Copula |
| DU | Dual |
| ERG | Ergative |
| INF | Infinitive |
| INT | Interrogative |
| LOC | Locative |
| NEG.IMP | Negative imperative |
| NFNT | Non-finite |
| NMLZ | Nominalizer |
| NPST | Non-past |
| PERF | Perfect |
| PL | Plural |
| POSS | Possessive |
| PROG | Progressive |
| PST | Past |
| SD | Same day |
| SG | Singular |

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# Tense and aspect in Chhulung

## Man Kumari Limbu

*This paper deals with the tense and aspect system of Chhulung, a Kirati language spoken in the East Nepal. There are two types of tense and two types of aspect in Chhulung. Tense and aspect in Chhulung are marked morphologically.*

## 1 Introduction

Chhulung people are one of the sub-tribes of Rai who live in Akhisalla VDC of Dhankuta district. The term Chhulung is pronounced with unrounded central vowel [ɨ] and its true phonetic transcription is [tˢʰɨlɨŋ] but non-native of the Chhulung language cannot pronounce this sound correctly and they pronounce the term [tˢʰɨlɨŋ] as either Chhulung or Chhiling. I have used the term Chhulung for writing because majority of the non-native people use it. So, for my convenience I have used the term Chhulung (Limbu 2007, 2009). Chhulung is one of the Kirati languages under the Sino-Tibetan language family. According to Ethnologue (2005), ISO number of the Chhulung language is 639-3 and its SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics) code is cur. Chhulung people have their distinct identity since they have their own history[1], unique culture[2] and language.

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[1]. *Budhahang* ruled over the Khalsa territory before unification of Nepal. It is told that Prithivi Narayan Shah's army attacked the territory of *Budhahang* but *Budhahang* was not defeated by them. It is believed that he disappeared himself wrapping within *madro* N 'made up of bamboo' after the attack of the Prithivi Narayan Shaha's army.

[2]. Chhulung people celebrate *Wadhanmi* once a year. It is both ritual and group dance festival . There are tribal shaman like *Nangsuba* and *Chhambak* which are not found in others groups of Rai. This ritual makes Chhululng people different from other groups of Rai. In this way, they are distinct group of Rai historically, culturally and linguistically.

According to the CBS report (2001), the total population of Chhulung Rai is only 1314. Among them half of the total population can speak the Chhulung language fluently. In Akhisalla, they live in ward no. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8. Chhulung consists of five several clans altogether. They are Longawa, Chhongkha Phangphu, Phanchu and Rajbengsi.

## 2 Tense

Tense is a grammatical category, which refers to the way the grammar marks the time at which the action denoted by the verb takes place. According to Payne (2003:236), tense is the grammatical expression of the relation of the time of an event to some reference point in time, usually the movement the clause is uttered. In Chhulung, there are two types of tense: non-past and past (Limbu 2012). They are morphologically marked.

### 2.1 Non-past tense

The basic meaning of the non-past tense is the location of the situation or event at the present movement. In Chhulung, the non-past is marked by suffix <-yuk/k/nu>. The non-past tense is marked by <-yuk> suffix in the verb if first person singular, dual, second person dual and third person dual appear as the subject as in (1).

(1)   a.   ancʰi imyukcʰi
          ancʰi     ims-yuk-cʰi
          2DU.INCL sleep-NPST-DU
          We (two) sleep.

       b.   ancʰiŋa-a naŋ kitab piyukcʰuŋa
          ancʰi-ŋa-a naŋ  kitab
          2DU-EXCL-ERG   3SG book
          pid-yuk-cʰ-u-ŋa
          give-NPST-DU-3P-EXCL
          'We (two) give him a book.'

Similarly, the non-past tense morpheme is marked by <-k> suffix in the verb if the first person plural and second person plural appear as the subject as in (2).

(2) a. ani cama tʰuktiki
       ani cama tʰukt-i-k-i
       2PL rice cook-PL-NPST-PL
       'We cook rice.'
   b. kʰani aimsiki
       kʰani    a-ims-i-k-i
       2PL      2-sleep-PL-NPST-PL
       'You cook rice.'

In the examples above, the suffix<-k> is used as the non-past tense in both transitive and intransitive constructions. Likewise, the non-past tense morpheme is also marked by <-nu> suffix in the verb if the second person singular and third person singular appear as the subject in both transitive and intransitive constructions as in (3).

(3) a. khan cama atʰuknu
       khan      cama      a-tʰuk-nu
       2SG       rice       2-cook-NPST
       'You cook rice.'
   b. khan aimnu
       khan      a-ims-nu
       2SG       2-sleep-NPST
       'You sleep.'
   c. naŋ cama tʰuknu
       naŋ       cama      thuk-nu
       3SG       rice       cook-NPST
       'He/She cooks rice.'
   d. naŋ imnu
       naŋ       im-nu
       3SG       sleep-NPST
       'He/She sleeps.'
   e. naŋkha cama iŋtʰuknu
       naŋkha    cama      iŋ-tʰuk-nu
       3PL       rice       3PL-cook-NPST
       'They cook rice.'

The examples above show that the non-past tense morpheme<-yuk/k/nu> occurs in both transitive and intransitive constructions.

### 2.1.1 Past tense

According to Comrie (1985:41), the past tense refers to the situation prior to the present movement and says nothing about where the past situation occupies just as a single point prior to the present moment, or an extended time period prior to the present movement, indeed the whole of the time up to present movement. The past tense in Chhulung is marked by several suffixes <-e/a/hẽ/>. One of the past tense suffixes <-e> occurs with second person singular, third person singular, dual and plural in both transitive and intransitive constructions as shown in (4).

(4) a. kʰan citʰi acʰapte
       kʰan      citʰi      a-cʰapt-e
       2SG       letter      2-write-PST
       'You wrote a letter.'
   b. kʰan aimse
       kʰan      a-ims-e
       2SG       2-sleep-PST
       'You slept.'
   c. naŋ cama tʰukte
       naŋ       cama      tʰukt-e
       3SG       rice       cook-PST
       'He/she   cooked rice.'
   d. naŋ imse
       naŋ       ims-e
       3SG       sleep-PST
       'He/she slept.'

In the examples above, the suffix <-e> denotes the past tense marker in Chhulung language.

The other past tense marker <-a> appears with the first person dual, second person dual and third person dual with transitive and intransitive constructions as in (5).

(5) a. ancʰi cama tʰuktache
       ancʰi cama    tʰukt-a-ch-e
       1DU      rice cook-PST-DU-PST
       'We cooked rice.'
   b. ancʰi imsacʰie
       ancʰi      ims-a-cʰi-e
       1DU        sleep-PST-DU-PST
       'We slept.'

In the examples above, the suffix <-a> denotes the past tense marker in Chhulung language.

Similarly, another past tense marker is <-hẽ> which occurs if the first person singular, plural and

second person plural are subjects in both transitive and intransitive constructions as shown in (6).

(6)  a.  kʰani cama a-tʰukt-i hẽ

    kʰani cama a-tʰukt-i-hẽ
    2PL  rice  2-cook-PL-PST
    'You cooked rice.'

   b.  kʰani aimsihẽ

    kʰani  a-ims-i-hẽ
    2PL   2-sleep-PL-PST
    'You slept.'

The suffix<-hẽ> has occurred in the sentences to denote the past tense in Chhulung.

## 3 Aspect

Aspect describes the internal temporal shape of events or states (Payne 2003:238). It indicates whether an event, state, process or an action that is denoted by a verb is completed or in progress. Similarly, Comrie (1981: 3) has also defined it as different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation. In Chhulung, aspect is further divided into two categories; perfective and imperfective aspect (Limbu 2012).

## 3.1 Perfective aspect

Perfective is a term used in grammatical description of verb forms, which is referring to the completion of an action in relation to some point in time. According to Comrie (1976: 12) perfect denotes a situation viewed in its entity, without regard to internal temporal constituency. Perfect is concerned with temporal boundness and duration of a situation. In Chhulung, perfective aspect is further divided into two categories (Limbu 2012). They are described as follows.

### a. Present perfective

In Chhulung, present perfective aspect is <-aŋs> which is suffixed to the verb stem followed by the past tense marker by <- hẽ > as in (7).

(7)  a.  ga imsaŋshẽ

    ga      ims-aŋs-hẽ
    1SG     sleep-PRF-PST
    I have slept.

   b.  naŋ habaŋse

    naŋ hab-aŋs-e
    3SG cry-PRF-PST
    'He has cried.'

Here, the suffix <-aŋs> attached to the verb denotes present perfect aspect in Chhulung.

### b. Past perfective

Past perfective construction is more complex in Chhulung. For past perfect, the present perfect marker <-aŋs>, past tense marker <-a> and possessive marker <-ba> are suffixed to the verb stem and main verb is followed by the past form of copula yuwakte as shown in the following examples.

(8)  a.  ga imsaŋsaba yuwakte

    ga ims-aŋs-a-ba  yuwakte
    1SG sleep-PRF-PST POSS BE.PST
    'I had slept.'

   b.  khan ahapaŋsaba yuwakte

    khan a-hap-aŋs-a-ba yuwakte
    2SG 2-cry-PRF-PST POSS BE.PST
    'You had cried.'

Past perfect cannot be constructed through only single morpheme or suffix. It is more complex in its construction. The past perfect construction consists of <-aŋs-a-ba+yuwakte>.

### 3.1.1 Imperfective aspect

Imperfect is expressing duration without specifying completion of an action with the internal structure of the situation. Comrie (1976: 16) defines that imperfective forms indicate situation of long duration. In Chhulung, imperfective aspect can be divided into two categories present progressive and past progressive (Limbu 2012).

### a. Progressive aspect

Progressive aspect refers to an action which is in progress. In Chhulung, the progressive aspect is expressed by the affixation of the suffix <- yeʔ> added to the verb which occurs in intransitive verbs. The suffix <-et> is added to the verb root which occurs in transitive verbs. Progressive is also further divided into present progressive and past progressive (Limbu 2012). The present

progressive refers continuous activity in the present time whereas the past progressive refers continuous activity in a given time.

### i. Present progressive aspect

There are two suffixes <-yeʔ> and <-et> for present progressive aspect. The suffix <-yeʔ> occurs with intransitive and <-et> occurs with the transitive. The following examples make it clear.

(9) a. ga imyeʔwa
    ga        ims-yeʔ-wa
    1SG     sleep-PROG-1A
    'I am sleeping.'
  b. ga citʰi cʰaptetuŋ
    ga    citʰi    cʰapt-et-u-ŋ
    1SG   letter   write-PROG-3P-1A
    'I am writing a letter.'

### ii. past progressive aspect

The morpheme <-akt> is used to indicate the past progressive aspect in Chhulung.

(10) a. ga citʰi cʰaptaktaŋe
    ga    cithi    cʰapt-akt-a-ŋ-e
    1SG   letter   write-PROG-PST-1A-PST
    'I was writing a letter.'
  b. ga imsaktaŋe
    ga  ims-akt-a-ŋ-e
    1SG sleep-PROG-PST-1A-PST
    'I was sleeping. '

From the examples in (10) the morpheme <-yeʔ-> occurs with intransitive. The morpheme <-et-> occurs with transitive to denote present progressive and the morpheme <-akt> occurs with transitive and intransitive to denote past progressive aspect.

### 4. Summary

To sum up, tense in Chhulung is categorized into: non-past and past. Non-past is marked by suffix <-yuk/k/nu>, and past tense is marked by suffix <-e/a/ hẽ>. Similarly, the aspect is categorized into perfective and imperfective. These two aspects are further categorized on the basis of present and past. Present perfective is marked by <-aŋs> whereas past perfective is constructed through complex structure consisting of <-aŋs-a-ba+yuwakte>. Imperfective aspect is further

classified into progressive aspect. Progerssive aspect are of two types: present progressive and past progressive. The present progressive is marked by the suffixes <-yeʔ> and <-et> whereas past progressive is marked by the suffix <-akt>.

### Abbreviations

| 1 | first person | PFV | perfective |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | second person | PRF | perfect |
| 3 | third person | POSS | possessive |
| 1 | first person | PFV | perfective |
| 2 | second person | PRF | perfect |
| 3 | third people | POSS | possessive |
| DU | dual | PL | plural |
| ERG | ergative | PRS | present |
| EXCL | exclusive | PROG | progressive |
| INCL | inclusive | PST | past |
| N | Nepali | | |

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# Role of language in constructing identity

Ramesh Kumar Limbu and Rishi Ram Adhikari

## 1 Introduction

This paper analyzes the role of ethnic languages on the construction of the people's identity living in a particular community in Nepal. Nepal is a homeland of various linguistic and cultural communities designating with divergent identities by means of correlation to language and culture. Both culture and language have imbrications to each other. Culture can exist through language and language also depends on culture. If it is separated from one another then, either it tends automatically to get impaired or gets modified from its originality and turns into hybrid or absorbs into the powerful one. And, this changes simultaneously concerns to the identity of the community people. So preservation of ethnic language is imperative to the conservation of cultural and ethnic identity of people. The discussion of language and its correlation to Chepang and Limbu ethnic identity is thus another pressing issue of this paper.

While talking of different linguistic and cultural identities, general practice is that most of the greater and influential linguistic zones are dominant in both language and cultural practices although other factors like political, academic, social, legal and many other questions are also there to determine identities. For instance, 'Nepali' is both noun and adjective which refers to the person who belongs to Nepal and the language spoken in Nepal. Similarly, Mithila Pradesh means the zone related to Maithali language, 'Nepal Mandala' denotes the region with Newari language dominance, Limbuwan refers to the language dominance of Limbu. But, the smaller linguistic zone like Chepang has been unable to capture the attention of its own linguistic zone in terms of nation re-structuring process.

Hence, linguistic and cultural performances play vital role to maintain identity of a community. The greater use of language the dominant repertoire it covers. In this context, the views of Eckert and McConnell can be assertive who note that, "joint engagement in some activity of enterprise is sufficiently intensive to give rise over time to a repertoire of shared practices" (23).

## 2 Language and identity

The tension of language is related to the meaning of word which is determined by the negotiation of worldly phenomena as well as cultural and ritual practices of community language speakers. This expression influences activities of speaker's identity and plays out daily in the workplaces and maintain constituency. Norton (1995) discusses on the dynamic nature of language, for him, "Neither identity nor language use is a fixed notion; both are dynamic, depending upon time and place" (23). The nature of ethnic identity is frequently contingent so that language acts as the requirement to identify construction of ethnicity. Although, some researchers including Liebkind argue that language is not necessary for ethnic identity while he presents the example of Irish ethnic community that, "a person may identify themselves as Irish yet not speak Gaelic (see Eastman & Reese, 1981, or Liebkind, 1999: 22). However, ethnic group or individual ascribing may have a symbolic attachment to an associated language so it has nexus of language and culture that commonly an ethnic group identifies with a specific language. Anzaldua describes language and culture is the two sides of one coin. In this context, he regards, "Language runs deeply into cultural and personal identities, eloquent phrasing of this principle captures the language-identity fusion. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity (consequently) I am because of my language" ( 59). The speaker can tends to influence the people how others perceive them, but ultimately it is the hearer who creates the speaker's identity. If the speaker is not allowed creating any impression on their own, then the hearer is not able to construct an identity for the speaker which may be entirely difficult to usher the speaker's desired identity. This allows the hearer an inordinate amount of power, and diminishes the self-sufficiency and independence of the speaker. It is also used in national language policies to extinguish the power

associated with politically 'subversive' and culturally 'inappropriate' languages.

Nepal is a multi-lingual nation where all the ethnic people have been practicing their ritual and cultural performances by using their own languages despite of the endorsement of one national policy of the pre-democratic governments. For certain linguistic practices are understood by the members to be more appropriate than others, speakers who embrace the identity of a particular community will engage in positive identity practices, while those who reject their identity will use negative identity practices to distance themselves from it.

The formation and maintenance of individual and collective identity through language is also influenced by the perceived social rewards of any given discursive utterance. 'Discourse' as Bourdieu regards, is a symbolic asset which can receive different values depending on the market in which it is offered (12). Multilingual speakers who reside in a non-native society where certain languages are more useful or socially valued than others are faced with potentially difficult language choices within any given utterance. A multilingual speaker has many ways to define himself/herself. In the context of Nepal, these assumptions play vital role to maintain the ethnic identities of people. Semantic correlation of language and culture create problems to separate it from one to other, and then concomitantly appears in a certain context identifying the speakers who he /she are. As Bourdieu mentions, "Linguists are right in saying that all languages are linguistically equal: they are wrong in thinking that they are socially equal" (132). Therefore, it is up to those multilingual speakers to decide which language is appropriate for differential social situations, and also which language carries the most benefits for use in an ever-changing linguistic and social environment.

For those non-Nepali speakers who resettle in Nepal intentionally or otherwise, the process of negotiating the various identities that accompany various language choices in Nepali has overwhelmingly dominated private and public lives of ethnic people.

Nepal's linguistic diversity is indeed unsurprising as different caste and ethnic people reside in it. The development of literary traditions in Nepal happened to take place basically in areas where cultural exchange and development of art and artisans rendered upon. Other most of the languages here retained their oral traditions and have not got their written tradition. After linguistic diversity was allowed, to some extent, from the centralized authority, the situation is reverse now and various linguistic groups have initiated writing and reading tradition on their own languages which surely can create a new horizon and contact zone although only big linguistic zones appear to culturally dominant ones. Smaller mother-tongue speaking communities are still seen negotiating with Nepali language in their private and public affairs. If we, for instance, look at the two ethnic groups speaking zones of Limbu and Chepang, we can find that the Limbu community has its bigger linguistic and cultural zone in comparison to the Chepang community.

## 3 Chepang language and identity

Chepang is one of the ethnic communities living in central hilly region of Nepal mainly in Southern part of Dhading, northern part of Chitawan, Makwanpur and Gorkha district. They have their own language and culture too. Their language belongs to Tibeto-Burman group of Sino-Tibetan language family. The linguistic realm of Chepang is related to their cultural zone and produce meaning that identifies who they are. In the same way, the hearer also identifies them on the basis of the discourse they create. In this way, Chepangs establish the practices of their cultural repertoire. As a multilingual panorama they speak their language as well as practice their culture and accordingly other people accept their distinct ethnic identity. If they lose the competence of language they may not preserve their cultural heritage. So that, people living in smaller linguistic zone are being threatened to get separated from cultural zone and are being compelled them to accept the bigger one. While talking about ethnic community having a bigger linguistic community such as Lumbu, Magar and among others have been successful to raise the issue of ethnic identity, namely, Limbuban, Magarant and so on. In this regard, Adhikari (2010:2) states, "The linguistic

identity of Chepang falls on the crisis of the shifting culture and ritual practices which is either dominated by Hindu or Christian" (2). Because of the influence of powerful culture and language that has created problem in continuation as a distinctive Chepang identity. In the mean time, the previous one language policy taken by the government in the name of nationalism also seems not paying attention to the conservation of those smaller linguistic zones.

## 4 Limbu language and identity

Every community people whether form Rai, Sherpa, Gurung, Magar or a caste Hindu speaks Limbu language fluently in Ikhabu, Tapethok, or Khejenim VDCs, atop of Tambarkhola river of Taplejung district where it is their first language if not a mother-tongue. The Limbu language, thus, spoken by the Limbus (and non-Limbus) mainly living in the far eastern Nepal known as Limbuwan, is one of influential ethnic languages in Nepal. Indeed, Limbu language is understood by all community people especially in the dominant zones of this language. They communicate among one-another in Limbu language which they call *Yakthungpan* or *Yakthungba-pan,* and their script is called Srijanga. Limbu language has the characteristics of pronominalization and falls under the rubric of the Tibeto-Burman subfamily of Sino-Tibetan family of languages. Yakthungpan "is not only used as a medium of communication among one another but also a means of embodying their culture, history, mythology, oral and written literature, and day to day activities demonstrating their symbolic values, functional importance and social sequences," and hence their self-identification (Limbu 76). Despite of the fact that the numerical ratio of Limbu mother tongue speakers is declining due to the impact of modernity, late capitalism and globalization, studies and writings in Limbu language, culture and literature are gradually increasing. Limbus have created their own distinctive identity since they have greater and stronger linguistic zone relatively to the Chepangs. The Limbus have their own distinct social tradition and native culture. Their various rituals like birth, marriage, death and others establish their distinct heritage and identity. Since long time Nepalese authority has announced that this territory is the home land of various ethnic

community and linguistic groups. The rulers and government authorities right from King Prithvi Narayan Shah to People's Movement of 1990 always used to claim that their government was conscious about the identity of the people. However, it was not practically materialized in favour of ethnic communities specifically of the smaller cultural and linguistic community like Chepang. After being Nepal a republic nation it legally announced to give equal opportunity to all cultural groups and linguistic community. The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) regards:

All the languages spoken as the mother tongue in Nepal are the national languages of Nepal. (2) The Nepali Language in Devnagari script shall be the official language. Notwithstanding anything contained in clause, it shall not be deemed to have hindered to use the mother language in local bodies and offices. State shall translate the languages so used to an official working language and maintain record thereon. (Article 5.1.2)

In the same way, article 17 further declares the cultural right that:

Education and Cultural Right: (1) Each community shall have the right to get basic education in their mother tongue as provided for in the law. (2) Every citizen shall have the right to free education from the State up to secondary level as provided for in the law.(3) Each community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture, cultural civility and heritage.( Article,17)

Constitutionally, every community shall have equality; however, it is just in the process of identifying linguistic and cultural zone. And, bigger linguistic and cultural community like Limbu has strong presence of their voice and succeeded to establish the proposal of Limbuwan. But smaller community like Chepang is being ineffective to establish voice of federal state in terms of Chepang identification. Multilingual minority group is often analyzed as having two components: the "we" versus "they" code (Gumperz, 1982; Lambert, 1972 in Zentella, 1990), or the high versus low language (Valdés, 2000). The minority language code "we" represents in-group speech. It connotes intimacy and is largely confined to the home because it

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suffers lower prestige than the "they" code or high language, which is the language of the more powerful group and is associated with wealth and status. In Chepang community, they differentiate themselves from the dominant group, while creating camaraderie with other speakers simultaneously. These choices are made not only within situations, but within conversations and debates. Code switching is another form of language use, which can be at once exclusionary and inclusionary, serves to create an important sense of 'them' and 'us'. Therefore, language is the vehicle of cultural transportation, wherein power lies in its circulation as per the density and widespread of it, helps to consolidate one's identity.

## 5 Conclusion

As language is a means of discourse which effectively helps creating power and, thus, its efficacy relies on the realm of its utilization. The wider zone it covers, the more powerful it becomes. While analyzing the role of language in identity formation of the two ethnic communities living in Nepal, i.e., Chepang and Limbu, in different socio economic and geographical situation, there are found two distinct situations. Chepang community seems unable to establish stronger cultural and linguistic zone to create federal identification once at a time while Limbu community has been successful enough to hold both cultural and linguistic situation and identified themselves as distinctively a bona-fide community and a zone with historical background of Nepal.

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# 'The tail' in classical Newari lexicon and the proto-Tibeto-Burman root

## Kamal P. Malla

*This paper attempts to show the relevance of Classical Newari lexical resources compiled from dated manuscripts by focusing on a single word, "the tail". Synonyms from nearly sixty Tibeto-Burman languages are cited as supporting reflexes and cognates. It also shows the potentiality of using Classical Newari material for reconstruction of proto- TB roots. Three roots are proposed so far in the literature. However, none of them considers the Newari resources.*

## 1 Introduction

This paper is focused on the relevance of the Classical Newari Lexicon for Tibeto- Burman comparative studies. The Lexicon is compiled from eleven bilingual Sanskrit- Newari manuscripts dated between AD 1381- 1711. The manuscripts are based on the popular Sanskrit lexicon, *Amarakośa,* containing well over 12,000 Sanskrit nouns with synonyms glossed in Newari. As orthography of these texts is not consistent we come across different forms. A case in point is the thirteen variants for the root "the tail". Though they appear different in form they may be grouped into two underlying forms, *mhe* and *nhi.*

The *mhe*- forms are, *mhe, mhen* (with nasal), *mhe- pola, mhai, mhai- pā, mhai- pvaṃ, mheṃ- pva- lu,* and *me* (without aspiration)

The *nhi* - forms are *nhi- pvaṃ, nhi- pā, nhi- poṭa, nhi- pota,* and *nhi.*

Chronologically, the *mhe* and its *vṛddhi* or diphthongized form are decidedly earlier because the diphthongization of the mid front vowel is a typical Middle Indo- Aryan phenomenon, and the high vowel is later than mid- vowel, thus we have *e →› ai-› i*

The later form *nhi- pvam* or *nhi- poṭa* seems to have developed from *mhe,* followed by a classifier used for specifying length, or flatness, or a bunch.

Not all tails of quadrupeds, fish, or fowl look alike. In Newari, classifiers began to develop gradually to specify the dimensions of nominals- the shape and size, of the tail. The tuft (*pvala),* the bunch (*pvam*), the length (*pu/puta*), the flatness of the tail (*pā)* etc., are specified by the second lexical element. For analyzing etymology of the root, these classifiers may be left out, for the time being.

## 2 The reconstructed Proto- TB roots

Now, information for reflexes, cognates and proto- forms of the tail is not overwhelming in the literature. Prior to the launching of the Sino- Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus file online in January 2011 only limited data were readily accessible for study and comparison. For example, Shafer (1966) lists in all 15 words available to him. In connection with positing prefix *k,* he cites the following forms for the tail, *ra- mei* (Kom), *re- mei* (Tsiru), *mei (* Lusei), *k- mei* (Kapwi), *- r- mei* (Aimol), *\*ar- mai* (Hrangkhol), *m- ra- mei* (Lamgang), and *a- m'i (*Anal). Based on these data, Shafer reconstructs the proto root for the tail as *\*k- r- mei* He examined ."the tail" further in the context of Old Bodish, Middle Burmese and Magari, documenting the following forms, *- rme* (Old Bodish), *\*rme>me* (Thebor), *mri > rmi* (Middle Burmese), and *me- me* (Magar). To this list he adds two more forms, *'a- mri* (Middle Burmese) and *k'- r- mei* (Kukish). Finally, he compares these words with Newari *hni- pot,* a form attested late in a text dated AD 1785, to reconstruct the sound correspondence of final *–ei* with Newari *–i* (Shafer 1966: 29, 144, and 159)

Benedict (1972: Root No 282), on the other hand, reconstructs the proto TB root for the tail as *\*r- may.* It is reconstructed from the following 13 cognate data set*: teme (*Gyarung)*, me- kon* (Thebor)*, me- me (*Magar)*, me- ri (*Bahing)*, lemi- leming (*Digaro)*, mai- nmai (*Kachin)*, arim (*Aka)*, a- mri (*Burmese)*, kime (*Garo)*, khermai- bermai (*Dimsa)*, mei (*Lushei)*,, ramain (*Amol), and *arme (*Mikir)*.

Recently, Matisoff (2005:216) reconstructed two different roots for 'the tail'. - *ba* and *may* <>*mey* < >*mi*. The first is limited to Tangut and Proto- Lolo- Burmese branch of the sub- family, and this may be ignored for the time being. The second is *may*<> *mey* <> *mi*.

Cognates available for Himalayish languages are *mi* (Gurung), *me:* (Tamang), *me* (Thakali), *me-mek* (Magar*), ormeh/or'bah* (Kham), *mya* (Kaike*), ngā- māq* (Jirel), *ngā- māq* (Sherpa), *'mi- lu* (Sunwar), *'mer (* Khaling), *nhi- pota* (Newari), and *me?* (Chepang) (Hale 1973:50). Note that Old Chinese for the tail is *mi- war* or */mjwat*, for Akha it is *arim- mi*, and for Jinghpaw*, n- mai*.

Matisoff comments that this root poses "a special problem", as Bahing and Burmese have the nasal preceding the liquid, "Here Benedict confesses he is tempted to interpret the Bahing and Burmese forms in terms of metathesis, but there is no analogy whatsoever for this shift in either language." (Editor's note No 204, 1972:64).

### 3 Quality of available data

These are thus some of the comparenda and cognates readily available for reconstructing the root 'the tail' in the published sources so far. Further data sets in the Sino- Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus Project (as of - September 15, 2006) were not yet accessible for study or scrutiny.

However, except for Old Chinese, Old Bodish and Middle Burmese few forms discussed in the literature are documented chronologically, regionally or dialectally. We hardly know, if at all, how old they are, nor do we definitely know where they are spoken in terms of their social or geographic distribution. Some of these forms are difficult, if not intractable, to track in terms of their exact linguistic provenance. Because of war, conquest, and natural disasters not uncommon in the region, there have been constant migration of the tribal populations from their enclave or ancestral habitat.

Not infrequently, data citation in TB comparative linguistics is liberal, there is a kind of "free for all" propensity in the choice of cognates. Regardless of

their geographic distribution, time- depth, and status in the hierarchy of language history, some linguists tend to pick all "look alikes". The vexing question is: are lexical correspondences enough to posit a cognate? What about sound correspondences? What are we looking at—data from the micro, meso or macro levels? In other words, are we climbing down or up the genetic tree, moving gradually from unit to unit, branch to branch, or division to division of the language family/sub- family? The "family - tree model" or terminology is currently in disrepute, but what have taken its place are graphic metaphors such as the ripples in a lake, or the primeval forest floor full of leaves and bare trees. The question still is a moot one: how do we know which trees shed them. TB languages/dialects have been sub- classified either on the basis of geographical regions or on political/administrative boundaries, Few proposed classifications are based on formal criteria or shared innovations..

With the exception of *the Linguistic Survey of India* (1903- 9), or the SIL sources (1966- 76), or the more recent works, based on the field- work done by trained native scholars from South East Asia, the quality, authenticity and validity of the data have roused doubt and occasional debate or two. Some of the pre- war data used or collected, for example, by Shafer and Benedict for their Sino- Tibetan Linguistics Project have been contested. Even for widely known languages like Written Tibetan (or Newari), they continue to use a few older publications in the Western languages. A living example is Hodgson's paper on Kusunda. His informant was a native speaker, but the words were transcribed in "Pre- Cambrian Roman" by a clerk in Hodgson's service. What phonetic information may have been lost in transliteration is a mere guess, now impossible to verify. But by comparing the transcription and the published version of the paper a lot seems to have been missing in print.

### 4 Relevance of classical Newari data

As TB languages are mostly unwritten, the relevance of Classical Newari cannot be overemphasized. It has a large number of dated texts, including bilingual lexicons dated since the

late 14ᵗʰ century onward. More than 26,000 lexical items belonging to 25 conventional classified semantic domains are accessible to be used. However, few TB comparativists seem to notice this resource. It is not too late to explore this material. This database can be accessed online by searching it by Sanskrit word or by Newari gloss, but alas, NOT by English word.

The on- going STEDT Project at UC, Berkeley led by Professor Matisoff has just begun to notice and use these Newari resources which are only a click away. The data file records Old Chinese, Written Tibetan, and Middle Burmese, but not Classical Newari. The Project database for Newari contains 1,922 words including Dolakha Newari , but not from Bhaktapur dialect yet. Not astonishingly, although it is closer to their proto form than *nhi-pot*, neither Shafer nor Benedict mentions the Classical Newari form for the tail, *mhe* , in their citations. This can be only by accident, not by design. The database of the STEDT represents the state of the art both in terms of technology as well as methodology. The use of computing in lexicography had just begun and the Internet revolution had just arrived when a trial unit of the Classical. Newari Lexicon was posted online on August 15, 1995. In 1998 all 21 units were posted in the Internet. By the time Matisoff's *Handbook* was out in 2005, the Classical Newari Lexicon has been online for a full decade.

In their citations from Newari material, written or contemporary, hitherto TB comparativists are too cautious, still confined and limited to the Linguistic Survey of India, Conrady (1891,1893), Jørgensen, (1931), not even his dictionary dated 1936! Shafer quotes from Colonel William Kirkpatrick 1811, the first English publication on Nepal. Citations from Classical Newari were limited to Jørgensen's early work.

## 5 The use of classifiers and the advent of *nhi*

To come back to the tail, the older form *mhe* was finally displaced by the younger one *nhi- (pot)* around the mid- 16ᵗʰ century. However, *nhi- pot, nhi- po, nhi- pā* are obviously the tail of the cow, buffalo, and other commonplace animals. It is less

likely to denote the tail of the horse or the elephant.

The development of the classifier system in Newari in the 16ᵗʰ- 17ᵗʰ centuries appears to have been a major inspiration behind the displacement of *mhe* by *nhi- pot*. *A Dictionary of Clssical Newarī* (Malla 2000:407) records *mhe- puta* as a form attested in a text dated AD 1380 whereas the form *nhi- pọta* is first attested two centuries later in NS 638/AD1517 only (Malla 2000:266). This chronological information documented in the two forms of Newari root is of no small significance for the history of the tail in Tibeto- Burman languages. The heartening message is that Classical Newari lexical material may be of critical relevance to resolve many a vexing issues in TB comparative studies, including the reconstruction of a proto- language.

## 6 Conclusion

Word - lists and dictionaries of spoken Newari are compiled since 1793.However, these have only *nhipot*, (Joshi 1956), *nhipoṃ*, (Kœlver/Shresthacharya 1994), *nhipoṃ* (Tuladhar 1949), *nhipanna, nhipota* (Joshi 1956:277). The Academy's *Practical Dictionary* too lists *nhipaṃ*. All these recent sources give us the impression that *nhi- pot* is the only root for 'the tail' in Newari. However, until the late 1970s little systematic work on Newari lexicography, with the exception of Jørgensen (1936), was available. What sundry work has been done is poorly documented and hardly disseminated. No wonder that the three semantic blocks of Classical Newari Lexicon, posted online in August 1995, and of the entire file of 21 blocks that were finally posted in 1998, there is not a single reference to the material in the literature. Few TB linguists seem to have taken any note of it. At least, we have not yet come across anyone who has taken note of the resources readily accessible in the Internet.

**The tail: Select cognate data set**

The proto-form probably consisted of a prefix *\*r,* an initial consonant-*\*m* followed by a nucleus, a front vowel, *\*e* or *\*i*, developing into a diphthong, *\*ei* or *\*ai* in Kuki-Naga as well as in Naga-Bodo,

but not in Bodic or Sinetic Divisions, nor in Burmic.

| | |
|---|---|
| Aimol | *r-mei/ramain* |
| Aka | *arim/mi:myi*: (Cunningham's Dictionary) |
| Anal | *a-m'i* |
| Bahing | *me-ri* |
| Burmese | *a-mri* |
| Chinese | *miwar* (Cikoski, p.142) |
| Chepang | *me?* |
| Digaro/Taying | *'ami~aming/lemi-leming* (Benedict) |
| Dimsa | *ke'-r-mai/k'e-r-mei/ber-mai* (Benedict) |
| Empeo | *-mi* |
| Garo | *ki'-me* |
| Garo | *kime/ki'mi* |
| Gurung | *mi* |
| Gyarung | *teme* |
| Hrangkhol | *\*ar-mei* |
| Jinghpaw | *n-mai* |
| Jirel | *nga-maq* |
| Kabui | *(ka)-mai* |
| Kachin | *mai~nmai* |
| Kaike | *mya* |
| Kapwi | *ka-mei* |
| Katsin | *r-mai /mair~mai* (Benedict) |
| Khaling | *'mer* |
| Kham | *ormeh~or'bah* |
| Khami | *a-mai* |
| Khoirao | *(a)-mei* |
| Khunggoi | *a-ka-mai* |
| Kom | *ra-mei* |
| Kukish | *k'-r-mei* |
| Kupome | *a-ka-mi* |
| Kwoirang | *mi* |
| Lamgang | *m-ra-mei* |
| Lusei/Lushei | *mei* |
| Magar | *me-mek/me-mek* (Benedict) |
| Maram | *a-me* |
| Maring | *ka-mei* |
| Meithlei | *mei* |
| Middle Burmese | *mri<\*rmi* |
| Midzu | *ra-mai* |
| Mikir | *ar-me* |
| Mosang | *a-mi* |
| Namsangei | *a-me* |
| Newari | *hni-pot* |
| Old Bodish | *\*rme* |

| | |
|---|---|
| Phadang | *a-k'a-mei* |
| Rengma | *(a)-ma* |
| Rgyarong | *(ta)-'imi* |
| Sherpa | *nga-maq* |
| Sunwar | *'mi-lu* |
| Tamang | *me:* |
| Tsiru | *re- mei* |
| Tengima | *mi* |
| Thakali | *me* |
| Thebor | *\*mri>rmi/me-kon* (Benedict) |
| Classical Tibetan | *arme* |
| Old Chinese | *mi-war/mjwar*. |

(Sources: Shafer 1966, 1967 and Benedict 1972: No. 282. for the languages other than Himalayish. Hale 1973:50 for the Himalayish. The STEDT Database File contains all these and many more, in all 855 words for the tail, including duplicates, with 480 reflexes, not accessible at the time when this paper was presented at Seattle in September, 2006)

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The Sino- Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus 2011. The project web page is at URL: http://www.stedt,edu.berkeley. Since January 1, the database is open to search by English gloss. Nearly 4,32,976 words in ca. 566 TB languages/dialects are listed and grouped geographically into sub- groups. For 2500 roots, synonyms, reflexes, and cognates are given together with available reconstructed proto forms.

# Effective language learning in Indian language classrooms: A study

## Devi Archana Mohanty

*Dealing with large classes poses a real challenge to language teachers. Effective language teaching and learning is critically constrained by the large size of classes. The article discusses the status of language teaching in large classrooms in Indian context. Large classes in India suppose to be a major hindrance in effective language learning. While discussing the problems of large classes, the paper suggests some possible solutions to cope with large classes and create a conducive learning atmosphere for effective language teaching.*

## 1 Introduction

There has been vigorous debate over the learning outcome of large classes. The debate has gained momentum when it comes to the negative effects of large classes in the context of language learning. Large classes are often perceived as one of the major obstacles to ensuring quality education. Indeed, there are many researches that point to the disadvantages of large classes to ensure quality education. In spite of this, large classes are a reality in many educational settings. The aim of the paper is to highlight the negative consequences of large classes in the context of teaching and learning English as a second language. In India, it is often observed that large classes are a result of inadequate funding and the absence of political will to provide a sufficient number of teachers and classrooms that would ensure an effective learning environment for English language.

Large classrooms are those where the learner-teacher ratios exceed 45:1. Such classroom conditions are particularly acute in India where class sizes often swell up beyond 100 students. There have been a number of comprehensive researches on the effect of class size (Gibbs & Jenkins 1992; Bennett, 1996; Goodykoontz 2008; Blatchford, Russell, & Brown, 2009; Ehrenberg, Brewer, Gamoran, & Willams, 2001). With a large class, students would experience less interaction with their teachers, leading to a drop-out and failure as asserted by Gibbs & Jenkins (1992). Large classes have an adverse effect on teaching and learning (Bennett, 1996). According to Goody koontz (2008), in large classes some students often get distracted with noise, and do not get opportunity to approach the lecturers for help. Large classes pose to be major setback in the path of language learning in India. There are different reasons behind the overcrowded classes in India: rapid population growth, deficient teachers, inadequate classroom infrastructures, lack of interest and motivation on the part of the school authorities as well as guardians. The reality, however, is that each of these factors have worked to increase class size, and thus affect the atmosphere of effective language learning.

## 1.1 Status of English language teaching in India

English, although treated as a foreign language in India, is progressively gaining ground over the years. Ranging from an auto rickshaw driver to a Pizza boy, everybody is well conversant with this language. Regarded as a 'neutral' language for wider communication and the language of technology, modernity, English is also becoming a social status symbol. It occupies the position of associate official language. It is used widely as a link language in offices and among both the educated and illiterate people. It is not only a compulsory subject at school, college and university but is also the medium of instruction to a large extent. It occupies the position of a second language in the school curriculum and for higher education. Parents see English medium schools as a way of pushing their children up the social scale. This contemporary position of English in India shows English language teaching occurring at all levels of Education, as a second language. However, it is ironical that even though English enjoys a high status in India, its teaching and learning in the educational institutes is rather inadequate and unproductive. English thus being a second language needs more attention. All the four

skills are to be learnt. However, among the four skills of English language - listening, speaking, reading and writing, concentration is much on writing and reading in the context of large classrooms. Very rarely, a few minutes are spared to speaking and listening. The reasons are many: Teachers in the overcrowded classes face many obstacles when attempting to teach various skill of English language.

## 2 Features of Indian large classes

The paper discusses some typical characteristics of Indian large classrooms which hamper effective language learning. They are rigid class room infrastructure, theory based lectures, mixed ability learners, shun technology classrooms and so on. These features create various problems in effective language learning, such as discomfort on the part of both teachers and students; lack of personal attention; erratic evaluation; and most importantly chaos. Some of the characteristics of Indian large classrooms are elaborated below.

### 2.1 Lack of flexibility

Many teachers are worried by the physical constraints imposed by large numbers of sitting arrangements in a confined classroom. They find it discomfort to facilitate student interaction, since there is no space to move about. The students can't move easily; some students don't participate in interaction based activities. Concerned language teachers opine: 'I must speak very loud that gives me sore throat; There's not enough room (space) to do some communicative activity like role play, group discussion; Large size of class makes me very frustrated and tired and I feel hopeless to manage the class successfully etc.'

### 2.2 Theory based lectures

Indian large classrooms mostly promote theory based lectures. There is less flexibility of equipments to conduct group activities. Moreover, language teachers strive hard to finish syllabus as instructed by the authority. Less attention is given to interaction based activities and other important language skills, such as listening, speaking . With a mere chalk and blackboard, language teacher has nothing to do but to teach and preach syllabus to students.

### 2.3 Mixed ability learners

Indian large classes consist of mixed ability learners. Students from different background sit together and learn. So dealing with a mixed capacity class becomes a challenge for language teachers. Some students pick lessons faster and some other hesitate a lot. Interested students take initiatives and in other cases students do not understand anything. Out of nervousness, hesitation, students do not take part in learning activities.

### 2.4 Classroom control

Teachers are often worried by the discipline aspects of large classes. They feel that the classes become too noisy with a large number of students. Sometimes it becomes impossible to control chaos in the classroom. More specifically, students in the back benches do not take interest in the teaching process. Also, during some team activities, students make loud noise. In this context, the teachers feel helpless since s/he can't control the entire class. One of my colleagues once said: 'it is noisy, some students who aren't interested in class disturb the others . . . when we have activities in class, it is difficult to control or solve their problems'. Teachers also agree that it is not possible to do some activities like role play, group discussion, group debate in large class atmosphere. Often, students reveal that they surf internet sitting in back benches, or write assignments, have nice naps for one or half hour. Students take the advantage of being in back benches and escaping the teachers' attention.

### 2.5 Individual attention

Another major problem in large classes is giving personal attention to students. Many teachers are concerned that they are neglecting the needs of their students as individuals. Teachers find it difficult to attend the need of each individual student in large classes. As a result, students do not find a room to speak up their needs or share their ideas. It creates a gap between the pupil and the teacher. Gradually students start feeling isolated and unwanted. Learning a language highly depends on the interest and participation of the learner. However, when the learner do not find a comfortable space to express his/her ideas, then

there is likely to be little room for success in language learning.

## 2.6 Casual attitude

Unless and until we realize the importance of English language in our daily lives we won't be able to give justice to the language. It is unfortunate that very few parents and learners realize the significance of the language in our daily life.

## 3 Suggestions for dealing with Indian large classrooms

The above issues related to large classes in Indian context show that effective language teaching and learning becomes a real challenge for teachers. Students' attitude and performance towards language learning, in large classes is also a challenge, and guidance and support would be necessary to achieve learning. However, the problems related to large classes discussed in the previous section can be avoided if everybody will realize and understand the significance of English as a *lingua franca*. The article suggests some remedial measures so as to make teachers capable to cope with the challenges of large classes.

The use of effective classroom organization and management skills, particularly the use of group work, is the suggested panacea in the literature for effectively teaching large classes(Vale´rien 1991; Pasigna 1997). Teachers can use group work to provide all learners with an opportunity to engage with the lesson material. They can set up useful group work routines, for example, upon the teachers' signal the pupils immediately formed themselves into groups, chose a leader, and set to work on the tasks assigned

In case of mixed-ability learners, the more able learners in the group can help the others to master the work so that the teacher need not teach some parts. The teacher needs to move around the classroom to see what progress learners are making and what problems are coming up. S/he can give advice, encouragement and extra individual help where it is needed.

Research has also promoted 'dialogic teaching' a concept elaborated by Alexander (2004) in both whole class and small class settings. Seen as being collective, supportive and reciprocal, dialogic teaching advocates more discussion among class members above the use of instructional talk, a cumulative approach to classroom talk, the use of more open questions, keeping lines of enquiry open and not closing interactional opportunities down and is said to achieve the best educational results (Alexander, 2000; Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachru, & Prendergast, 1997).

## 4 Conclusion

To conclude, this article can suggest that understanding and analyzing students' perception, motivation, and performance would guide the language teacher to come up with strategic and effective management in handling large classes to achieve the maximum learning outcomes and resolve the issues in language teaching.

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# A Sociolinguistic profile of the Kinnaura Tribe

Harvinder Kumar Negi

*Kinnaur is a remote region lying in the northern side of Himachal Pradesh, in India. It is inhibited entirely by the Kinnaura tribe. They speak Kinnauri language, one of the lesser documented languages of Tibeto-Burman family of languages. The paper illustrates sociolinguistic profile of Kinnaur and brings into light issues that affect language vitality like language use and language attitude.*

## 1 Land and people

Kinnaur, or *kanawaring*, as is locally known, is a mountainous district on the north-eastern side of Himachal Pradesh. The region is entirely inhibited by the *kinnaura* tribe, locally known as *kanawara* or *kanawaras*. In the ancient literature, kinnaur has been mentioned as the land of gods which was inhibited by kinners, meaning- demi gods or half god, half human. Due to the absence of writing traditions in the region, not much is known about the land and their languages.

Due to its rugged terrains, the region remained isolated from the outside world for centuries and it is only in the last few decades that it became accessible for outsiders. This geographical isolation provided an ideal environment for the development of an indigenous tribe that has distinct religio-cultural and socio-economic traditions, very much unaffected by the outer world. It also contributed to the development of several regional varieties of language in the region that exhibit varying intelligibility.

The inhabitants of Kinnaur show ample diversity in their religious, linguistic and socio-cultural practices, based on which, the region can be divided into three cultural micro areas; lower kinnaur, middle kinnaur and upper Kinnaur.

Upper Kinnaur lies along with the international border of Tibet. They speak a variety of Tibetan known as bhoti Kinnauri. People here are mostly Buddhist. Inhabitants in the middle and lower Kinnaur speak a language known as *khoshiaskad*

or hamskad or lower Kinnauri, also known as popular Kinnauri. People here are majorly Hindus.

Total area of the region is 6,401 sq. km., and the population is 84,298 (2011 census), with density of population being 13 per sq. km. The exact count of speakers, region wise, is not available but inhabitants speaking lower Kinnauri variety constitutes are found in majority.

## 1. 2 Genetic classification

Scholars have referred the language of Kinnaur region with many alternate names like- Kanauri, Kanauryanu-skad, Kanawari, Kanoreanu-skad, Kanorin-skad, Kinnaurayanu-skad, Koonawure, Malhesti, Milchan, Milchanang, Milchang (Sharma 88).

Kinnauri has been classified as the language of the West-Himalayish (WH) sub group of the Tibeto-Burman language family. According to the Ethnologue, Language Family Index Kinnauri has been classified as:

**Chart 1**

Sino-Tibetan
    Tibeto-Burman
        Himalayish
           Tibeto-Kanauri
              Western Himalayish
           Kanauri
                Kinnauri
Linguistic Lineage for Kinnauri (source: Ethnologue)

Popular Kinnauri is spoken uniformly from 'Chora' village which is the entry point of Kinnaur region, up to some villages in the Pooh division, in upper kinnaur. In between, there are few noted regional varieties as well.

Various regional varieties found in the region are listed as; rakcham- chitkul Kinnauri, shumcho which is spoken in the Kanam, Labrang, Spillo and Syaso villages of upper Kinnaur, Sunnam Kinnauri spoken in the Sunnam village of upper

Kinnaur, Kinnauri-Bhoti spoken in Pooh region, Jangrami spoken in the Jangi, Lippa and Asrang villages of Upper Kinnaur. The scheduled caste population of the lower kinnaur region has a language variety known as chamskad or Harijan Boli that belongs to the Indo Aryan family. The language family index of harijan Kinnauri is as given below:

**Chart 2.**

Indo-European

    Indo-Iranian

       Indo-Aryan

          Northern zone

             Western Pahari

                Harijan Kinnauri

Linguistic Lineage for Kinnauri, Harijan (source: Ethnologue)

Hindi has developed as the main lingua franca in the region, used for inter-region communications.

## 1.3 Available resources

The region lacks in literary traditions and thus oral traditions and folklore are the only source of information here. The place is full of myths and mythologies about the history and languages of the people. People here are very fond of dancing and singing. It is in this form also, that they have maintained their rich culture and traditions. In the recent times, education has spread in the region and people are starting to go out for employment and education. Of late, youngsters have shown interests in recording and releasing audio/ video CDs of the Kinnauri songs, in which influence of the dominating language 'Hindi' is evident. Hindi terms have converged in the Kinnauri songs too.

## 2 Methodology

The paper has been divided into sub-sections with each illustrating upon various facets of the language from a sociolinguistic perspective and highlights issues like language use pattern to bring out factors associated with language endangerment so as to propose measures to develop resources for language maintenance.

The current study is based on a field work that was conducted in the month of June in 2011. The data was collected in the Kalpa region of Kinnaur. Data collection followed the standard practice of questionnaire method, followed by formal interviews and self observations.

Medium for interviews and questionnaire was Hindi. With an aim to collect the representative data, samples were selected from different parts, across different age groups and sexes. There were total 150 participants, grouped in age groups below 22, 23-45 and 46- above. The grouping was formed to give equal representation to participants from each generation i.e. youth, mid- age and old age[1].

Table 1: Number of participants, with their languages.

| Site | Language | No. |
|------|----------|-----|
| Kalpa | Bhoti | 30 |
| | Popular Kinnauri | 20 |
| | Rakcham-Chitkul | 20 |
| | Shumcho | 30 |
| | Jangrami | 20 |
| | Harijan | 30 |
| | | n= 150 |

## 3 Language use and first language choice

The language use study was done to ascertain which language or variety of language do they use various domains. The main idea was to identify their attitude towards their language varieties. It was also aimed to find out the language used for inter-region communications.

As for first language choice, Eighty percent reported Kinnauri as their first language, followed by Hindi. For sixteen percent, Hindi was the first language.

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[1] Henceforth, researcher have used the terms youth, mid- age and old age to represent the grouping of participants in the study i.e. young < 22, 22-42 & >42.[1]

Table 3: First language choice

|  | >16 | 16-32 | 33-above |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kinnauri | 60% | 90% | 100% |
| Hindi | 38% | 10% |  |
| other | 2% |  |  |

In the test to identify language use domains, it was found that ninety percent older generation used Kinnauri at home. Sixty percent mid-aged generation used Kinnauri at home. Twenty percent among the younger generation used kinnauri at home. While with neighbors, seventy percent older generation used Kinnauri, thirty percent mid- aged used Kinnauri and the younger genetation used two percent Kinnauri when in neighborhood, while playing. Here, Hindi was the most preferred choice.

Table 4: Percentage of language use in various domains:

|  | Young | Mid | Old |
|---|---|---|---|
| Home | 20% | 60% | 90% |
| Neighbor | 70% | 30% | 2% |
| Market | 20% | 5% | 0% |

In market, place, Hindi was the most preferred choice for all three generations

### 3.1 Inter-region language use

Language used in inter- region interactions e.g. when a shumho speaker talks to a popular kinnauri speaker, younger and mid generation chose Hindi, while older genetation chose popular Kinnauri. It was also found that older generation knew more than one language varieties of the region. Also, many people knew popular kinnauri in addition to their own language variety.

Table 5: Language use among inter-region communication

|  | Young | Mid | Old |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kinnauri | 5% | 20% | 60% |
| Hindi | 90% | 75% | 10% |
| other | 5% | 5% | 30% |

### 3.2 Language education

Kinnauri is not taught as a subject in the schools in the region. Medium of instruction in the schools is Hindi and none teaches in Kinnauri medium. There is no writing system in kinnauri, thus no literature is available in local languages in the region. People read Hindi newspapers and magazines, and watch Hindi movies. No association at the community level was reported to exist to work on languages or the culture of their region. Local leaders mostly talked in Hindi.

### 3.4 Language identity

People were aware and feel strongly about their distinct identity. Though, there is an intergenerational shift in attitude towards their language, culture and customs. Older and mid generations feel strongly about their languages, social customs, festivals, dress and food habits. Among the younger generation, many are not able to relate themselves to the traditions and customs of the region.

Table 6: Language identity, with own language

| Choice | young | mid | old |
|---|---|---|---|
| languages | 5% | 70% | 90% |
| customs | 10% | 80% | 95% |
| festivals | 15% | 85% | 90% |
| dress | 10% | 75% | 95% |
| food habits | 15% | 70% | 80% |

When asked to mention their feelings about other languages in the region, majority was positive about other languages also. They knew about other languages and considered them one of the languages of Kinnaur.

Table 7: Language identity, with own language

|  | young | mid | old |
|---|---|---|---|
| polite | 10% | 60% | 70% |
| rich | 5% | 40% | 60% |
| pure | 5% | 70% | 80% |
| grammatical | 10% | 70% | 85% |

### 3.5 Language attitude test

This test was done to assess attitude of the people towards their language.

Majority of people felt that their language is rich, musical, expressive, prestigious and pure.

Table 8: Language attitude test: opinion about their language

|  | young | mid | old |
|---|---|---|---|
| rich | 40% | 80% | 90% |
| musical | 60% | 60% | 80% |
| expressive | 10% | 70% | 80% |
| prestigious | 20% | 85% | 95% |
| pure | 20% | 70% | 90% |
| Harsh | 10% | 5% | 2% |
| poor | 10% | 5% | 0% |

## 4. Language vitality

Kinnaur has become a bilingual region where people use one of their own variety of language along with Hindi. Hindi though is the main lingua franca in the region. Hindi is replacing kinauri languages in most of the domains though. Younger generations use hindi and watch movies, listen to music that are in Hindi. Though, they admit to have a positive attitude towards Kinnauri, still threat native languages are real. Hindi is language in markets, jobs and educational institutions. Even the kinnauri songs that are in the market in CD/VCDs have Hindi influence. Kinnauri songs are full of Hindi terms that show influence of Hindi.

Kinnaur has no script. Very little documentation has been done on the languages of the region. Due to lack of government support to promote native language and culture, domains of its usage are fast shrinking. Lesser number is learning kinnauri languages as their first language. According to the UNESCO language vitality and endangerment parameters, all the kinnauri varieties can be said to be unsafe.

Below is table that show result of language vitality and endangerment test.

Table 9: language vitality test

| factors | scale (1-5) |
|---|---|
| intergenerational language transmission | 4 (unsafe) |
| number of speakers | low in all |
| proportion of speakers within the total population | 3 (definitively end ) |
| shift in domain of use | 3 (dwindling domains) |
| response to new domains/ media | 2 ( coping) |
| available material for lg education | 0 (no orthography) |
| govt attitude | 2 (active assimilation) |
| community attitude for own language | 1 (few cares) |
| documentation | 3 (fair) |

Looking at all the (UNESCO) factors, it is clear that all languages in kinnaur region are definitely endangered, intergenerational transmission is unsafe, total number of speakers is very low, though there is good homogeneity of speakers in the region, domains of language use is are shifting, new languages are used in new domains/ media, no literary tradition is noted in the region, government support towards languages of Kinnaur is poor, only few community members support and care about the situation of their language, very little or no documentation is done on the languages in the region.

Like other tribal languages, Kinnauri too may lose much of its linguistic characteristics due to lack of proper documentation and government as well s community apathy. Among urgent measures, all the languages of Kinnaur should be documented and discussed among the scholars, linguists and researchers.

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# Tense in Dangaura Tharu

## Krishna Prasad Paudyal

*The Dangaura Tharu is a variety of the Tharu language spoken by the Dangaura Tharus living in the west of Rupandehi district of Nepal terai. This is the largest and most developed variety of the Tharu language based on the number of speakers, the literature available in the language, and the area it is spoken (Kharal 2064 VS:51). This paper attempts to deal with the morphological structure of the verbs in different tenses in the Dangaura Tharu. It has been organized in three sections with several subsections where required. The paper begins with a short introduction of the Dangaura Tharu and the language they speak. The second section discusses the morphological structure of the verbs in different tenses. The third section concludes the paper.*

## 1 Tense

Tense is the relation between sequences of events expressed by the verb and our concept of time. In other words, tense indicates whether the action took place prior to the moment of utterance (past tense), is contemporaneous with it (present tense), or subsequent to it (future tense).

The most common tense system in most NIA languages is past, present and future (Masica 1991:279). The Dangaura Tharu has all the three tenses, and exhibits distinct verb forms to indicate the actions in different tenses.

### 1.1 Present tense

The present tense markers in the Dangaura are *-t-,* an alveolar voiceless stop, and- *tʰ,* an alveolar voiceless aspirated stop, which are affixed to the verb root before the inflectional suffixes are attached. The tense marker *-t* is always used with the copular verb, whereas the *-tʰ,* is used with other lexical verbs as in (1 a-b). The inflectional suffixes *-ũ, -i, -o, -ya, -ə* are almost the same in all the tenses and are determined by the number, person, and honorificity of the subject NP.

(1)  a.  *həmrə səḍḍə iskul jəiṭʰi*

   həmrə  səḍḍə  iskul  ja-ṭʰ-i
   We  every.day school  go-PRE-1PL
   'We go to school every day.'

   b.  *ṭũ kisan huiṭo*

   ṭũ   kisan   hu -ṭ -o
   you  farmer be -PRS -2SG.MID.HON
   'You are a farmer.'

In the sentence (1a), the tense marker is *tʰ,* with the lexical verb *jaina* 'to go', whereas in (1b), the tense marker is *-ṭ* with the copular verb *huina* 'to be'.

A considerable point in the Dangaura Tharu is that it has three levels of honorificity in the second person: Non-Hon, Mid-Hon, and Hon, and two levels of honorificity in the third person: Non-Hon and Hon. The honorific form uses the first person plural verb whereas the mid honorifics have distinct verb forms for each person and number, as illustrated in (2a-d).

(2)  a.  *ṭəĩ kəlwa kʰəiṭʰya*

   ṭəĩ    kəlwa    kʰa -ṭʰ -ya
   you    lunch    eat -2SG NON-HON
   'You eat your lunch.'

   b.  *ṭũ kəlwa kʰəiṭʰo*

   ṭũ    kəlwa    kʰa -ṭʰ -o
   you lunch eat- eat-PRE-2SG.MID-HON.
   'You eat your lunch.'

   c.  *əpnə kəlwa kʰəiṭʰi*

   əpnə    kəlwa    kʰa -ṭʰ -i
   you     lunch    eat -PRS -2SG.HON
   'You eat your lunch.'

   d.  *əpnə hũkrə kəlwa kʰəiṭʰi*

   əpnə hũkrə    kəlwa kʰa -ṭʰ -i
   you PL       lunch  eat -PRS -2SG.HON
   'You eat your lunch.'

## 1.2 The past tense

Even in the past tense, the Dangaura Tharu has two distinct tense markers *-n*, in the first person singular, and *-l* elsewhere. The tense markers, *-n* and *-l*, are directly attached to the verb root before the inflectional affixes are applied, as illustrated in (3a-b).

(3)  a.  *məi kal^h bəzar gəinũ*

      məi     kal^h     bəzar     ja -n -ũ
      I    yesterday    market go -PST -1SG
      'I went to market yesterday.'

    b.  *həmrə kal^h bəzar gəili*

      həmrə    kalh bəzar    ja-l-i
      we yesterday market   go-PST-1PL
      'We went to market yesterday.'

    c.  *ʈəĩ kal^h bəzar gəilya*

      ʈəĩ kal^h bəzar     ja -l -ya
      you yesterday market go-PST-2SG.NHON
      'You went to market yesterday.'

    d.  *u kal^h bəzar gəilə*

      u kalh     bəzar    ja-l-ə
      he yesterday  market  go-PST-3SG.HON
      'He went to market yesterday.'

Here we notice that the tense marker in (3a) is *-n,* whereas in (3b-d), it is *-l*, because the subjects in these sentences are *məĩ* 'I', *həmrə,* 'we', *ʈəĩ,* 'you', and *u* 'he' respectively.

In all these examples, we also notice that the base form of the verb *ja* has been suppleted by the form *gə* in the past tense. The suppletion of *ja* by the form *gə* in the past is a common NIA feature which is also present in Nepali, Hindi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, and so on.

A special feature of infixing is noticed in the past form of the copular verb *rəhə* 'remain' in this language. The tense markers *-l* or *-n* is infixed between the two syllables of the base *rəhə* before the inflectional affixes are applied. Thus, the stem for the inflections is *-rələhə,* or *rənəhə* (see Paudyal 2067 V.S. for details). The examples are given in (4a-d).

(4)  a.  *məĩ kisan rənəhũ*

      məi     kisan    rə -n -hũ
      I     farmer    be -PST -1SG
      'I was a farmer.'

    b.  *həmrə kisan rələhi*

      həmrə kisan   rə -l-h-i
      we    farmer be-PST-1PL
      'We were farmers.'

    c.  *ʈũ kisan rələho*

      ʈũ     kisan    rə -l -h -o
      you    farmer   be -PST -2SG MID-HON
      'You were a farmer.'

    d.  *u kisan rələhə*

      u     kisan     rə -l -h -ə
      He    farmer   be -PST -3SG.HON
      'He was a farmer.'

## 1.3 The future tense

The future tense markers in Dangaura Tharu are *-h* in the third person, and *-b-* elsewhere, which are attached to the root before inflecting other suffixes.[1] The personal suffixes are affixed to the stem consisting of the root plus tense marker, as illustrated in (5a-b)

(5)  a.  *həmrə kal^h bəzar jəibi*

      həmrə   kalh bəzar   ja-b-i
      we tomorrow   market  go -FUT-1PL
      'We will go to market tomorrow.'

    b.  *ʈəĩ kal^h bəzar jəibya*

      ʈəĩ kal^h     bəzar   ja-b-ya
      you tomorrow market go-FUT-2SG NHON
      'You will go to market tomorrow.'

With the first person singular subject, a different inflectional suffix *-m* is optionally used. It is mutually exclusive with the regular vocalic suffix-*ũ*. The suffixes differ in that the vocalic suffix is attached to the stem consisting of the root plus

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[1] Masica (1991:289) considers that the future marker-*b*-which is found in many of the NIA languages like Marwari, Bhili, Bundeli, Braj, Awadhi, Bhojpuri and Maithili, is the descent of the OIA future passive 'participle of obligation' or gerundive, ' *təbya'.*

tense marker, whereas the consonantal suffix is appended directly to the root. No tense marker is used in this case. Thus, in the first person singular, we have two alternative forms, as illustrated in (6a-b).

(6)   a.   *məĩ kal^h bəzar jəibũ*

      məĩ kal^h      bəzar    ja -b -ũ
      I    tomorrow market  go-FUT-1SG
      'I will go to market tomorrow.'

    b.   *məi kal^h bəzar jaim*

      məi kal^h      bəzar    ja -m
      I    tomorrow   market  go-FUT.1SG
      'I will go to market tomorrow.'

Besides, the third person verbs inflect differently from the regular inflections. A non-nasalized high front vowel *-i* is used in non-honorific singular form, whereas a nasalized one is used in honorific forms irrespective of the number. Furthermore, a different tense marker-*h,* instead of -*b,* is used in the third person, as in (7).

(7)   a.   *u kal^h bəzar jəihĩ*

      u kal^h  bəzar    ja -h -ĩ
      he tomorrow  market go-FUT-3SG HON
      'He will go to market tomorrow.'

    b.   *u kal^h bəzar jəihi*

      u kal^h  bəzar    jai -h -i
      he tomorrow  market go-FUT-3SG NON-HON
      'He will go to market tomorrow.'

The difference between the singular non-honorific form and the singular honorific and plural forms is indicated by the presence and absence of the nasalization on the personal suffix- *i* (7a-b).

## 2 Conclusion

In the discussion, we have seen that the Dangaura Tharu has three tenses with distinct tense markers in each tense. The copular verbs in the present tense take a tense marker -*t*, whereas other lexical verbs take -*ṭ^h*. Similarly, there are two tense markers -*l*, and -*n* in the past tense too. The first person singular verb takes the marker -*n,* and the rest take -*l*. We have two markers in the future as well: *h* in the third person, and -*b* elsewhere.

## Abbreviations

1:  First person      2: Second person
3:  Third person   ACC: Accusative
CLF: Classifier     FUT: Future
HON:  Honorific    INF: Infinitive
LOC:  Locative     MID-HON: Mid-honorific
NEG: Negative     NHON: Non-honorific
PART: Particle     PL:  Plural
PROG:  Progressive  PRS: Present
PST: Past        REFL : Reflexive
SG:  Singular

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# Typology of verb agreement in the languages of Nepal

## Madhav P. Pokharel

*There are about a hundred languages spoken in Nepal, which can be grouped into four major families and a language isolate. The four major families comprise Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman (Sun, 1995), Austroasiatic and Dravidian. The language isolate is Kusunda (Watters et al, 2005). The Bodish group of Tibeto-Burman languages has no verb agreement. Indo-Aryan languages except for Darai, Maithili, Rajbamshi (Chris Wilde, pc) and Majhi (Dubi Nanda Dhakal, pc) and a few Tibeo-Burman languages like Newar and its dialects Dolakha Newar, Balami and Pahari have verb agreement with the subject. Some of the Kiranti languages and Bhujel show object agreement when the object is higher in animacy than the subject. Jumli, a dialect of Nepali, shows ergative verb agreement. Kusunda and some of the Tibeto-Burman languages like Dhimal, Baram (Kansakar et al, 2011), Bhujel (Danraj Regmi, pc) and Magar have subject-pronominalization (Bauman, 1974; Benedict, 1993; Nishi, 1995) while the Austroasiatic languages, Kiranti languages (LaPolla, 1995)in general and other Himalayish group of languages spoken mainly in the west and center like Hayu (Michailovsky, 1974), Chepang, Raji, Kham (Watters, 1973; DeLancey, 1988) and Byasi show complex pronominalization.*

## 1 Introduction

There are five basic patterns of verb agreement in the languages of Nepal. Two types of languages follow simplex pronominalization in that the verb copies pronominal Subject or Object completely or partially as an affix.

## 2 Methods

This is a typological analysis of verb agreement in the Nepalese languages. Major parts of the data for this analysis were collected on my fieldworks and interactions with speakers of different mother tongues. Some of the data are secondary.

Generalizations are based on typological comparison.

## 3 Nominative-accusative pattern

In this pattern the verb agrees with the Subject-NP irrespective of whether the verb is transitive or intransitive. Languages that fall within this group are Indo-aryan languages like Standard Nepali, Churaute, Majhi, Darai and Danuwar (Dahal, 1997), the Dravidian language Jhangad (Oraon), Tibeto-Burman languages like Magar, Dhimal (Khatiwada, 1999) and Newar with its dialects like Pahari, Balami and Dolakha Newar (Genetti, 1994) and the language isolate Kusunda (Reinhard & Toba, 1970; Watters et al, 2005).

### 3.1 Without pronominalization

(1) Nepali

    a. mʌ        a-ẽ
       I        come-1s.PFV
      'I came'.

    b. mĩ -le tʌ ̃-lai    dekʰ-ẽ
       I.OBL-ERG you-DATsee-1s.PFV
      'I saw you'.

    c. tĩ -le mˌ-lai dekh-is
       you.OBL I-DAT   see-2s.PFV
      'You saw me'.

(2) Churaute

    a. ʈhul-a       keʈ-a       a-ya
       big-PL      boy-PL     come-3p.PFV
      'Big boys came'.

    b. ʈhul-i     keʈ-i     a-i
       big-FEM girl-FEM  come 3s.FEM.PFV
      'Big girl came'.

    c. keʈ-i le   muĩ-kun      dekh-i
       girl-ERG I-ACC   see-PFV.FEM
      'The girl saw me'.

Verb agreement is found only in marginal cases in Majhi. On the basis of the limited data number

and gender agreement are missing from Majhi. Contrast on person agreement is also limited in negative forms,e.g:

(3) Majhi

    a.  tʌ̃        ba-budz-as
        you      NEG-understand-2sg.NPT
        'You can't understand'.

    b.  mʌ      ba -budz    -ũ
        I         NEG-understand-1sg.NPT
        'I can't understand'.

    c.  tshor-i  ba-budz-ẽ
        daughter NEG-understand-3sg.NPT
        'The daughter can't understand'.

(4) Darai

    a.  buɖk-a    manus ʌi-l-ʌ
        big-MASC man    come-PAST MASC
        'A big man came.'

    b.  buɖk-i    manus ʌi-l-i
        big-FEM  man come-PAST-FEM
        'A big woman came.'

(5)  Danuwar (Dahal, 1997)

Danuwar does not have number and gender distinctions in verb agreement, but it shows contrasts of person:

    a.  mʌ̃      nikh-siyo
        I         write-1sg.NPT
        'I write'.

    b.  tuĩ      nikh-tshʌ
        you     write-2sg.NPT
        'You write'.

    c.  u         dzai-tsho
        he        go-3sg.NPT
        'He goes'.

These data show that the agreement pattern in Danuwar is nominative - accusative. It does not reflect any clear trace of pronominalization although a linguist like Givon (1979, 1984) would expect so.

## 3.2 With simple pronominalization

(6) Magar

(6.1)    Palpa Dialect

    a.  ŋa      rah-a
        I        come-PT
        'I came.'

    b.  ŋai     niŋ ke  daŋ-a
        I.ERG   you ACC see-PT
        'I saw you.'

    c.  niŋ-e   ŋa ke  daŋ-a-s
        you-ERG I  ACC see-PT-2s
        'You saw me.'

(6.2) Eastern Syangja Dialect

    a.  ŋa      rah-a-ŋ
        I        come-PT-I
        'I came'.

    b.  ŋai     niŋ ke  daŋ-a-ŋ
        I.ERG   you ACC see-PT-I
        'I saw you'.

(6.3)    Western Syangja

    a.  ŋa ŋa-rah-a-ŋ
        I  I-come-PT-I
        'I came.'

    b.  ŋai     niŋ ke  ŋa-daŋ-a-ŋ
        I-ERG   you ACC I-see-PT-I
        'I saw you.'

    c.  niŋ-e   ŋa ke  na-daŋ-a-s
        you-ERG I-ACC  2s-see-PT-2s
        'You saw me.'

These data from Magar language show that there is subject pronominaliation (of different patterns) in both the Western and Eastern Syangja dialects, but the Palpa dialect seems to have lost pronominalization although agreement pattern is nominative-accusative in all the dialects of Magar.

(7)  Dhimal (Khatiwada, 1999)

    a.  ka-ɔ   na-seheŋ danai-ğa
        I-NOM   you-DAT beat-I
        'I beat you'.

    b.  nelai-ɔ   kelai-heŋ danai-su-n̩  a
        you.PL-NOM    we-DAT beat-2p-you
        'You people beat us'.

These sentences show that in Dhimal there is simplex pronominalization with subject

agreement. That is, it has nominative-accusative pattern in verb agreement. The examples also find it difficult to verify the claim of Grierson and Konow (Grierson, 1927) that Dhimal is a complex pronominalized language. Dolakha Newar (Genetti, 1994) shows simplex 'pronominalization of subject agreement'

(8) Dolakha Newar

    a.  dzi        wʌŋ-gi
        I          go-1sg.PT
        'I went'.

    b.  dzi-n    thʌn tʌ  kʰoŋ-gi
        I-EGR   you-ACC see-1sg.PT
        'I saw you.'

Kathmandu Newar also shows subject agreement, but it does not show clear trace of pronominalization. It also reflects nominative-accusative pattern in verb agreement.

(9) Kusunda
(9.1)    Reinhard & Toba (1970)

    a.  ci        paao     c-ingian
        I        tired    I-be
        'I am tired.'

    b.  nu       paayo    n-ingian
        you     thirst   you-be
        'You are tired.'

    c.  git      idaan    g-ingian
        he      hunger  he-be
        'He is tired.'

(9.2)    Bandhu (pc)
    a.  ci        kadi     t-amanan
        I        rice     I-eat
        'I eat rice'.

    b.  nu       kadi     n-amanan
        you     rice     you-eat
        'You eat rice.'

    c.  gi       kadi     g-amanan
        he      rice     he-eat
        'He eats rice.'

(9.3)    Pokharel
    a.  tsi      saŋ-di
        I       sit-I

'I sit.'

    b.  nu       haŋ-nu
        you     sit-you
        'You sit.'

With the very limited data like this it is not clear whether Kusunda had complex pronominalization. These data only indicate that Kusunda is a pronominalized language in that the subject pronoun is prefixed in the Gorkha dialect while it is suffixed in the Dang-Pyuthan dialect. Reinhard and Bandhu collected their data from Gorkha, but I collected from the Dang-Pyuthan dialect. This difference in the distribution of affixes may hint that Kusunda had at least two dialects when it was a language of everyday conversation. Prefixing in pronominalization is a less likely pattern in the contemporary languages of Nepal.

**4 Ergative-absolutive pattern**

In this pattern the verb agrees with the NP in the Absolutive case. It means the verb agrees either with the transitive Object or with the intransitive Subject. This pattern is found in Nepali dialects of Darchula, Baitadi, Bajhang and Achham (Subedi, 1994) and Chamling if the intransitive subject or the transitive object is in the second person. Otherwise Chamling is also a language with complex pronominalization (see Ebert, 1997b).

**4.1 With pronominalization**

(10)  Chamling (Informant: Bagdevi Rai)

    a.  kaŋa    wa banu-ŋa
        I-TOP   came-I
        'I came.'

    b.  khana    ta-ba-na
        you      2-came-you
        'You came.'

    c.  kaŋa    khana   lai      tʌ:-na
        I        you     DAT    saw-you
        'I saw you.'

    d.  khana wa kaŋa  lai      ta-tʌdu-ŋa
        you-TOP       I-ACC  2-saw-I
        'You saw me.'

Chamling data clearly show that the verb in this language agrees with the noun in the Absolutive case, but there are other morphological intricacies

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of person hierarchy and so on that I have not been able to crystallize. Yakkha (Ramji Kongren, pc) and Thangmi (Turin, 1999) also show similar pattern in a subset of data.

## 4.2 Without pronominalization

The following examples represent the structures without pronominalization.

(11) Dialects of Nepali (Subedi, 1994)

(11.1) Dialects of Darchula and Baitadi

    a.  mulya-i le mulya    lai   dhek-yo
        girl-F-ERG    boy.NF    ACC    see-PFV.NFEM
        'The girl saw the boy.'

    b.  mulyale   mulya-i lai ḍek-i
        boy-ERG girl-F-ACC see-PFV.FEM
        'The boy saw the girl'.

(11.2)  Dialect of Bajhang (Subedi, 1994)

    a.  keṭ-i    le    keṭ-a  lai  ḍek-yo
        girl-FEM  ERG  child-NF  ACC  see-PFV.NFEM
        'The girl saw the boy.'

    b.  keṭ-a  le    keṭ-i lai ḍek-i
        boy-NF ERG child-FACC see-PFV.FEM
        'The boy saw the girl.'

(11.3) Dialect of Achham (Subedi, 1994)

    mʌ kʌnʌ     tshoryaṭṭ-i ḍek-yai
    I-DAT       girl-F   see-PFV.FEM
    'I saw the girl.'

## 5 Complex pronominalization

This pattern is followed by a number of languages like Satar or Santal, Limbu (Weidert & Subba, 1985), Bantawa (Rai, 1985), Yamphu (Rutgers, 1998), Khaling (Toba, 1984; 1991), Yakkha, Thangmi (Turin, 1991), Chhiling (van Hoorn, 1999), Athpare (Ebert, 1997a; Neupane, 2002), several Kirantis (Michailovsky, 1975) and Maithili (Yadava, 1993; Bickel et al, 1998).

Limbu verb- agreement also shows the contrast of transitivity in that if the verb is intransitive, it is in the middle voice and if the verb is transitive, it is in the active voice (Weidert & Subba, 1985).

(12) Austroasiatic Satar or Santal

    a.  iɲ       gitiɲ-iɲ-a
        I       sleep-I-INTR
        'I slept'.

    b.  alaŋlaŋ        gitiɲ-iɲ-a-laŋ
        we.two.(INCL)    sleep-I-INTR-1DI
        'You and I slept'.

    c.  ʌliŋɲliɲ gitiɲ-iɲ-a-liɲ
        we.two.(EXCL)   sleep-I-INTR-1DI
        'He/she and I slept'.

    d.  abubun  gitiɲ-iɲ-a-bun
        1PL.INCL sleep-I-INTR-1PL.INCL
        'We slept'.

    e.  alele        gitiɲ-iɲ-a-le
        we (PL.EXCL) sleep-I-INTR-1PL.EXCL
        'We slept'.

    f.  am       iɲ-em  ɲelkid- iɲ-am
        you     I-ACC  see-OBJ-SUB
        'You saw me'.

    g.  iɲ       ɲelkid-mi-iɲ
        I      saw-OBJ-SUB
        'I saw you'.

Santal or Satar is a typical Austroasiatic northern Munda language with complex pronominalization. In fact a single verb form in the language is a full sentence if the SPEECH ACT PARTICIPANTS (first and second person pronouns) are in the subject or in the direct object position. In such a situation the verb carries all the information about the subject and object pronouns like their number, person, case and whether the first person plural subject or object is exclusive or inclusive of the listener.

## 5.2 Kiranti languages

(13) Limbu (Informant: Yehang Lawati)

    a.  kʰunɛ      pʰɛr-a
        (s)he    come-PT.MIDDLE
        'He came'.

    b.  kʰun-tshi pʰɛr-ɛ-ttshi
        3-du      come-?-du

'They two came'.

c. kʰɛn-tˢʰi kɛ-b̤ɛr-ɛ-ttˢʰi
   2-du          2-come-?-du
   'You came'.

d. an-tˢʰi   a-b̤ɛr-ɛ-ttˢʰi
   1-du      1-come-?-du
   'We two (INCL) came'.

e. an-tˢʰi-gɛ          a-b̤ɛr-ɛ-ttˢʰi-gɛ
   1-du-EXCL          1-come-?-du-EXCL
   'We two (EXCL) came'.

f. kʰun-i   mɛ-b̤ɛr-a
   3-p                   3p-come-PAST
   'They came'.

g. kʰɛn-i   kɛ-b̤ɛr-i
   2-PL                 2-come-PL
   'You (pl) came'.

h. aŋga      pʰɛr-a-ŋ
   I            come-PT.PAST-I
   'I came'

i.  kʰɛne kɛ-b̤ɛr-a
   You   2S-come-PT.MIDDLE
   'You came'.

j. kʰɛl-lɛ  kʰɛnɛʔ  kɛ-nis-a
   he-ERG you.S   you-see-PT
   'He saw you'.

k. kʰunɛʔ  aŋga      nis-aŋ
   he       I          see-I
   'He saw me'.

l. kʰɛnɛʔ  aŋga      kɛ-nis-aŋ
   you       I          you-see-I
   'You saw me'.

m. aŋga      kʰɛnɛʔ  ni:-nɛ
   I           you        see-you
   'I saw you'.

Begendra Subba (1999) has given about four hundred different verb forms in the Phedappe dialect of Limbu. The verb forms are complicated by difference in transitivity, POLARITY, tense, number, participant roles of subject and object nominals (see Bhat, 1998), animacy hierarchy, inclusive-exclusive contrast in the first person dual and plural forms and with variation in REFLEXIVE AND RECIPROCAL MEANINGS. Similar paradigms are found in (Weidert & Subba, 1985)

and (van Driem, 1987, 1992, 1995). Such a complication is typically found in verb forms of an Austroasiatic language like Santali. It is not possible here to note all such verb forms of a language with complex pronominalization.

Khaling (Toba, 1984; Toba, 1998), Bahing (Hodgson, 1857), Hayu (Michailovsky, 1974), Chepang (Caughley, pc), Bantawa (Rai, 1985) and Athpare (Ebert, 1994, 1997a, [32]), Chamling (Ebert, 1997b), Belhare (Bickel, 1996), Yamphu (Rutgers, 1998), Thami (Sanu Maya Thami, pc), Yakkha (Ramji Kongren, pc) and Chiling (van Hoorn, 1999) seem to have equally complicated verb forms. Taka dialect of Kham (Watters, 1973; DeLancey, 1988) and Thulung (Allen, 1975) do not have inclusive-exclusive contrast, but in terms of other categories involved in pronominalization they are similar to Limbu in many respects. Gyarong (Chin et al, 1958), Sunuwar (Bieri, 1975) and Khaling (Toba, 1984; Toba, 1991) also have complex pronominalization, but several of the complexing categories of verb that take part in agreement in typical Santal or Limbu are missing from these languages. Still less complex is the verbs of Kulung (Holzhousen, 1973; Tolsma, 1993).

## 5.3 Indo-Aryan Maithili

Maithili (Yadava, 1993) is a single Indo-Aryan language that has developed complex pronominalization. It does not have all the features of verb agreement relevant in a typical Austroasiatic Santali or a typical Kiranti language with complex pronominalization, but there are pragmatic factors that control verb agreement (Bickel et al, 1998). Except for a few syncretic forms, verbs in this language agree with difference in person and the honorific grade of speech act participants irrespective of whether the noun which denotes an honorable man to the speaker is in the nominative or in the oblique case. Sometimes, even in a situation when the esteemed person is not mentioned in the sentence, but if he or she is mentally present in the speaker's mind, he or she is able to control verb agreement in this language (Gaderi, 1997).

(14) Maithili

a. kaka    kʰel-l-k-ʌi
   uncle   eat-PT-3NH
   'Uncle ate'.

b. kaka    kʰe-l-khin
   uncle   eat-PT-3MH
   'Uncle ate'.

c. kaka    kʰe-l-ah
   uncle   eat-PT-2MH
   'You uncle ate'.

d. ke-kʌr          g̈  ʌr   cʰa-ik
   whose (NH)    house    is-NH
   'Whose house is it?'

e. kin-kʌr   g̈ʌr           cʰa-inh
   whose (H)    house       is-H
   'Whose house is it?'

f. i    okʌr       g̈ʌr        cʰa-ik
   This his (NH) house        is-NH
   'This is his house'.

g. I hun-kʌr          g̈ʌr    cʰa-etʰ
   this he (HON)-POSS houseis-HON
   'This is his house'.

h. ham tohar babu-ji-ke˜ dekʰa-l-i-au-nh
   I your   father-H-ACC see-PT-1-2NH-3H
   'I saw your father' (Yadava, 1993).

i. to˜ḍyan lʌgake    pʌḍ-l-ah-unh
   You (2MH.NOM) attentively read-PT-
   2MH-3H
   'Did you read attentively?' (e.g. for your
   father's sake)

In (17a) the verb form shows agreement markers
not only of the subject and object NP but also of
the possessive NP. In 18b the listener's father or
some other esteemed person was in the mind of
the speaker. The esteemed person may or may not
be in the sentence or in the speech act situation,
but he or she is controlling verb agreement.
Maithili stands out in this respect among all the
languages of Nepal. Bickel et al (1998) think that
the non-nominative agreement in Maithili is
controlled by the relations of 'face' hierarchy and
'empathy'.

Credit for the emergence of such an agreement
pattern in Maithili (Chatterji and Bagchi's 'Bihari'
in Chatterji & Bagchi, 1929) may be given to a

substratum influence of Munda language.
Chatterji and Bagchi (1929) write:¨

> Sten Konow...admitted that some phenomena of
> Bihari [Maithili], like the conjugation of verbs,
> the use of diffenent forms to denote an honorific
> or nonhonrific subject or object and the curious
> change of verb when the object is a pronoun of
> the second person singular can be conveniently
> explained as due to Munda influence.

Hook (1991) is also of the same view about verb
agreement with the oblique NP and other
irregularities in Marathi, which he thinks is a
substratum influence of Munda languages over
Marathi.

## 6 Languages without verb agreement

Languages of this group are Meche (endonym
Bodo) and the Bodish group of Tibeto-Burman
languages like Gurung, Tamang, Thakali,
Hyolmo, Chahntyal (Noonan, 1998), Sherpa and
Jirel. These languages do not have verb agreement
at all. Among the languages noted in this group all
except  Meche  have  geographically  and
historically close affinity with Tibetan.

## 7 Results, discussions and conclusions

In this typological survey of languages spoken in
Nepal we can classify the languages basically into
two groups, viz. languages that have verb
agreement and those that do not. Meche (endonym
Bodo) and the Bodish languages do not have verb
agreement. The rest of the languages have verb
agreement of one type or the other. The languages
that have verb agreement can be further classified
into two groups. In the one there are languages
that show Nominative-Accusative pattern, in the
other  there  are  languages  with  Ergative-
Absolutive pattern. Standard Nepali, Churaute,
Majhi, Darai, Danuwar, Magar, Dhimal, Kusunda,
Newar and its dialects like Pahari and Dolakha
represent Nominative-Accusative split while the
pattern found in Chamling and Nepali dialects of
Darchula, Baitadi, Bajhang and Achham has
Ergative-Absolutive split in a subset of data.
Among these languages Magar, Dhimal and
Kusunda show subject pronominalization, but
Chamling      possibly      has      complex

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pronominalization. If we follow Givon (1979, 1984) verb agreement of other languages could also represent historical development of pronominalization.

The rest of the languages in our data represent complex pronominalization. The languages that follow this pattern are Tibeto-Burman Thangmi (Turin, 1991), Austroaisatic Santal, Kiranti languages like Limbu, Bantawa, Behlare, Athpare, Yamphu, Khaling, Yakkha and Chhiling and Indo-aryan Maithili and Darai. Verb-agreement of Limbu and several other Kiranti languages noted above also shows the contrast of transitivity in that if the verb is intransitive, it is in the middle voice and if the verb is transitive, it is in the active voice.

Indo-aryan languages like Nepali (dialects), Churaute, Majhi and Darai show difference of gender and honorificity in verb agreement. Some of the languages of this family like Danuwar and Rajbamshi do not show contrast of gender. Maithili has gender distinction only in a subset of data, but it has developed honorificity with different intricacy and delicacy.

Verb agreement in the languages of Nepal show different grammatical categories like number (singular, dual, plural), gender (feminine, nonfeminine), person (first, second and third), animacy hierarchy, participant roles, inclusiveness of the listener, honorificity, transitivity, ergativity (DeLancey, 1981), role played by postpositions, obligation, volitionality, reflexivity, reciprocity and voice categories like active-middle or active-passive paradigms. Maithili stands out in its verb agreement patterns dominated by pragmatic factors.

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# A sociolinguistic study of the Balami dialect of Newar (as spoken in Chitlang)

Jyoti Pradhan

*This paper summarizes the findings and indications of the sociolinguistic study aimed at recognizing the language use and attitude, language maintenance and vitality, and the effort towards language preservation. The focus of this study is on the domains in which the Balami language is used. The sociolinguistic findings were based on questionnaires, interviews and observation.*

## 1 Background

Citlang VDC, located in the south west of Kathmandu valley, is confined by Phakhel VDC to the east, Markhu to the south, Tistung to the west and Toplang and Thankot to the North. It is a single VDC, which covers the whole valley. The valley is adjacent to south of Kathmandu valley at the back of Chandragiri hill. The VDC has nearly 9,138 population; among them the Newars hold about 6000 (61%). The ethnic composition of Citlang is Newar (61%), Tamang (13%), Kshetri (11%), Brahmin (8%), Magar (4%), and others (3%). By ethnicity of the Newars the valley has Balami (3,000), Gopali (1600), Gamal (1,000), Dyola (400) and others. (Citlang VDC 2062 (2006): 2).

Balami language is a Tibeto-Burman language of the Himalayan sub-group within Tibeto-Burman language group of Sino-Tibetan language family. Census Department investigators have included the Balamis within Newar. The Balami society is patriarchal in structure. They live in joint families in villages. However, those who live in towns are the exceptions. They follow Hindu religion. They have their own distinct culture, custom and traditions. Their main festivals are Mahachuni Jatra, Gai Jatra, Shri Krishna Jatra, Indra Jatra, Khadga Jatra, Kattik Jatra (masque dances), Mahalaxmi Jatra, Swacchanda Bharaiv Nya Jatra, etc.

According to Toffin 2008 and Mr. Punyaraj Balami, one of the members of the Rashtriya Balami Samaaj, the four main areas where Balami language is spoken are: 1) in the north-west of Kathmandu valley like, the villages of Kagatigaun, Dandagaun, Latabu in Nuwakot district; Balaju Baisdhara, Raniban, Sitapaila  2) the sector of Thankot (Thankot, Tekanpur, Baligaun, Matatirtha within the Kathmandu valley in the west); 3) The sector of Chitlang-Palung in the west (Majhgau, Kuchubu, Kabugaun, Taukhel, Ambudol, Barmutol, Tistung, Vajravarahi, Palung, Papung); and 4) the area of Pharping in the south-west of Kathmandu (Pharping, Thasigaun, Pulchwok, Hundu, Sokhel-Pikhel). Apart from these, other places where the Balamis are found are: Sirubari (Baglung), Bhaktapur, Pokhara in Kaski, and Tanahu.

Much of the findings from this research are those which many Balami people themselves are already intuitively aware of. This study may serve to consolidate the local people's intuition, and to encourage for preserving the various domains of language use.

## 2 Language attitude

The Balamis have strong positive attitude towards their language. They feel very prestigious about being the speakers of their native language. Because of the larger population size residing in the same vicinity their language vitality is very strong. The language is spoken by all the speakers exclusively by all the age groups in almost all of the domains. The Balamis are found to have been the very influential ethnic caste group in Citlang. The Newar speakers of the surrounding varieties who were involved in the administration of the sociolinguistic questionnaires, the (Gamals, Gopalis, Dyolas) can speak and understand Balami language. Almost all of the Balamis are literate. The Balamis have recently founded an organization called 'The Balami society' in Mangsir 2067. The responsibility of the society is to distribute one membership to each family as

well as to raise fund from each member family in order to run the society. The Balamis are very conscious about exploring their identity, history and ethnicity. They are eager to enlarge their domains of language use. The publications of the Balamis are: 1) the New Nepal page of *The Gorkhapatra* (a Nepali vernacular daily) published twice a month, 2) the quarterly magazine *Balami Awaaj*, 'voice of the Balamis' (launched on September 1, 2012). The magazine, which serves as the mouthpiece of the Balamis is to raise a common voice for the recognition of the right of the Balami society.

## 2.1 Domains of language use

The respondents have been categorized into two age groups: a) above 40 (A1), and b) below 40 (A2). There are altogether 20 respondents from each group. The data shows that except for the domain of counting and singing, cent percent of the Balamis use their mother tongue (MT). In the domain of counting 20% of the speakers use just Nepali, 80% use just mother tongue; while 20% use both mother tongue and Nepali. Similarly, in the domain of singing 30% of the speakers use just Nepali, 70% use just (MT), while 60% use both (MT) and Nepali. Majority of the speakers above 60 years are monolingual. Of them, almost all the women over 60 are monolinguals. Within the family, in the community, in the market, in the working environment the respondents above 60 use just their mother tongue. They use Nepali only to the strangers who come from another VDC.

## 2.3 Language vitality

For the study of language vitality a total of 40 Sociolinguistic Questionnaires (SQs) were administered from the Balami speakers of Chitlang VDC of Makwanpur district, Narayani zone. Responses to language vitality questions indicate the mother tongue proficiency of 100%. Cent percent of the respondents said that they use their mother tongue every day. When asked if their small children understand what their Nepali teachers say, 75% replied that they understand a little bit and 25% said they understand some. Since there are the speakers of Nepali, Tamang residing in the VDC the Balami children speak Nepali with the other ethnic group. Hence their second

language is Nepali. When asked about their proficiency in reading and writing their mother tongue 40% replied that they can read and write it very well, among remaining 60%, 40% replied that they can read and write some. While mother tongue literacy level of 20% is very low. There is the language transmission from parents and grandparents to the children and grand children. It is only in the school in the teaching environment and with the strangers outside the village they speak Nepali.

## 2.4 Language attitude

In front of the non-Newars the Balamis feel prestigious while speaking their native tongue. Of the total, 76% of the Balamis said that they feel bad if their children get married to the person who does not speak Newar, while 24% showed indifference. Cent percent of the Balamis are confident that their children and grand children will speak and maintain their native tongue. Similarly, cent percent of them said that they feel bad when they find the Newars of their neighborhood speak other language than Newar. Similarly, cent percent of the Balamis said that their language has not been undergone any change since their childhood.

In the appreciative enquiry conducted through the participatory method the respondents of different age groups expressed their desire to make Balami language the lingua-franca of the region. The educated Balamis wanted to produce dictionaries and literature of their own. If given the chance they can run a mother tongue education program.

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# A study of Manipuri V-*li*: Beyond progressive

N. Pramodini

**Abstract**

The paper attempts to examine the conditions under which the Manipuri aspectual formV-li takes different meanings. It is argued in this paper that, in addition to the traditional meaning of progressive, the resultative, perfect, habitual meanings are also obtained. This paper proposes that duration is an important factor that determines whether progressive or resultative or any of the said meaning is obtained. The account proposed is essentially an application of Simith's (1997) two component theory of aspect.

## 1 Introduction

Not much attention has been paid to the study of Manipuri V-*li* except the fact that it is a progressive aspect marker. This marker, in a way corresponds to English V-*ing* but unlike its English counterpart the Manipuri V-*li* as an aspectual form that has multiple semantic readings. It may yield progressive, perfective, resultative and habitual readings. This is an important issue to be addressed as how V-*li* is analyzed and viewed will have consequences elsewhere in the grammar of Manipuri.

Till now the multiple readings of V-*li* have been overlooked. This fact clearly becomes visible when V-*li* does not give progressive readings. The following examples illustrate this point.

(1) a. tombə cen-li
    Tomba run-PROG
    'Tomba is running'
 b. lairik    ta-ri
    book      fall-PROG
    'The book is there as a result of having fallen.'(resultative)
 c. ma həwjk phawbə       iroi-ri
    he now    till        swim-PROG
    'He has been swimming till now. (experiential perfect)

 d. oja        kharə-di  cət -khə- ri
    teacher some DET   go EVD li
    'Some teachers have gone.' (perfective)
 e. ma-di      yamnə waŋ-li
    he DET      much   tall-li
    'He is very tall.' (resultative)
 f. əy-nə    lairik-to  phəŋ-li
    I ERG book  DET got-li
    I got the book      (resultative)
 g. əy lairik-tu    yamna pam-li
    I   book DET    much  like -li
    I like the book much (resultative)
 h. ma-si  cət -kə-ni      haynə khən-li
    he DET go FUT COP  say    think-li
    I think he will go. (resultative)
 i. mi    si-ri
    man dead-li
    'A man is dead.' (not a man is   dying) (perfective)
 j. əy na ma- bu    khəŋ -li
    I ERG he ACC know-li
    'I know him.' (experiential perfect)
 k. ma yamnə noy-ri
    he  much fat-li
    'He/She is very fat.' (resultative)
 l. əy yamnə cok –thə-ri
    I   much exhaust-li (resultative)
    'I am very tired.' (not: I am getting very tired)

In order to resolve V-li's problem, this paper proposes an account. The account proposed is essentially an application of Smith's (1997) two-component theory of aspect which claims that the meaning of an aspectual marker is determined by how the inherent aspectual character of the verb-argument structure interacts with aspectual morpheme that denotes view point aspect. Even though scholars working in Manipur feel that function of V-li is not only progressive but there is something intriguing in its function. However, no serious attention has been given so far. Sensing

this complex situation the paper is an attempt to give a precise characteristics of the conditions under which different senses occur with aspectual form –*li*.

It is proposed in this paper that V-*li* has four distinct meanings 1) progressive 2) resultative 3) perfect and 4) habitual

It is to be noted here that the general meaning that –*li* conveys is 'focus on duration phase of a situation' and also that –*li* can be essentially characterized as durative imperfective. There seems to be an overarching meaning that depending on different parameters namely, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic, distinct and different senses such as progressive, resultative, habitual are instantiated. In this paper, I will propose that 'duration' plays a significant role in Manipuri in the analysis of the semantics of Manipuri –*li*.

The organization of the paper is as follows: After a brief introduction to the phenomenon to be explained, i.e., the semantics of –*li*, section 2 presents the framework employed in this paper, which primarily depends on the inherent aspect of verbs and its interaction with grammatical aspect markers (i.e. the two-component theory proposed by Smith, 1997). Section 3 discusses how different interpretations of –*li* arise within the framework proposed here.

## 2 The two-component theory of aspect

### 2.1 Inherent aspect

Smith (1997) proposed a general theory of aspectual phenomena, which relies primarily on the interaction between situation type and viewpoint aspect. I focus on how aspectual meaning is determined as a function of the interaction of these two components. First, I begin by summarizing the inherent aspectual classes, originally proposed by Vendler (1957), which correspond to what Smith calls situation type. Vendler's semantic categories of verbs are state, activity, accomplishment, and achievement. These are demonstrated with examples below:

| Categories of verbs | Examples |
|---|---|
| State | love, contain, know |
| Activity | run, walk, play |
| Accomplishment | make a chair, walk to school |
| Achievement | die, drop, win the race |

State terms (e.g. love) describe a situation that is, viewed as continuing to exist unless some outside situation makes it to change. Activity terms (e.g. run) describe a dynamic and durative situation that has an arbitrary endpoint; i.e. it can be terminated at any time. In contrast, accomplishment terms (e.g. make a chair) describe a situation that is dynamic and durative, but has a natural endpoint after which the particular action cannot continue. Finally, achievement terms describe a situation that can be reduced to a point on a time axis instantaneous and punctual. state are [-dynamic], [-telic], [-punctual]; activities are [+dynamic], [-telic], [-punctual]; accomplishments are [+dynamic], [+telic], [-punctual]; aspect classification, based on the temporal schemata of the situation described by the verb, nicely predicts the aspectual meanings that aspectual markers (e.g. 'be-ing' in English) carry. Note that duration is one of the key notions in this system.

### 2.2 Imperfective viewpoint and its interaction with inherent aspect

Aspectual markers denote viewpoint aspect, which conveys the perspective a speaker takes on a situation. Imperfective vs. perfective is one fundamental viewpoint-aspectual contrast found in many languages. Briefly, imperfective aspect expresses an internal perspective, and perfective aspect an external on (Comrie 1976). Imperfective treats a situation viewed from within, regardless of the beginning or final point of the situation. Perfective view the situation as a bounded whole, including the beginning point and the endpoint of the situation (Comrie 1976; Smith, 1997).

The meaning denoted by a progressive marker, which is a case of imperfective, can be predicted as a function of its interaction with the inherent aspect of the verb (i.e. situation type). In English, the progressive marking 'be –ing' normally has the

following meanings when combined with different types of inherent aspect:

**Activity:** action in progress
(2) a. He's running.
   b. She's playing the violin.

**Accomplishment:** action in progress
(3) a. He's making a chair.
   b. He's running a mile.

**Achievement:**
   i. process leading up to the endpoint.

(4) a. He's reaching the summit.
   b. He's leaving.

   ii. Iterative action-in-progress

(5) He's jumping.

   iii. Anomalous

(6) a. *I'm finding the book.
   b. I'm recognizing him.

**State**:
   i. vividness, temporariness

(7) a. I'm liking it!
   b. I'm thinking that he might be sick.

   ii. anomolous

(7') a. * I am owning a car.
   b. *I am knowing him.

As a type of imperfective aspect, the progressive aspect imposes an internal view (Comrie, 1976), unlike the perfective aspect, which imposes an external view. An external view disregards the internal structure of a situation, and presents the situation as a whole, while an internal view (i.e. imperfective) looks at a situation with a focus on its internal structure. In order to focus on internal structure, one needs 'duration' on which to impose an internal view. This is why both Activity and Accomplishment, which have duration, have the meaning of action-in-progress. Achievement, which is instantaneous and non-durative, cannot normally be viewed from within, since it does not have an internal structure. Therefore, for the imperfective viewpoint to operate, it needs to find some durative component in the situation it

describes. In (4a) and (4b) above, it is the process leading up to the punctual point of achievement that is focused on. In (5), since a single punctual action cannot have duration, it finds duration through repetition. In (6a) and (6b), it is impossible to impose a duration, and anomaly results. Finally, State cannot have an 'action in progress' meaning, since Stative is non-dynamic, and does not constitute an 'action. This explains why the progressive viewpoint is generally anomalous with state verbs, as in (7'a) and (7'b). However, when progressive marking is possible, the meaning obtained is 'state viewed as dynamic event' (Smith, 1983, 1997) as in (a), by dint of the dynamic meaning of the progressive marking. It often conveys vividness or temporariness of the situation (e.g. *He lives in Imphal vs. He is living in Imphal).* Smith (1997) proposes that the class of achievement which yields 'iterative action in progress' as in (1j) above should be treated as a fifth category, Semelfactive, which is punctual and atelic (e.g. *jump, knock, bang).*

The Manipuri aspect marker-*li*-shows an interaction with inherent aspect which is very similar to that in English. However, we find one crucial difference between English and Manipuri.

Activity: action in progress
(8) 'Tomba is singing.'

Accomplishment: action in progress
(9) 'Tomba is making a chair.'

Achievement: a. resultative state
(10)          bol    ta-ri
              ball    fall- li
'The ball is there as a result of having fallen.'
          b. iterative action-in-progress
              tombə –nə    thoŋ thin-li
          Tomba NOM    door bang -li
          'Tomba is banging on the door.'

State:          a. vividness, temporariness

(11)          əkhoy    tha    u- ri
              we    moon    see    li
'We can see the moon (at this moment).'
          ('We are seeing the moon')

It is seen from the examples that the significant difference between English and Manipuri is that Manipuri can refer to resultative state using the imperfective –li-, but to 'process leading up to the endpoint'. In imposing an internal view, English 'be –ing' can focus on the process leading up to the punctual point of achievement, whereas Manipuri –li- cannot. Instead, Manipuri –li- focuses on the duration of resultant state that obtains as a result of the punctual action. Thus, the literal equivalent of 'man is dying' in Manipuri (mi si-ri) means 'the man is dead'.

The advantage of the employment this framework in this paper is that this type of verb classification has been universally attested, and has been utilized in the analysis of diverse languages across the world. Smith (1997) presents comprehensive analyses of the tense-aspect systems of English, French, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, and Navajo. Moreover, the Vendler-type categories have been used in the analysis of many languages (see Smith). If this framework can be successfully applied to Manipuri, it has an advantage in terms of explanatory power-it can account for facts not only of Manipuri but also of many of the Tibeto-Burman languages.

## 3 The problem: The semantics of –li-

The Manipuri aspectual marker –li- has four distinct meanings: (a) progressive, (b) resultative state, (c) perfect, and (b) habitual

(12)  a.  tombə  isəy  sək-li
          Tomba  song  sing-li
          'Tomba is singing.' (Progressive)
      b.  thoŋnaw haŋ-li
          window open -li
          'The window is open.' (Resultative)
      c.  tombə  lairik əhum  i-ri
          Tomba  book  three  write-li
          'Tomba  has  written  three  books.'
          (Perfect)
      d.  tombə həwzik mətəmsi kar-nə skul    cət-li
          Tomba  these days car INST school go-li
          'Tomba is going to school by car these
          days.' (Habitual)

It should be noted here that the general meaning that –li- conveys is 'focus on the durative phase of situation', and also that –li- can be generally characterized as 'durative imperfective'. This overarching meaning is always there, and depending on the different parameters (syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic), distinct senses such as progressive and resultative are instantiated. In the remainder of this paper an attempt is being made to give a precise characterization of the conditions under which these different senses are obtained.

## 4 How are different senses of –li- obtained?

### 4.1 Progressive

The typical progressive meaning is obtained with Activity and Accomplishment, since both have dynamic duration.

(13)  a.  tombə cen-li
          Tomba run-PROG
          'Tomba is running'
      b.  tombə cəwki sa-ri
          Tomba chair  make-li
          'Tomba is making a chair.'

Progressive meaning can also be obtained by iteration of punctual verbs, i.e., when the progressive marker is used with a subclass of achievement verbs which Smith calls Semelfactives, such as *jump* and *bang* in English, and *thomb* 'hit' and *kawb* 'kick' in Manipuri.

(14)  tombə-nə  məpandə  bol kaw-ri
       Tomba ERG outside  ball kick-li
       'Tomba is kicking a ball outside.'

A case of marked progressive is stative progressive, discussed above, such as in example *əkhoy tha u-ri* 'we can see the moon (at this moment).

### 4.2 Resultative state

The resultative sense is obtained when –li- is combined with achievement.  As noted above, Manipuri imperfective –li- needs duration to impose an internal view.

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Therefore, for durative verbs (activities, accomplishments, and some states), progressive meaning is possible, but for punctual verbs, only repeatable ones that do not involve change of state (i.e. semelfactives) can have progressive meaning through iteration. In the case of achievements, which necessarily involve a punctual point of change-of-state, the imperfective –li- focuses on the duration created as a result of the change of state. In addition to the examples presented above (*ta-ri* 'drop' + *li*; h*aŋ-li* 'open' + *li*), unambiguous examples of resultative stative include the following:

(15) a.  ŋa    si-ri (resultative)
        Fish  die-li
        'This fish is dead.'
     b.   tombə nawbi khəŋ-li (progressive)
        Tomba   Naobi    know-li
        'Tomba knows Naobi.'

Thus, the conditions under which the two basic senses of –li- (resultative and progressive) are obtained are mutually exclusive:

Typical progressive meaning is obtained with activity and accomplishment (both dynamic and durative); iterative progressive appears with semelfactives (punctual and atelic); and stative progressive appears with certain State verbs. In other words, the progressive sense is possible if and only if the inherent aspect of the verb has duration or at least is repeatable to obtain duration. Resultative meaning is obtained with achievement verbs (punctual and telic).

### 4.3 Perfect

Perfect is argued to be derived from the basic sense of resultative stative, as noted above. If we assume Bybee et al.'s (1994) universal path of grammaticization, it is likely that diachronic change took place along this line in Manipuri as well, although it is yet to be documented by historical evidence, as noted above. Since grammaticization is gradual, and Manipuri –li- has both resultative sense and a range of perfect senses (experiential, out-of-sequence, etc.), it is

sometimes difficult to determine whether a given example of –li- is used for resultative or perfect.

*-li-* can also have a 'continuous/persistence' meaning of perfect, to denote a past situation which continues to the present.

(16) a. tombə  cəhi əhum məmaŋ- dəgi    ləy-ri
        Tomba year three  ago    from  live -li
        Tomba is living here since three years ago
        ('Tomba came here three hours ago and is still here.) (Tomba has been here since three hours ago.')
     b. Tombə puŋ  əhum məmaŋ- dəgi    cen-li
        Tomba  hour three  ago   from  run -li
        Tomba is running since three hours ago
        ('Tomba  has been running since three hours ago.')

The examples clearly refer to both the change of state of his coming that occurred three hours ago, and the current situation of his being here. Note that Manipuri –li- can denote perfect of continuation. In English, the literal translation of (16b) is anomalous (**Tomba is running since three hours ago*), and  the equivalent meaning has to be expressed by the perfect progressive (*Tomba has been running …*). The contrast here is a natural consequence of the fact that Manipuri –li- can denote both the progressive sense and the perfect sense.

### 4.4 Habitual

The habitual use of –li- is also possible with any verb class. There is, however, one important constraint on the habitual use of –li-. In Manipuri, habituality can be denoted by the simple nonpast form (-*i*)or the durative imperfective form -*li*. The difference is that imperfective –li- denotes dynamicity and/or temporariness. This can be exemplified by  examples below, which illustrates that simple present is more compatible with gnomic situations than is the progressive.

(17) a.  numit-nə  noŋcuptə ta-i
        sun ERG  west    set NPST
        'The sun sets in the west.
     b.   numit-nə  noŋcuptə ta-ri

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sun ERG    west        set
'The sun sets in the west.'

This is a generic statement. The same intent cannot be conveyed if  -li- is used (*si-ri die -li*), because the form conveys temporariness. This supports Yoshikawa's (1976, quoted in Shirai (2000)) suggestion that the habitual meaning of *–li-* is derived from its progressive meaning. Since progressive has temporariness/dynamicity, the extended meaning also has its temporariness as part of its meaning. Bybee et al. (1994) also claim that universally a progressive marker, which is originally restricted to referring to action in progress at reference time, tends to develop into a general imperfective marker by extending its reference to habitual situations. Presumably, as in the case of the resultative-to-perfect extension, the progressive use of *–li-* may have developed into habitual use, diachronically, although this has yet to be documented by diachronic data.

## 5 Conclusion

In sum, I have identified four different senses of *–li-* progressive, resultative, perfect, and habitual- and shown how they can be obtained in relation to its interaction with inherent aspect in Manipuri. The proposed account is based on the universal framework proposed by Smith (1997), which relies on a temporal aspectual contour of the verb-argument structure to which the viewpoint aspect marker is attached.

## Abbreviations

ACC         Accusative
COP         Copula
DET         Determiner
ERG         Ergative
EVD         Evidential
FUT         Future
INST        Instrumental
NPST        Nonpast
PROG        Progressive

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# Finite state approach to Nepali pronouns

Balaram Prasain

*This article groups pronouns in Nepali according to their formal behavior and implement to create finite state transducer for each group. All the finite state transducers are composed into a single one, which can analyze the pronouns in Nepali according to two-level morphology: lexical level and surface level. Devanagari script is employed while creating the finite state transducers. This article is divided into 3 sections. Section 1 discusses the characteristics of pronouns in Nepali; Section 2 groups them and designs the finites states for each group and finally Section 3 concludes the findings.*

## 1 Background

The pronouns in Nepali exhibit various characteristic features namely, person, number, form and honorificity. Each feature is illustrated from formal perspectives and corresponding morphological tags for each feature are assigned. Illustrations are in the IPA where length (:) and vowel (ʌ) in final position of pronouns are according to the standard written system. However, the finite state transducers are constructed for the standard written form in Devanagari script.

The theoretical framework for this study is discussed elsewhere in Prasain (2012) and further details can be found in Jurafsky and Martin (2000). Analyzed pronouns, along with morphological tags have been implemented into the computer for computational purpose using the Xerox Finite State Toolkit developed by Beesley and Karttumen (2003).

### 1.1 Person

Pronouns in Nepali have three persons: first, second and third. They are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Pronouns with respect to persons

| 1st | mʌ 'I', ɦami 'we' |
|---|---|
| 2nd | tʌ̃ 'you', timi: 'you', tʌpaĩ: 'you', jʌɦã 'you', |

ɦʌ̃dzur 'you', mʌusupʰ '(royal) you'

| 3rd | ji 's/he', jini: 'she', ji: 'they', tjo 'that', tini: 's/he', ti: 'they', u: 'he', uni: 'she', uhã 'he' |
|---|---|

### 1.2 Number

Personal pronouns in Nepali show two dimensions of number: singular and plural. The number feature in pronouns is also indicated by a plural/collective postposition -ɦʌru: but some of them such as mʌ 'I', tʌ̃ 'you' do not take any number makers. They have corresponding suppletive forms for the plural feature e.g., ɦami 'we', timi: 'you'. Table 2 lists the personal pronouns in Nepali with number distinctions.

Table 2: Personal pronouns in number distinctions

| 1st | mʌ 'I' | ɦami: 'we', ɦami:ɦʌru: 'we-Pl' |
|---|---|---|
| 2nd | tʌ̃, 'you' timi: 'you', tʌpaĩ: 'you', jʌɦã 'you', ɦʌ̃dzur 'you', mʌusupʰ 'you' | timi:-ɦʌru:, tʌpaĩ:-ɦʌru:, jʌɦã-ɦʌru:, ɦʌ̃dzur-ɦʌru:, mʌusupʰ-ɦʌru: |
| 3rd | jo 'this', ji: 'this' jini: 's/he', tjo 'that', ti: 'those' tini: 'those', u: 's/he', uni: 's/he' uhã 's/he' | jini:ɦʌru:, tini:ɦʌru:, uni:ɦʌru:, uhãɦʌru: |

### 1.3 Form

Pronouns in Nepali show two morphological forms: direct and oblique. When a pronoun is followed by postpositions, it changes into oblique forms. The oblique forms are found in personal, demonstrative, relative, reflexive pronouns; and sporadically in interrogative, definite and

indefinite pronouns. Table 3 lists the direct and oblique form of some pronouns.

Table 3: Forms of pronouns: direct and oblique

| Direct form | Oblique form |
| --- | --- |
| mʌ 'I' | mʌi 'I.OBL' |
| ɦami 'we' | ɦam 'we.OBL' |
| tã 'you' | tʌĩ 'you.OBL' |
| timi 'you' | tim 'you.OBL' |
| jo 'this' | jʌs 'this.OBL' |
| u: 's/he' | un 's/he.OBL' |
| dzo 'who.REL' | dzʌs 'who.REL.OBL' |
| tjo 'that' | tjʌs 'that.OBL' |
| ko 'who.INTERO' | kʌs 'who.INTERO.OBL' |

## 1.4 Honorificity

The second and third person pronouns in Nepali show five levels of honorificity. There is no particular honorific markers but the hierarchy is maintained at the lexical level. The honorificity in the third person pronouns is marginally marked whereas in second person pronouns it is not morphologically significant. Table 4 lists the pronouns in terms of honorific levels. The honorific agreement with the verb at the morphological level occurs only for non-honorific (level 0) and mid honorific (level 1) pronouns and other higher honorific levels (levels 2, 3 and 4) have the syntactic means for encoding the honorificity.

Table 4: Honorific levels in Nepali pronouns

| Level | 2ⁿᵈ | 3ʳᵈ |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | tã | jo, tjo, u: |
| 1 | timi: | ji:, ti:, jini:, tini:, uni: |
| 2 | tʌpaĩ: | uɦã |
| 3 | jʌɦã, apʰu:, | uɦã, apʰu:, ɦʌdzur |
|   | ɦʌdzur | |
| 4 | mʌusupʰ | mʌusupʰ |

## 2 Grouping of pronouns

Each pronoun in Nepali is unique in form and meaning. Therefore, they are treated and illustrated individually. However, for convenience, they are grouped in terms of their forms to demonstrate the finite-state network.

## 2.1 Personal pronouns

First person: First person pronouns have two forms: singular *mʌ* and plural *ɦami*. Both first person singular and plural have oblique forms. First person singular pronoun has direct, oblique, emphatic forms, and genitive: masculine, feminine, plural and emphatic forms. But, first person plural pronoun has direct, oblique forms and genitive: masculine, feminine, plural and emphatic forms. Table 5 lists first person singular forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 5: First person singular pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+1SG | mʌ 'I' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL | mʌi 'I' |
| PRON+1SG+EMPH | mʌi 'I' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+MASC | mero 'my' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+FEM | meri: 'my' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+PL | mera 'my' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+HON | mera 'my' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+OBL | mera 'my' |
| PRON+1SG+OBL+GEN+EMPH | merʌi 'my' |

The finite state transducer in Figure 1 (See in Annex) encodes the first person singular pronouns in Nepali presented in Table 5.

The first person plural pronouns in Nepali are presented in Table 6 with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 6: First person plural pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+1PL | ɦami: 'we' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+MASC | ɦamro 'our' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+FEM | ɦamri: 'our' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+PL | ɦamra 'our' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+HON | ɦamra 'our' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+OBL | ɦamra 'our' |
| PRON+1PL+OBL+GEN+EMPH | ɦamrʌi 'our' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 2 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the plural pronouns illustrated in Table 6.

**Second person:** The second person pronouns can be grouped into two classes. One consists of *tã̃* 'you' and *timiː* 'you' which have various forms for direct, oblique, emphatic and genitive: masculine, feminine, plural and emphatic. And, another group consists of *tʌpaĩː*, *ufiã*, *jʌfiãː*, *apʰuː*, *fiʌdzur* and *mʌusupʰ* which do not have any other forms. Table 7 lists second person non-honorific singular forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 7: Second person singular non-honorific pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+2SG | tã̃ 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL | tʌĩ 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+EMPH | tʌĩ 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+MASC | tero 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+FEM | teriː 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+PL | tera 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+HON | tera 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+OBL | tera 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+GEN+EMPH | terʌi 'your' |

The second person singular non-honorific pronouns in Nepali are encoded into a finite state transducer as demonstrated in Figure 3 (See in Annex) which is capable of analyzing and generating the pronouns listed in Table 7.

Table 8 lists second person singular honorific forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 8: Second person honorific pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+2SG+HON | timiː 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+MASC | timro 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+FEM | timriː 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+PL | timra 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+HON | timra 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+OBL | timra 'your' |
| PRON+2SG+OBL+HON+GEN+EMPH | timrʌi 'your' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 4 (See in Annex) encodes the second person honorific pronouns in Nepali and it is capable of analyzing and generating the pronouns listed in Table 8.

Table 9 lists second person high honorific singular forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 9: Second person high honorific pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+2SG+HHON | tʌpaĩː 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+HHON | jʌfiãː 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+HHON | ufiã 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+HHON | wʌfiã 'you' |
| PRON+2SG+HHON | fiʌdzur 'you' |

The finite state transducer demonstrated in Figure 5 (See in Annex) encodes the second person high honorific pronouns in Nepal and it is capable of analyzing and generating the pronouns listed in Table 9.

A second person royal honorific pronoun in Nepali is given in Table 10 with its corresponding morphological tags.

Table 10: Second person royal honorific pronoun

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+2SG+RHON | mʌusupʰʌ 'you.RHON' |

The finite state transducer in Figure 6 (See in Annex) encodes the royal honorific pronoun and it is capable of analyzing and generating it.

**Third person:** The third person pronouns can be grouped into three distinct sets. The first one is *uː* and its various forms. *uː* inflects for form: direct and oblique, honorificity: non-honorific and honorific; and emphatic. Table 11 lists the pronoun *uː* and its various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

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Table 11: Third person pronoun *u:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+3SG | u: 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+EMPH | uɦii: 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL | usʌ 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+EMPH | usʌ 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+HON | uni: 'she' |
| PRON+3SG+HON+OBL | unʌ 'she' |
| PRON+3SG+HON+OBL+EMPH | unʌ 'she' |
| PRON+3SG+HON | uɦã 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+HON | wʌɦã 's/he' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 7 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the third person pronoun *u:* and its various forms illustrated in Table 11.

The second one is *tjo*, *ti:* and their various forms. *tjo* and *ti:* inflect for form: direct and oblique, honorificity: non-honorific and honorific and emphatic. Table 12 lists the pronouns *tjo*, *ti:* and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 12: Third person pronouns *tjo* and *ti:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+3SG+DIST | tjo 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+DIST+EMPH | tjʌɦii: 'he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL | tjʌsʌ 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+EMPH | tjʌsʌi 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+HON+DIST | ti: 's/he' |
| PRON+3PL+DIST | ti: 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+HON+DIST | tini: 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+HON+DIST | tinʌ 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+HON+DIST+EMPH | tinʌi 's/he' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 8 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the third person pronouns *tjo*, *ti:* and their various forms illustrated in Table 12.

The third one is *jo* and *ji:* and their various forms. *jo* and *ji:* inflect for form: direct and oblique, honorificity: non-honorific and honorific and emphatic. Table 13 lists the pronouns *jo* and *ji:* and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 13: Third person pronouns *jo* and *ji:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+3SG+PROX | jo 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+PROX+EMPH | jʌɦii 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+PROX | jʌsʌ 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+OBL+PROX+EMPH | jʌsʌi 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+PROX+HON | ji: 's/he' |
| PRON+3PL+PROX | ji: 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+PROX+HON | jini: 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+PROX+OBL+HON | jinʌ 's/he' |
| PRON+3SG+PROX+OBL+HON+EMPH | jinʌi 's/he' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 9 encodes the pronouns listed in Table 13 and it is capable of analyzing and generating the third person pronouns *jo*, *ji:* and their various forms illustrated in Table 13.

**b. Reflexive pronoun**

There is a single reflexive pronoun *apʰu:* 'self' in Nepali. However, it has various forms. It inflects for form: direct and oblique, genitive case: singular, plural, honorific, oblique and feminine, and emphatic. Table 14 lists *apʰu:* 'self' and its various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 14: The reflexive pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+REFL | apʰu: 'self' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+EMPH | apʰʌi 'self' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+EMPH | apʰʌĩ 'self' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+SG | apʰno 'own' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+PL | apʰna 'own' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+HON | apʰna 'own' |

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+OBL | apʰna 'own' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+FEM | apʰni: 'own' |
| PRON+REFL+OBL+GEN+EMPH | apʰnʌi 'own' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 10 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the reflexive pronoun *apʰu:* and its various forms illustrated in Table 14.

### c. Demonstrative pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns can be grouped into four distinct sets. The first one is *jo* and *ji:* and their various forms. *jo* and *ji:* inflect for form: direct and oblique and emphatic. Table 15 lists the demonstrative pronouns *jo* and *ji:* and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 15: The demonstrative pronouns *jo* and *ji:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+DEM+PROX | jo 'this' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+EMPH | jʌɦii: 'this one' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX | ji: 'these' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+HON | jini: 'these' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+OBL | jinʌ 'these' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+OBL+EMPH | jinʌi 'these ones' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+HON | jʌɦiã 'you' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 11 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the demonstrative pronouns *jo*, *ji:* and their various forms illustrated in Table 15.

The second one is *tjo* and *ti:* and their various forms. *tjo* and *ti:* inflect for form: direct and oblique; and emphatic. Table 16 lists the demonstrative pronouns *tjo* and *ti:* and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 16: The demonstrative pronouns *tjo* and *ti:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+DEM+DIST | tjo 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+EMPH | tjʌɦii: 'that one' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST | ti: 'those' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+OBL+HON | tini: 'those' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+OBL | tinʌ 'those' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+OBL+EMPH | tinʌi 'those' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 12 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the demonstrative pronouns *tjo* and *ti:* and their various forms illustrated in Table 16.

The third one is *u:* and its various forms. *u:* inflects for form: direct and oblique, and emphatic. Table 17 lists the pronoun *u:* and its various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 17: The demonstrative pronouns *u:*

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+DEM+DIST | u 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+EMPH | uɦii: 'that same' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+HON | uni: 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+OBL | unʌ 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+OBL+EMPH | unʌi 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+HON | uɦiã 'there' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+HON | wʌɦiã 'there' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 13 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the demonstrative pronouns *u:* and its various forms illustrated in Table 17.

The fourth one is remaining demonstratives and their various forms that inflect only for emphatic. Table 18 lists the remaining demonstrative pronouns and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 18: The remaining demonstrative pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+DEM+DIST | so 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+DIST+EMPH | soɦii 'that' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX | nidzʌ 'him/her' |
| PRON+DEM+PROX+EMPH | nidzʌi 'him/her' |

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+DEM+PROX | uktʌ 'that' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 14 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the remaining demonstrative pronouns and their various forms illustrated in Table 18.

### d. Relative pronouns

There are three relative pronouns *dzo*, *dze* and *dzunʌ* in Nepali. These relative pronouns inflect only for oblique and emphatic forms. Table 19 lists relative pronouns and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 19: The relative pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+REL+HUM | dzo 'who' |
| PRON+REL+OBL+HUM | dzʌsʌ 'who' |
| PRON+REL+OBL+HUM+EMPH | dzʌsʌi 'who' |
| PRON+REL+NHUM | dze 'which' |
| PRON+REL | dzunʌ 'which' |
| PRON+REL+EMPH | dzunʌi 'which' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 15 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the relative pronouns and their various forms illustrated in Table 19.

### e. Interrogative pronouns

There are three interrogative pronouns *ko*, *ke* and *kunʌ* in Nepali. But, two adverbs which act as interrogative form *kinə* and *kəsəriː* are also included here. These interrogative pronouns inflect only for oblique and emphatic forms. Table 20 lists relative pronouns and their various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 20: The interrogative pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+INTERRO+HUM | ko 'who' |
| PRON+INTERRO+HUM+OBL | kʌs 'who' |
| PRON+INTERRO+HUM+OBL | kʌsʌi 'who' |
| PRON+INTERRO+NHUM | ke 'what' |
| PRON+INTERRO | kun 'which' |
| PRON+INTERRO | kinʌ 'why' |
| PRON+INTERRO | kʌsʌri 'how' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 16 (See in Annex) is capable to analyze and generate the relative pronouns and their various forms illustrated in Table 20.

### f. Indefinite pronouns

The indefinite pronouns are derived from interrogative and relative pronouns. The indefinite pronouns derived from interrogative pronouns take *ɦiː* and *ʌi* as an emphatic marker. And, those derived pronouns from relative pronouns take *sukʌi* as an emphatic marker. Table 21 lists indefinite pronouns derived from interrogative pronouns with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 21: The indefinite pronouns derived from interrogative pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+INDEF+HUM | koɦii 'someone' |
| PRON+INDEF+NHUM | keɦii 'something' |
| PRON+INDEF+NEU | kunʌi 'anything' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 17 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the indefinite pronouns listed in Table 21.

Table 22 lists indefinite pronouns derived from relative pronouns with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 22: The indefinite pronouns derived from relative pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
|---|---|
| PRON+INDEF+HUM | dzosukʌi 'whoever' |
| PRON+INDEF+NHUM | dzesukʌi 'whatever' |
| PRON+INDEF+NEU | dzunsukʌi 'whichever' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 18 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the indefinite pronouns and their various forms illustrated in Table 22.

### g. Definite pronouns

There is a small set of definite pronouns, which does not show any kind of inflections except ʌrko.

ʌrko inflects for number, honorificity and form: oblique. Table 23 lists the definite pronouns with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 23: The definite pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+DEF | prʌtekʌ 'everyone' |
| PRON+DEF | hʌrekʌ 'each one' |
| PRON+DEF | sʌbʌi 'all' |
| PRON+DEF | ʌru: 'other' |

The finite state transducer in Figure 19 (See in Annex) encodes the definite pronouns listed in Table 23 and it is capable of analyzing and generating those pronouns.

The definite pronoun along with its various forms and their corresponding morphological tags are listed in Table 24.

Table 24: The definite pronoun

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+DEF+SG | ʌrko 'another' |
| PRON+DEF+PL | ʌrka 'another' |
| PRON+DEF+HON | ʌrka 'another' |
| PRON+DEF+OBL | ʌrka 'another' |
| PRON+DEF+FEM | ʌrki: 'another' |
| PRON+DEF+EMPH | ʌrkʌi 'another' |

The definite pronoun ʌrko and its various forms listed in Table 24 have been compiled into a finite state transducer as demonstrated in Figure 20 (See in Annex) and it is capable of analyzing and generating them.

**h. Reciprocal pronouns**

The reciprocal pronouns in Nepali are compound forms except one, i.e., apʌsʌ. A reciprocal pronoun ekʌʌrko 'each other' inflect for form: oblique, honorificity, number: plural and gender: feminine. Table 25 lists the reciprocal pronoun ekʌrko and its various forms with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 25: The reciprocal pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+RECIP | ekʌrko 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP+OBL | ekʌrka 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP+HON | ekʌrka 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP+PL | ekʌrka 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP+FEM | ekʌrki: 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP+EMPH | ekʌrkʌi 'each other' |

The finite state transducer demonstrated in Figure 21 (See in Annex) encodes the reciprocal pronouns listed in Table 25 and is capable of analyzing and generating them.

Some other reciprocal pronouns are listed in Table 26 with their corresponding morphological tags.

Table 26: The reciprocal pronouns

| Morphological Tags | IPA/Gloss |
| --- | --- |
| PRON+RECIP | ekapʌs 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP | apʌs 'each other' |
| PRON+RECIP | aphu: 'each other' |

The finite state transducer illustrated in Figure 22 (See in Annex) is capable of analyzing and generating the reciprocal pronouns and their various forms illustrated in Table 26.

The individual finite state transducers (from Figure 1 to Figure 22 (See Annex)) are composed using a composition operator .o. and a single finite state transducer is created which can be used as a morphological analyzer and a generator.

**3 Conclusion**

According to the characteristic features of pronouns in Nepali, they are grouped into 20 classes and individual finite state transducers are created in Devanagari scripti (See in Annex). Finally, these 20 finite state transducers are composed into single finite state transducer using composition operation; which can analyze and generate pronouns in Nepali.

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**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | First person |
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |
| PRON | Pronoun |
| OBL | Oblique |
| SG | Singular |
| EMPH | Emphatic |
| GEN | Genitive |
| MASC | Masculine |
| FEM | Feminine |
| PL | Plural |
| HON | Honorific |
| HHON | High honorific |
| RHON | Royal honorific |
| DIST | Distal |
| PROX | Proximal |
| REFL | Reflexive |
| DEM | Demonstrative |
| HUM | Human |
| REL | Relative |
| NHUM | Non-human |
| INTERRO | Interrogative |
| INDEF | Indefinite |
| NEU | Neutral |
| RECIP | Reciprocal |

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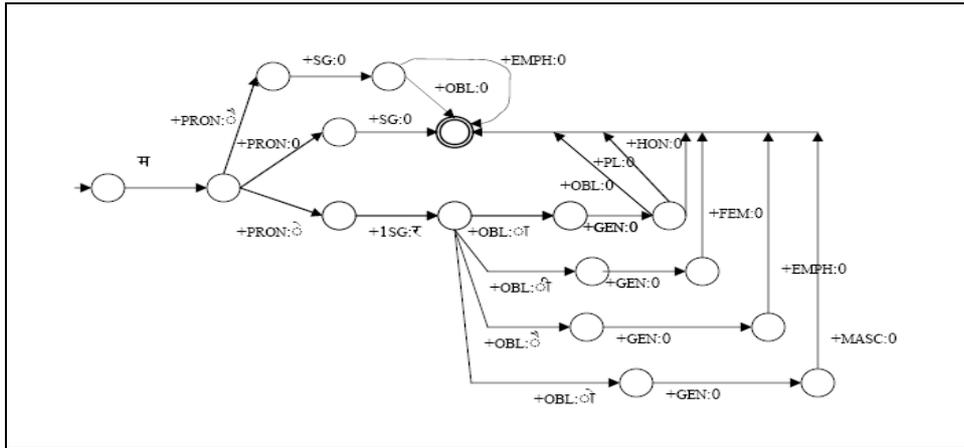
Figure 1: A finite state transducer for first person singular pronouns
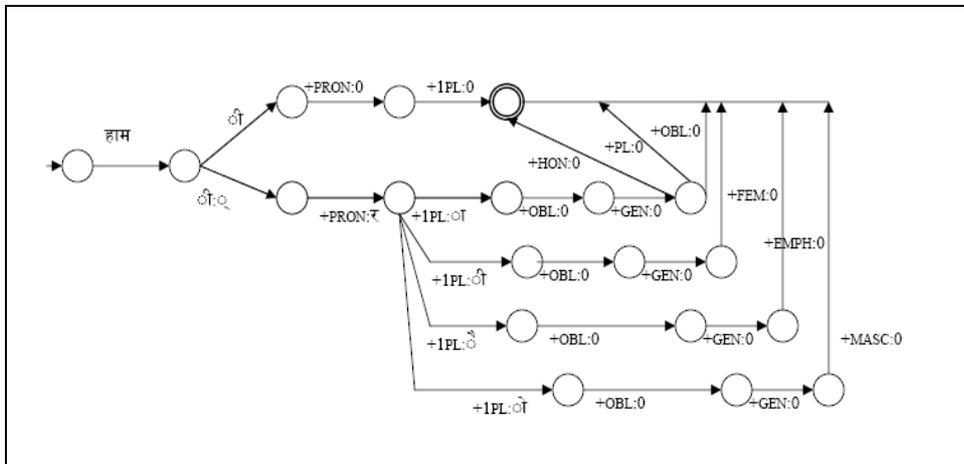


Figure 2: A finite state transducer for first person plural pronouns

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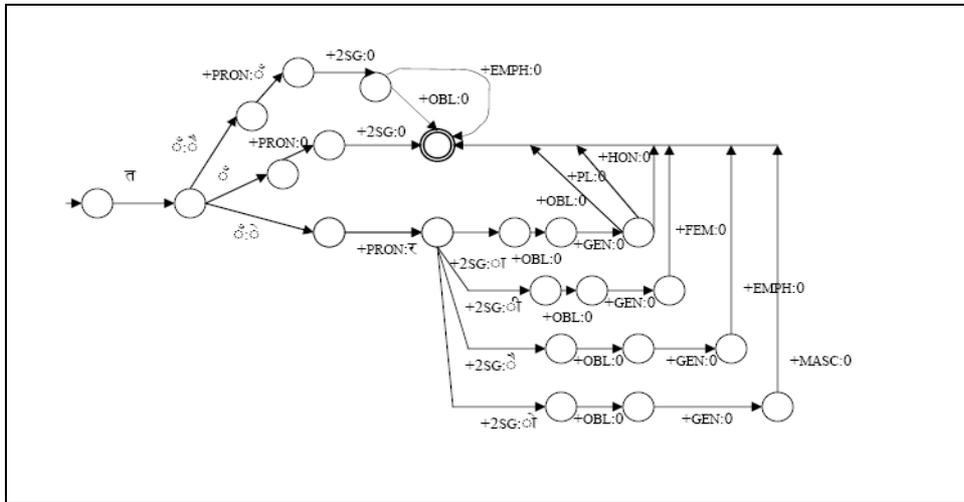
Figure 3: A finite state transducer for second person singular non-honorific pronouns

.
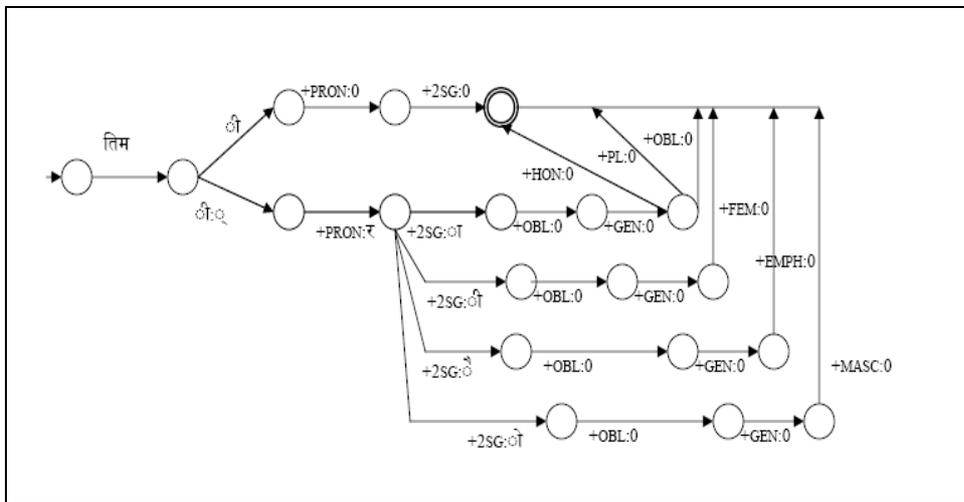


Figure 4: A finite state transducer for second person honorific pronouns
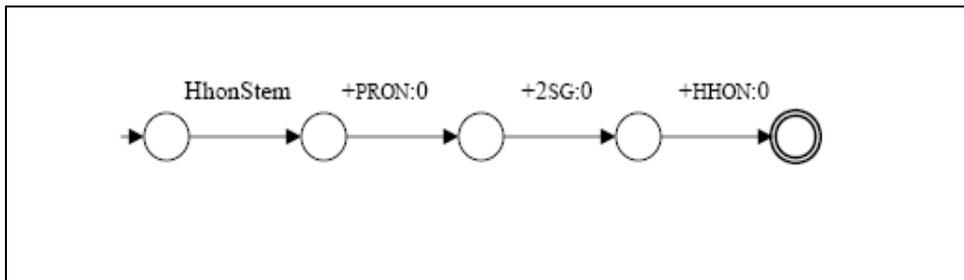


Figure 5: A finite state transducer for second person higher honorific pronouns

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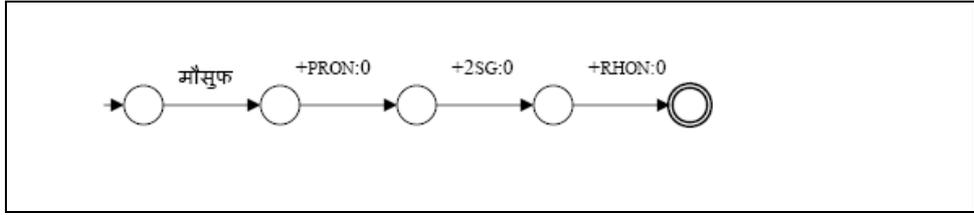
Figure 6: A finite state transducer for second person highest honorific pronoun
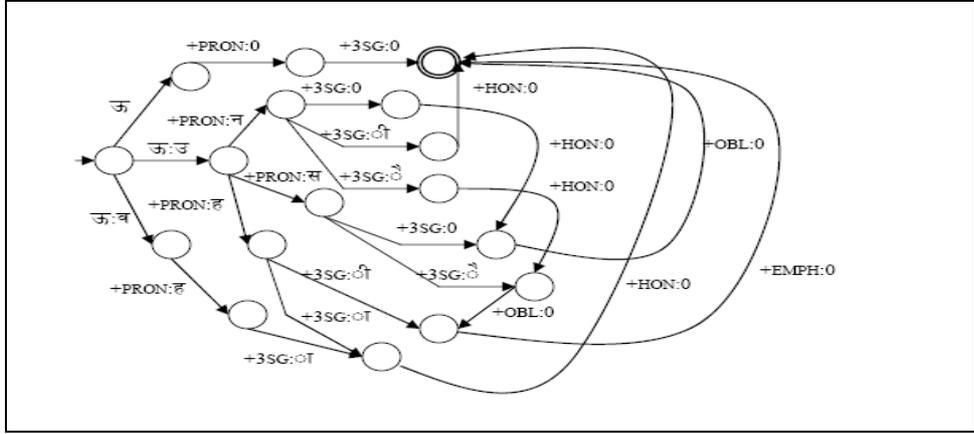


Figure 7: A finite state transducer for third person *uː*
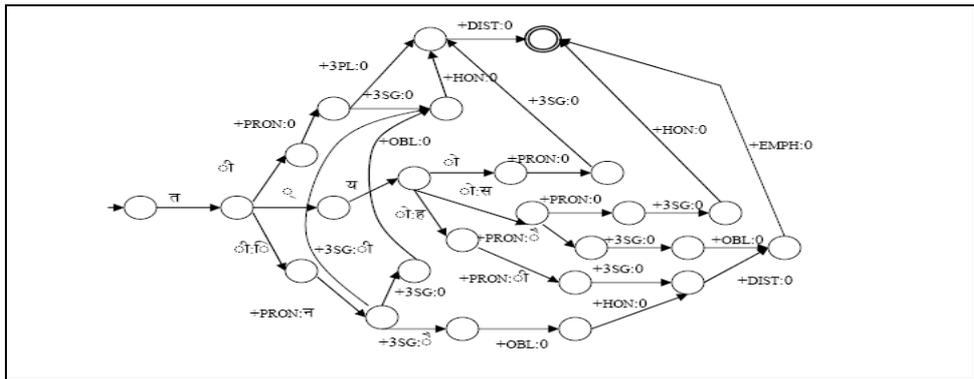


Figure 8: A finite state transducer for third person pronouns *tjo* and *tiː*
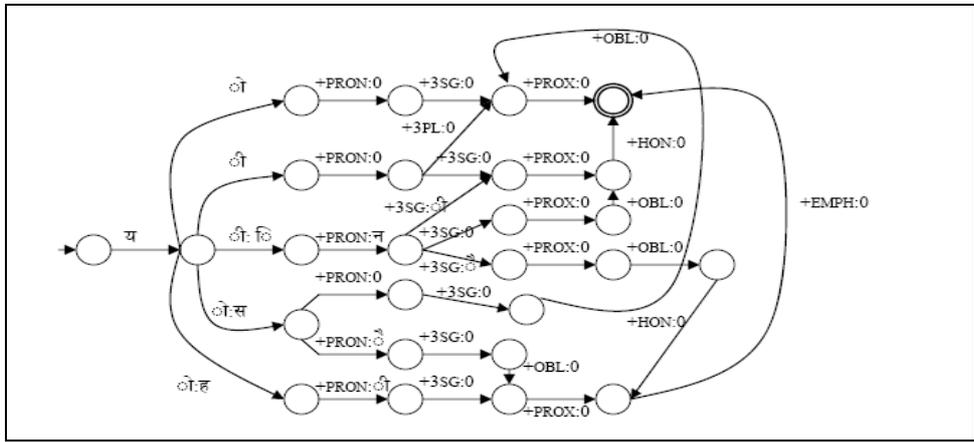
Figure 9: A finite state transducer for third person pronouns *jo* and *ji:*
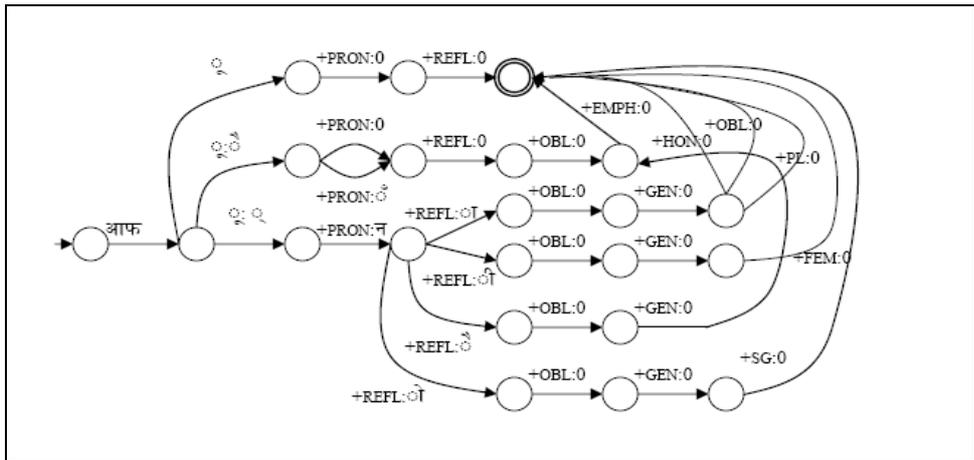


Figure 10: A finite state transducer for reflexive pronouns
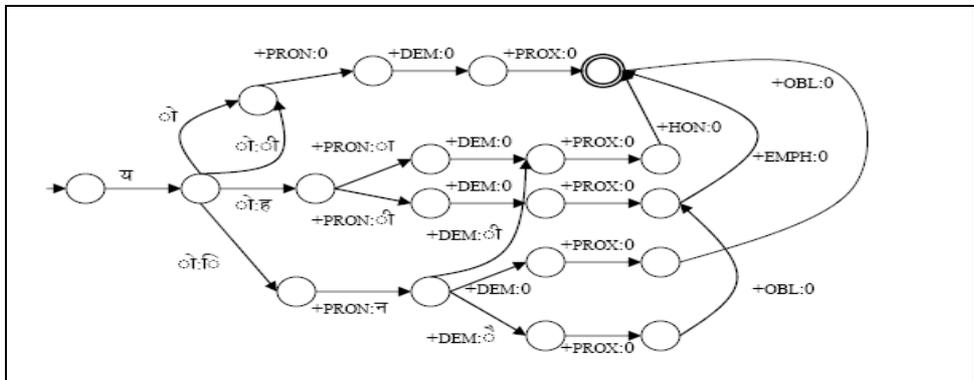


Figure 11: A finite state transducer for demonstrative pronouns *jo* and *ji:*
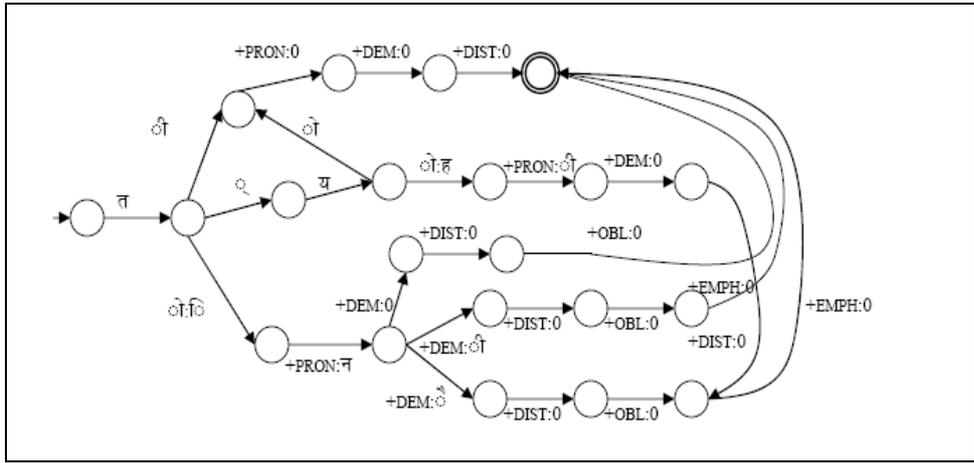
Figure 12: A finite state transducer for demonstrative pronouns *tjo* and *ti:*
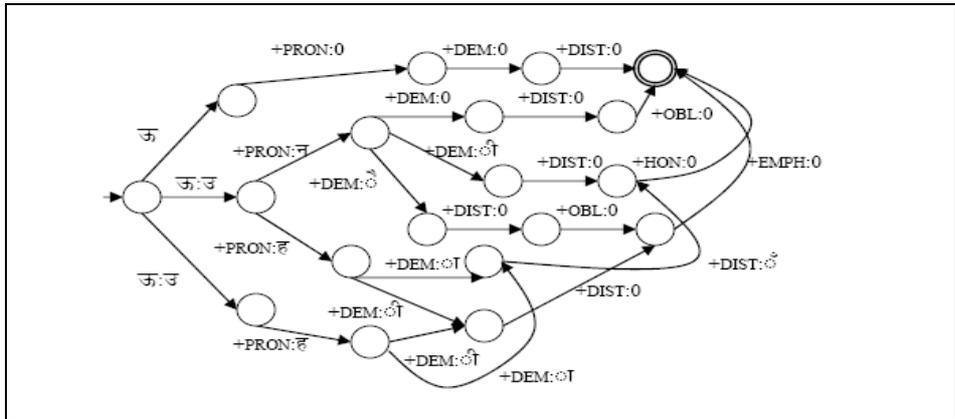


Figure 13: A finite state transducer for demonstrative pronouns *u:*
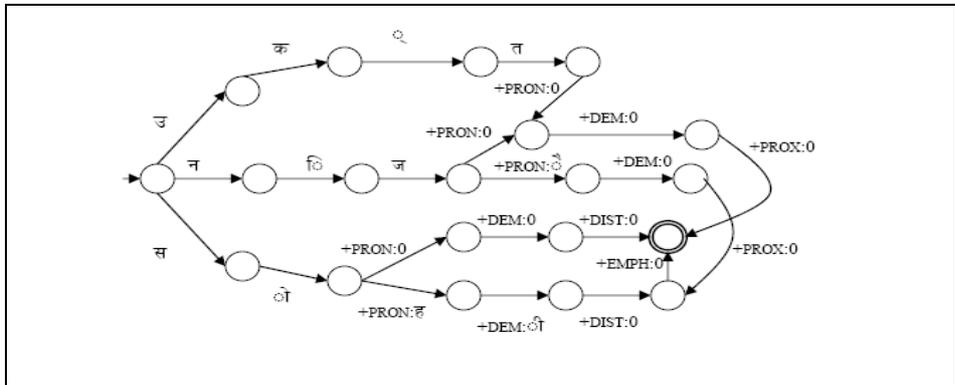


Figure 14: A finite state transducer for remaining demonstrative pronouns

Figure 15: A finite state transducer for relative pronouns



Figure 16: A finite state transducer for interrogative pronouns



Figure 17: A finite state transducer for indefinite pronouns derived from interrogative pronouns
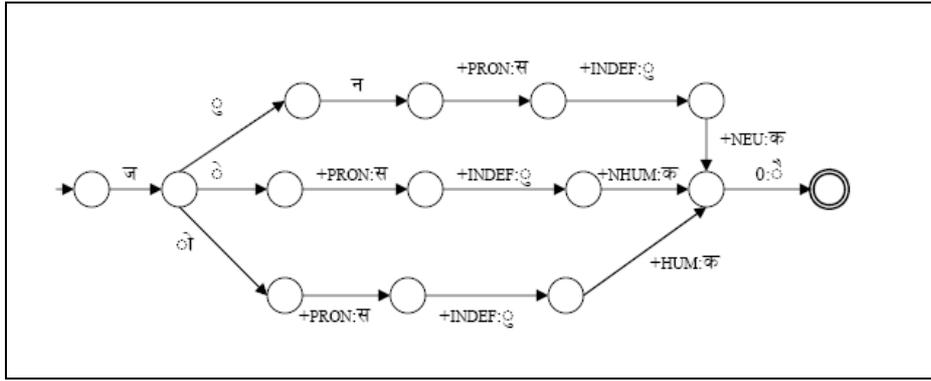
Figure 18: A finite state transducer for indefinite pronouns derived from relative pronouns
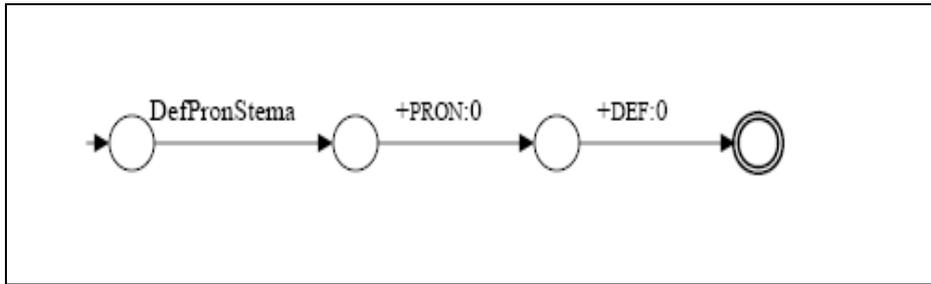


Figure 19: A finite state transducer for definite pronouns
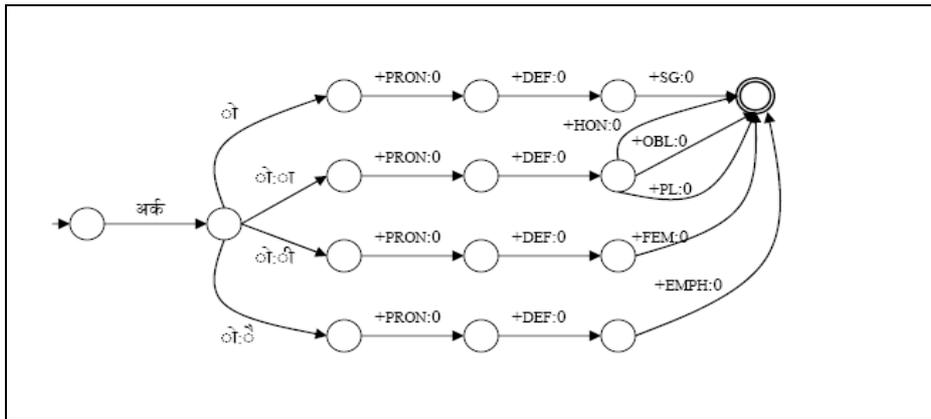


Figure 20: A finite state transducer for definite pronouns
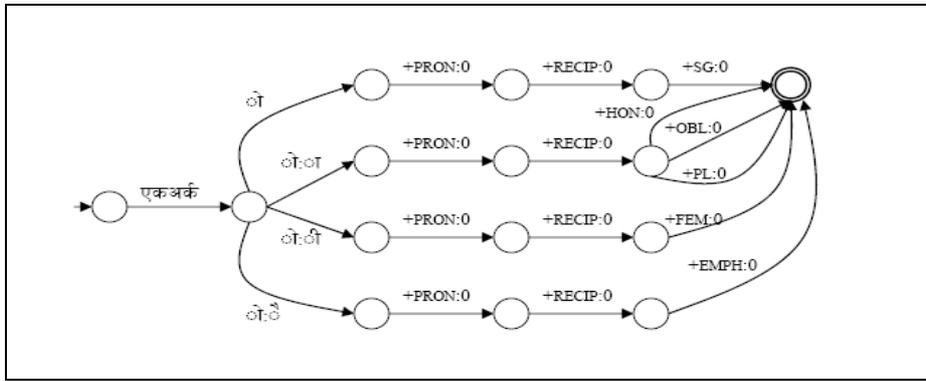
Figure 21: A finite state transducer for reciprocal pronouns
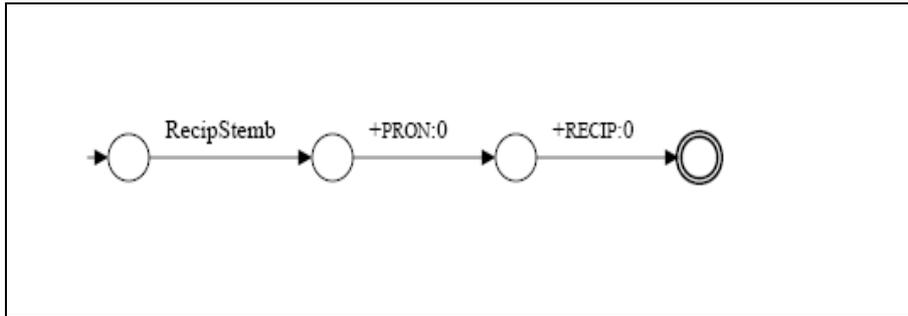


Figure 22: A finite state transducer for reciprocal pronouns

# A phonological study of Tilung: An endangered language of Nepal

## Vishnu S Rai

## 1 Introduction

Nepal is a multilingual country. The eastern hills of the country are the homes of more than 100 languages which belong to the Tibeto-Burman family. From the linguistic point of view, these languages are rich in morphology and stand out most of all by what is known as complex pronominalization. Except Limbu and Sherpa, they do not have scripts and, therefore, have no written tradition. Thus, the unique features of these languages have been preserved from centuries in their oral tradition which contains songs, myths, legends and *mundhum* 'the language of the rituals'. The majority of languages spoken in the eastern hills of Nepal fall in the Kiranti group which consists of more than thirty languages, and Tilung among them, belongs to a broad ethnic group known as the Rai Kiranti group.

### 1.1 Rationale for the study

There is no definite answer as to the number of languages in Nepal in general, and the number of Rai languages in particular. A survey done by Yayokha in the year 2058 V.S. reveals the fact there are 26 Rai languages most of which are highly endangered. A visit by the applicant to the Tilung language speaking area revealed the fact that there are no more than 2000 Tilung who live in small hamlets scattered in the different 7 wards of Chyasmitar Village Development Committee (VDC) in the Khotang district. They are not only poor in their worldly possessions but also in their language in the sense that only 7 elderly people above 60 could speak their language fluently. People over 40 could speak the language with the heavy borrowing (mostly nouns) from Nepali, the youth from 30-40 can understand some Tilung but the young generation below 30 neither speaks the language nor understands it. Children do not learn the language because young parents do not speak the language and the elderly parents tend to use the language only when they do not want their children to know what they are talking about. The young generation tends to use Nepali more and

their native tongue less, partly because their parents seldom speak Tilung at home and partly because the medium of instruction in school is Nepali and teachers are all Nepali native speakers. Thus, they have no choice but to learn and use Nepali. Tilung is, therefore dying a slow death.

It is not only the language but also the culture of the Tilung people are at stake. An informal talk with some people during that short visit showed that many Tilung stopped performing their rituals because they do not know the *mundhum*. The Tilung priests have migrated to the Terai and only go back to Chyasmitar once a year at the time of the ancestor worship. The rituals cannot be performed unless one knows the particular *mundhum* of that ritual. This is a clear example of how culture dies if its language dies. The invaluable knowledge which has been accumulated in a culture disappears once and for all with the death of a language. Thus the proposed documentation will not help preserve the language but also the cultural knowledge of the Tilung community, and provide a ground for further research on linguistics.

'One nation one language policy' was rigorously followed by the Nepalese government in the past. As a result, most indigenous languages suffered and were pushed on the verge of extinction (Rai 2005). The constitution (1990) recognised the citizens' right of preserving and promoting their own language and culture. Since then, the concerned minorities have expressed their linguistic identity more consciously. They are trying to introduce mother tongue education in primary schools. The proposed research study will help preserve the Tilung language and will assist the Tilung community to develop teaching materials such as grammar and textbook to be used for the purpose of the revitalization of the language.

In such a context, this study entitled "Vanishing Voices of Nepal: Documentation of the Tilung Language" was proposed to the National

Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) which approved the proposal and generously provided the fund to carry out the study.

## 1.2 Literature review: A study of the Rai Kiranti languages

The study of Kiranti languages is not very old. The first study of a Kiranti language is the Bahing grammar and vocabulary by Brian Houghton Hodgson, which appeared in 1857 based on research conducted in the 1830s. Then after about a century and a half of neglect, exploratory accounts of Kiranti languages were provided by the Summer Institute of Linguistics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, e.g. Hale, Hari and Schoettelndreyer (1972). In 1975, Allen's Sketch of Thulung Grammar made its appearance. In the early 1980s, a four-year study entitled the Linguistic Survey of Nepal was undertaken under the direction of Werner Winter within the framework of the programme Schwerpunkt Nepal, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). This project conducted a survey of the Kiranti area, a synopsis of which by Gerd Hanßon was published in 1991. This synopsis, though valuable, has many flaws which have been critically assessed by van Driem (2001).

The Structure of the Kiranti Languages by Karen Ebert (1994) and the two-volume compendium Languages of the Himalayas by George van Driem (2001) are mainly typological and geographical surveys of the Kiranti languages. Van Driem's book not only surveys the Kiranti languages, their origin and distribution but also includes all languages spoken in the greater Himalayan region from far the Indo-Burmese borderlands to Central Asia. Since 1990s, there has been a steady increase of linguistic work on Kiranti languages. Part of the credit goes to the efforts of the Himalayan Language Project at Leiden University, directed by George van Driem.

Quite a few grammars or descriptive accounts of Rai Kiranti languages are now available, e.g. Bahing (Hodgson 1857), Khaling (Toba 1979), Bantawa (Rai 1985), Dumi (van Driem 1993), Athpare or Āṭhpahariyā (Ebert 1997b), Chamling (Ebert 1997a), Belhare (Bickel 1996), and Wambule (Opgenort 2004). Many of these descriptions provide an account of the phonology, morphology and syntax.

Articles on different aspects of Rai Kiranti languages have also appeared, e.g. Bickel (1993, 1997, 1999, 2000), Ebert (1994, 1999a, 1999b), Gautam (2005), Neopane (2005), Rai (1984, 1988, 2005) and Rai (1997, 2004, 2005, 2007). However, in view of the number of Kiranti languages, these grammars and articles cover only a very small portion.

This lexicographical work has yielded a few small dictionaries (actually glossaries), e.g. a Khaling-English and English-Khaling glossary (Toba 1975), the Nepālī Kulu Rāī Śabdakoś (Rai, V.S 2049), a Kulung Nepali English glossary (Rai 1975) and the Cāmli Nepālī Śabdakoś, which is actually a glossary (Rai, V.S 2059). Some dictionaries in the real sense of the term appeared recently, i.e. the Bantawa-Nepali-English Dictionary (Winter 2002), the Chamling Nepali English Dictionary (Rai et. al 2007) and the Puma-Nepali-English Dictionary (Rai et al. 2009).

Tilung is an unwritten and endangered Kiranti language about which very little was known, except the name, the approximate location where it is spoken and some 130 words and affixes and a few short phrases. The present study was carried out to explore more about it.

## 1.3 Objectives of the study

The main aim of this project is to document the sound system of the Tilung language. The specific objectives of the proposed study were as follows.

- To collect the sounds of the Tilung language

- To analyse the sounds of the Tilung language in terms of phonemes, allophones and clusters

## 1.4 Materials and method

The researcher visited the field and selected the informants. Questionnaires for the elicitation of the phonetic and phonological phenomena of the language were used. For the verification and addition in the data, 8 elderly people, who could speak the language, were chosen. The researcher consulted them time and again during the research period to analyse the data. The data were audio-

recorded and later those audio-recorded data were analysed. The researcher also worked closely with Dr. Novel Kishore Rai who has received grants from the Nepal Academy to develop Tilung textbook for the Tilung speech community.

The progress of collecting the data and recordings of the texts were hampered by the fact that it was a bad time. Baisakh is the month of farming and cultivation and most Tilung were busy in their field. They openly said that firstly, they did not know the language well, and secondly, they could not afford to spend time with the researcher even at night as they were completely washed out from their toil during the day time in the field. The name of the informants are as follows:

1. Agnisher Rai 'Pathermpa'
2. Aitasher Rai
3. Awasher Rai
4. Bal Bahadur Rai 'Jimawal'
5. Birempa Rai
6. Briddiman Rai
7. Chhatra Bahadur Rai
8. Dan Bahadur Rai

## 1.5 Findings

It was found that the Tilung language is in the verge of extinction as there are only 8 elderly people beyond 60 who could speak the language. As per the objectives of the research, some texts were collected and a small trilingual dictionary was prepared, The collected texts consist of the description of the rites of passage, the introduction of the Tilung *pachas* and the Tilung lexicon. All the texts, etc. both in the audio form and in the form the hard copies have been submitted to NFDIN. Here, the analysis of the data and the texts are briefly presented.

### The Tilung people

The main homeland of the Tilung community is the Chyasmitar VDC of Khotang district which falls in the eastern hills of Nepal. Tilung live in 7 small hamlets in the VDC which is far from the din and bustle of any town. It takes at least 5 hours to reach the nearest bazaar where if luck favours one can get a bus because bus service is not very regular. The VDC is perched on a high hill and down below flows the Sun Koshi river which is a some 4 hours walk from the Tilung settlement.

The land is not very fertile as there is no any provision for irrigation. Since the crops (millet, maze, potato and only in very small pockets rice) which are grown are not sufficient for them, Tilung go down south in the plain in search of work.

Tilung are economically, politically and educationally highly marginalized people. The only graduate from the community works as a teacher in Kathmandu. There are quite a few who have passed School Leaving Certificate Examination (SLC) but could not continue their study any more further simply because they could not afford it.

Only elderly people above 60 speak their language, but since they are very few in number (7) the language being spoken is seldom heard. People between 40-60 speak the language occasionally with heavy borrowings (mainly nouns) from Nepali the national language. Those who are 30-40 might understand fragments of the language but they themselves do not speak it and children neither understand nor speak the language.

The main Tilung language speaking area is the Chyasmitar Village Development Committee (VDC) of the Khotang district. This VDC includes about 7 small hamlets which are the humble abodes of the Tilung people. Although in all of these settlements the Tilung are in the majority, significant number of native Nepali speakers such as Chettri can be found. There are also several households of Chamling and Wambule (other Rai groups) and particularly Chamling has considerbale influence on the local Tilung language and culture.

The field visit revealed the fact that most Tilung above 45 years still have some knowledge of the Tilung language. There are quite a few elders who possess cultural knowledge but no longer speak Tilung, while there are younger people with little cultural knowledge. In these settlements, children no longer speak the language. Persons above 45 might understand and may speak a few words. The total population of the Tilung people are estimated to be around 1500, and among them there were only 8 elderly people above 60 who could speak the language.

In their traditional homeland, the Tilung are a closely-knit society formed by exogamous clans (*pacha*). The number of Tilung clans is originally 8, though the figure has now increased. The stories about the new pachas are given in the appendix 2. This division does not have any implications for marriage: marriage alliances are possible across *pachas* but it is not allowed with the same *pacha*. The name of the *pachas* are given below.

1. Mukchhumchha
2. Chhakabungchha
3. Chhatabungchha
4. Palungcha
5. Muchhumcha
6. Waengchha
7. Rayingmichha
8. Khalungmicha
9. Kapinlungchha
10. Deuilingchha
11. Khakabungchha
12. Grolomichha
13. Riblingchha
14. Ewailungchha

Chyasmitar VDC, the main homeland of the Tilung people are surrounded by Wambule and Chamling speaking communities both being the larger group than Tilung and their influence in Tilung culture and language can be evidently noticed. For example, during the time of data collection, Chamling words were found to be frequently used by Tilung sometimes as they were and sometimes with little changes (*diku* 'mother's elder brother', *dabe* 'Nepali knife', *mari* 'woman', *lam* 'path' without any change and *lakanya* Cham. – *lakanyo* Til. 'moon', *lungṭo* Cham. – *lungṭa* Til. 'stone' etc.).

**The Tilung language**

Although linguistic analysis was not the objective of the research, on the basis of the available data linguistic findings are presented in the following heading.

**Tilung consonant sounds**

All together 25 consonants and 6 vowels sounds were found. The following table shows the consonant sounds accroding to the place and the manner of articulation.

| p | t | ṭ | | k | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ph | th | ṭh | | kh | |
| b | d | ḍ | | g | |
| | | ḍh | | | |
| | | s | | | |
| | | | | | h |
| | | | c | | |
| | | | ch | | |
| | | | j | | |
| | | r | | | |
| | | l | | | |
| m | | n | | ng | |
| w | | | y | | |

All the voiceless stops /p/, /t/, /ṭ/ and /k/ have their aspirated counterparts /ph/, /th/, /ṭh/ and /kh/, but among the voiced stops, only /ḍ/ has its aspirataed counterparts. The aspirated counterparts of /d/ and /gh/ were not found. There are two fricatives one voicelss /s/ and the other voiced /h/. Only voiceless affricate /c/ has its aspirated counterpart /ch/: the voiced affticate /j/, does not have its aspirated variety. One trill /r/ and one lateral /l/ were found. All the three nasals, /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ and two frictionless continuants /w/ and /y/ were found.

Usually, Rai Kiranti languages have some sounds which are not found in the Nepali language, such as Chamling has aspirated nasals, liquid and trill viz. /mh/, /nh/, /ŋh/, /lh/ and /rh/ (Rai 2007), Bantawa has glottal stop /ʔ/ (Rai 1985) and Wambule has implosive /ɓ/ (Opgnort 2002) but Tilung does not have any sound which is not in the Nepali language. The influence and overuse of Nepali might have caused some sounds to disappear.

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## Allophones

At least one allophone was noted down. It was found that the dental /d/ is changed into alveolar / / in intervocalic position.

/d/ ⟶ /ḍ/ = *waḍima* 'egg'

The words usually end with a vowel sound but they also end with nasals e.g. *āruŋ* 'up', *bākhum* 'finger, with lateral and trill, e.g. *ācel* 'vagina' and *bombhār* 'lemon' and with stops, e.g. *biruk* 'ginger' and *'tāp'* palm.

## Consonant clustering

Clustering is not very common. The most common sound with which other sounds come together in the intial position are the lateral /l/, the trill /r/ and the frictionless continuants /w/ and /y/. Some examples are given below.

| | |
|---|---|
| *blimā* | 'to say' |
| *byo* | 'head' |
| *phlembā* | 'bread' |
| ple | 'feather' |

However, cluster in the medial position is quite common and different combination could be noticed as shown below.

| | |
|---|---|
| *pāngrā* | 'knee' |
| *ronmā* | 'to hear' |
| *phikco* | 'salt' |
| *ṭongmā* | ''village'' |
| *āompācima* | 'milk' |
| *nākso* | 'shaman' |

Similarly the same sound clustering was also quite common. Some example are given below.

| | |
|---|---|
| *māssā* | 'quickly' |
| *minnā* | 'man' |
| *rāmmindā* | 'tomato' |
| *ālle* | 'big' |
| *dāppi* | 'today' |
| *hekkā* | 'long' |
| *iṭṭhā* | 'tail' |
| *sānggo* | 'ladder' |

## Tilung vowel sounds

Tilung has a six vowel system viz. high front unrounded /i/, mid-front unrounded /e/, high back rounded /u/, mid-back runded /o/, central neutral /a/ and low spread /ā/. They are diagramatically presented below.

i                     u

e                     o
                  a

ā

All the vowels except /a/ can occur in all the positions: /ʌ/ occurs only in the medial position. Some examples are given below.

| | |
|---|---|
| *ācchāme* | 'small' |
| *ācicā* | 'short' |
| *ācico* | 'few' |
| *āke* | 'here' |
| *echā* | 'boy' |
| *epe* | 'shit' |
| *iyā* | 'one' |
| *itipā* | 'star' |
| *okhā-okhā* | 'slowly' |
| *ole* | 'chicken' |
| *umbu* | 'horse' |
| *ume* | 'it' |
| *ghlangmā* | 'to lie down' |
| *marām* | 'skin' |

## 3 Conclusion and suggestions

This small scale research is significant in the sense that it has paved the way for further more extensive research on the Tilung language and culture. It was very tragic to find that the language is going to die when the 8 old people above 60 die because they are the only people who could speak the real language. Just in one hamlet, people in between 40-60 speak the language but with high degree of Neaplisation. Not only the Nepali vocabularies but also Nepali grammar had forced their way into the Tilung language. It was good to learn that a team of researchers led by Dr. Novel Rai is working on the development of Tilung textbooks which could be used in the community.

It is the time, that the government and concerned non-governmental organizations (NGO) should do something for the language before it disappear forever. There is also a need to create awareness among the Tilung people about the importance of language and culture, and what they are going to lose.

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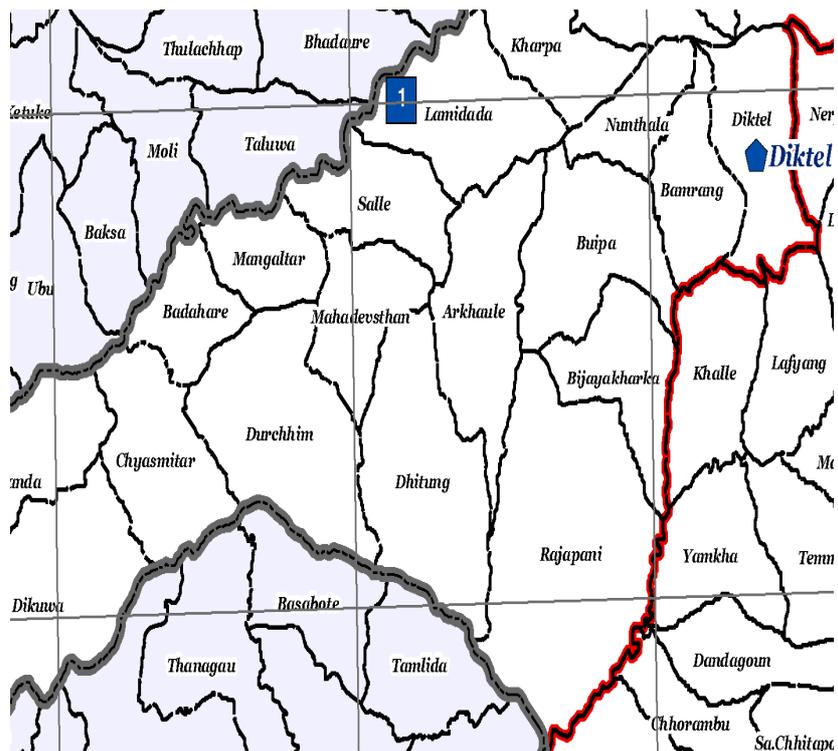
Location of the Chyasmitar VDC in the Khotang district

# Nominal morphology of the Mugali language

## Ichchha Purna Rai

*Mugali people, one of the sub-groups of Rai community settling in the Muga VDC of Dhankuta, east Nepal speak the separate language, a lesser known and highly endangered language. It is yet to be described except including its name in the language classification. This paper deals with the nominal morphology of the Mugali language[1].*

## 1. Introduction

Mugali is a sub-group of Rai. They have their own separate language and culture. What language Mugali people speak is known as the Mugali language. There is confusion between Mugal/Mugali and Mugali Rai. The Mugal/Mugali people are different from the Mugali Rai. The Mugal/Mugali people settle in Mugu district, mid-western and they include Aljen, Khmen, Dhuwa, Thuwa, Chowa, Chelwa, Khimgar and Langar, etc. as their subtribes. They speak the Tibetan language (Mukarung, 2066 B.S as cited in Rai, 2011). Whereas the Mugali Rai people settle in the Ward No. 3, 4 and 5 of Muga VDC of Dhankuta, east Nepal and consist of Lambichong, Khuncha, Kottara as their subtribes (Rai 2011).

The Mugali language, an endangered language falls under the Tibeto-Burman language family (Hansson, 1991) which is spoken by only elder generations but not by younger generations. It is very difficult to calculate its speaker's numbers since it was not addressed by the latest CBS report (2001). This language exhibits the same features found in its neigbhouring languages like Chhintang, Chhulung, Belhare, Athpahariya, and so on (Rai 2011). The main purpose of this paper is to contribute a short grammatical sketch of the Mugali language.

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## 2 Nominal morphology

Under the nominal morphology, numerals, numbers, pronouns, case markers are described which are given below.

### 2.1 Numerals

Numerals are universal feature of all languages of the world but different languages employ different numeral systems. Most of the languages are can be categorised into as quintenary (base five) or decimal (base ten) or vigesimal (base twenty). But, Mugali does not fall under all of these types. It has only a few cardinal numbers which are very much similar to the *Chhiling* and *Chhintang* languages. It is possible to count anything up to three so it has only 1, 2, and 3. If we need to count more than three, we should borrow Nepali number systems. The cardinal numbers which are found in Mugali are as follows:

1.      a. *thili* 'one'
        b. *hicci* 'two'
        c. *sumci* 'three'

### 2.2 Numbers

There are two types of number systems in nouns, namely, singular and non-singular. Here, singular is unmarked and non-singular is marked with -$c^hi$. For examples:

2.      a. *kocu* 'dog'
        b. *$k^him$* 'house'
        c. *$kocu^hi$* 'dogs'.
        d. *$k^himc^hi$* 'houses'

But there are three types of number systems in verbal system. They are singular, dual and plural. The singular is unmarked, the dual is marked by either *-ci* or *-ce* and the plural is marked by either *-i,* or *-ti* or *-si*. For examples:

3.      a.    *kani cama thugiye*
               kani cama thug-i-ye
               1piA/S rice cook-p-PST

b. *kanciŋa cama thugace*
kanciŋa cama thug-a-ce
1de A/S rice cook-PST-d

c. *kaniŋa cama thugiye*
kaniŋa cama thug-i-ye
1pe A/S rice cook-p- PST

d. *ka habayẽ*
ka hab-a-yẽ
1 A/S weep- PST-1s PST

e. *kanci habace*
kanci hab-a-ce
1diA/S weep-PST-d

f. *kani habiye*
kani hab-i-ye
1piA/S weep-p-PST

## 2.3 Personal pronouns

Similar to many languages of the world, personal pronouns in Mugali are divided into three categories in terms of person- first, second and third persons and singular, dual and plural in terms of number.

### 2.3.1 First person pronouns

The first person pronouns refer to the addressor or the speaker. First person pronouns in Mugali can be categorised into singular, dual and plural in terms of number and exclusive and inclusive distinction can be found in only dual and plural which is common feature of Kirati languages. There are five first person pronouns in Mugali altogether which are shown in the following table.

| Person | Singular | Dual | | Plural | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Excl | incl | Excl | Incl |
| First | *Ka* | | | | *Kani* |
| | | *kaciŋa* | *kanci* | *kaniŋa* | |

### 2.3.2 Second person pronouns

The second person pronouns refer to the addressee or the hearer. Second person pronouns can also be categorised into singular, dual and plural in terms of number. They are three terms in Mugali altogether which are shown in the following table.

| Person | Singular | Dual | Plural |
|---|---|---|---|
| Second | *kʰana* | *kʰanci* | *kʰani* |

### 2.3.3 Third person pronouns

The third person pronouns refer to the person or the thing beyond the speaker and hearer. They refer to something else. Unlike Bantawa (Rai 1985), Sangpang (Rai 2009), there are no anaphoric pronouns in third person. There are only proximal and distal pronouns in Mugali. Both of them can be categorised into singular, dual and plural in terms of number. There are six third person pronouns which are shown in the following table.

| Person | Singular | Dual | Plural |
|---|---|---|---|
| Third prox | *Na* | *nahaci* | *naha* |
| Third dist | *Au* | *auhaci* | *auha* |

According to the terms shown in the table, there is interesting structure in third person if we look at the data closely. Here, *na* and *au* are root and plural pronouns *naha* and *auha* are extended from *na* and *au* respectively and *nahaci* and *auhaci* are extended from *naha* and *auha* respectively. In this

way, structurally, plural is derived from singular and dual is derived from plural in Mugali which is really interesting feature of personal pronouns.

## 2.4 Demonstrative pronouns

The third person pronouns also function as demonstrative pronouns (Rai 1985, Rai 2009) which can be categorised in terms of proximity and numbers. In terms of proximity, they are proximal and distal and in terms of number, they are singular, dual and plural. For examples:

4.     a.     *na cama cayu*
                 na cama ca-yu
                 3sPROX.DEM rice eat-3NPST
    b.     *nahaci cama cayaci*
                 nahaci cama ca-ya-ci
                 3dPROX.DEM rice eat-3 NPST-d
    c.     *naha cama cayu*
                 na cama ca-yu
                 3sPROX.DEM rice eat-3NPST
    d.     *au cama cayu*
                 au cama ca-yu
                 3sDIST.DEM rice eat-3NPST
    e.     *auhaci cama cayaci*
                 auhaci cama ca-ya-ci
                 3dDIST.DEM rice eat-3NPST-d
    f.     *auha cama cayu*
                 auha cama ca-yu
                 3sDIST.DEM rice eat-3 NPST

## 2.5 Interrogative pronouns

There are some interrogative pronouns in the Mugali language which are as follows:

a.     *thi*               'what'
b.     *heʔne*          'where'
c.     *hende para*    'in what way'
d.     *hembe*         'when'
e.     *seʔle*           'who'
f.     *sekha*          'whose'
g.     *thimmale*      'why'
h.     *heʔnaʔ*        'which'

## 2.6 Reflexive pronouns

In Mugali, *apiro* refers to reflexive pronoun which is used for all the cases. The following examples illustrate more clearly.

6.     *ka apiro cama thuʔuŋa*
       ka apiro cama thug-u-ŋa
       1A/S REF rice cook-3P-1SNPST

## 2.7 Case markers

In Mugali, there are following cases which are described below.

### 2.7.1 Ergative/Instrumental

The ergative case marker in Mugali is *-ŋa*. The following example makes it clear.

7.     *kaŋa ramlai piduhẽ*
       ka-ŋa ram-lai pid-u-hẽ
       1s-ERG Ram give-3P-PST

### 2.7.2 Dative

The dative case marker in Mugali is *-lai* which is borrowed from the Nepali language. The following example illustrates more clearly.

8.     *kaŋa nalai piduhẽ*
       ka-ŋa na-lai pid-u-hẽ
       1s-ERG 3sDAT give-3P-PST

### 2.7.3 Genitive

The genitive case in Mugali is -kha which denotes the possession of something. The following example shows very clearly.

9.     a.     *ka khakhim*
                 ka kha-khim
                 1s GEN-house
                 My house.
    b.     *khan khakhim*
                 khan kha-khim
                 2s GEN-house
                 Your house.
    c.     *na khakhim*
                 na kha-khim
                 3s GEN-house
                 His/her house.

### 2.7.4 Locative

The locative case is marked by postposition -be. The following example makes clear.

10.     *na khimbe yuŋga*

     na khim-be yuŋga

     3s house-LOC BE

     This is in the house

### 2.7.5 Mediative

There is a mediative case which is marked by –*lam.* The following example shows clearly.

11.     *ka bajarlam tayauŋa*

     ka bajarlam ta-yau-ŋa

     1s market-MED come-PROG-1SNPST

     I am coming from market.

### 2.7.6 Comitative

The comitative case marker is found in Mugali which is –*lo*. The following example shows it clearly.

12.     *kalo kocu yuŋga*

     ka-lo kocu yuŋga

     1s-COM dog BE

     I have a dog

## 3 Conclusion

The Mugali language is a lesser known language and it is on the verge of extinction since young people are not able to speak this language. There are 23 consonant and 5 vowel sounds. There are three types of basic syllable structures which are of CV, VC and CVC. Similarly, Mugali has very few ordinal numbers and has no cardinal number. Similarly, there are three numbers, viz. singular, dual and plural. Similarly, there are different types of pronouns like personal, demonstrative and interrogative. Similarly, there are different types of case markers like ergative/Instrumental, dative, genitive, locative, meditative, comitative.

### Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | First person |
| 3 | Third person |
| A | Agent |
| COM | Comitative |
| DAT | Dative |
| DEM | Demonstrative |
| DIST | distal |
| ERG | Ergative |
| excl | exclusive |
| GEN | Genitive |
| LOC | Locative |
| MED | Mediative |
| NPST | Non-past |
| P | Patient |
| PROG | Progressive |
| PROX | proximal |
| PST | Past |
| REF | Reflexive |
| s | Singular |
| S | Subject |

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# Grammatical case marking in Dumi

## Netra Mani Rai

*This paper discusses the system of grammatical case marking in both nominal and verbal complex in Dumi within functional -typological perspective. Dumi is a Kirati Rai language belonging to the East Himalayish group of Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan family. This study employs both elicited and corpus data collected from the field.*

## 1. Introduction

This paper examines the grammatical case marking in the Dumi language. Grammatical case marking is generally referred to as primary morphology coding property of the syntactic or grammatical relations, viz., subject and object in a clause. While semantic roles define the state or event semantically, grammatical roles define the clause syntactically (Givón, 2001:105). Dumi belongs to western Kirati group under the Eastern Himalayish branch of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal. CBS (2001) reports 5,721 (i.e. 0.02% of the total population 2,27,36,934) Dumi speakers in Nepal. This study is concerned with Makpa Dumi, where majority of Dumi speakers reside in. Van Driem (1993) has described ten types of cases: ergative, absolutive, instrumental, genitive, vocative, locative, comitative, ornative, ablative, and comparative in Baksila Dumi. However, no attempt has yet been made to analyze the case role inflections on the noun phrase that are imposed by the syntax of the Dumi language under the study within functional-typological framework development by Givón (2001).

This paper is organized into five sections. Section 1 provides the overview of the structure of the paper. In section 2, we deal with the methodology used in the study the system for grammatical case marking in Dumi. Section 3 discusses the case role inflections which signal the syntactic relationship between the words or structures in a clause in Dumi. In section 4, we attempt to present the typological implications of the study. Finally, section 5 summarizes the findings of the paper.

### 1.1 Background

While talking about the system for grammatical relation, Dixon (1979) has classified three core semantico-syntactic relations: **S** (Nominal argument of intransitive clause), **A** (Agent like argument of transitive clause), and **O** (Patient like argument of transitive clause). The grammatical pattern in which subject of intransitive clause '**S**' and object of transitive clause '**O**' get similar treatment while '**A**' is different is known as *ergative-absolutive system*.

Examples:

(A) Ergative/Absolutive in Dumi
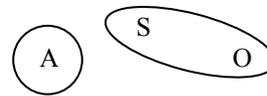


a.  *tˢu:tˢu - ø    ŋuk-t-a*
    baby-ABS    cry-NPT-3s
    'A baby cries.'

b.  kʰitˢi-a      lələ-ø          kʰ-i
    thief-ERG  ornaments-ABS    steal-PT.3s
    'The thief stole ornaments.'

c.  tˢu:tˢu-a      kəŋku-ø        t·uk·-u
    thief-ERG  water-ABS        spoil-PT.3s
    'The child spoilt water.'

## 2 Methodology

### 1.1 Data

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data for Dumi were elicited from the Dumi speakers especially from Makpa area (i.e. Makpa VDC) in the eastern Nepal. The secondary data for Dumi is based on Rai (2008).

Both the primary and secondary data were cross-checked with the native speakers from the same area 'Makpa' and with the writer's intuition as a mother tongue speaker.

## 1.2 Framework

Since Dumi is a less described Kirati Rai language, there has not been studied case marking in linguistic point of view. In this scenario, case marking is one of the primary coding properties of grammatical relations, other being verb agreement and word order (van Valin, 2001:34) in Dumi.

Case marking basically is a morphological overt-coding property of grammatical relations: subject, direct object and indirect object. Such grammatical relations are encoded in the noun phrase by case role inflections. Similarly, they can also be indexed by pronominal verb agreement in the verb complex.

The case marking of the subject and direct object, Givón, 2001), is primarily governed by three functional-adaptive imperatives, viz., coding: semantic roles, pragmatic functions and transitivity. Indirect objects are exclusively semantically marked (Givón, 2001: 198). Typologically, there are three systems of grammatical case marking: active-stative (semantically oriented), nominative-accusative (pragmatically oriented) and ergative-absolutive (transitivity oriented). Table 1 summarizes case marking strategies in the languages of the world.

**Table 1: Case marking strategies (Givón, 2001)**

|   | Strategies | Orientation | Coding |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Active-stative | Semantics | Semantic roles |
| 2. | Nominative-accusative | Pragmatics | Pragmatic functions |
| 3. | Ergative-absolutive | Syntax | Transiti-vity |

In this section, we briefly discuss the grammatical cases with the specific case role inflections in Dumi.

## 2 Case role inflections

There is no grammatical gender difference in Dumi. A noun phrase may be inflected for different case roles to signal the syntactic relationships at the phrase or sentence level. Table 2 presents case role inflections with grammatical cases in Dumi.

**Table 2: Case role inflections in Dumi**

| Case role inflections | Grammatical cases | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| *-ø* | Absolutive | ABS |
| *-a* | Ergative | ERG |
| *-a* | Instrumental | INS |
| *-po* | Genitive | GEN |
| *-kajo* | Comitative | COM |
| *-lai* | Dative | DAT |
| *-hu, -ja, -ju, -tu* | Allative | ALL |
| *-lamka, -laka, -bika* | Ablative | ABL |

In this section, we briefly discuss the grammatical cases with the specific case role inflections in Dumi.

### 3.1 The ergative

Case marking in Dumi is exclusively governed by coding transitivity, viz., coding syntactic distinction between transitive and intransitive clauses. Thus, the subjects of transitive clauses are consistently marked with ergative case markers.

In Dumi, the subject of a transitive clause is marked by ergative marker, '-*a*' and the subject of the intransitive clause and direct object of the transitive clauses are zero-marked as in (1).

(1) a. *aŋu-a      səpʰu-ø*
     1s-ERG      letter-ABS
     *cəp-t-o*
     write-NPT-1s
     'I write a letter.'

b. *aŋu- ø*    *kʰuc-o*
1s-ABS    go-PT-1s
'I went.'

c. *ɨm-a*   *si*   *tuŋ-u*
3s-ERG   tea   drink-PT.3s
'He drank tea.'

## 3.2 The instrumental

According to Ebert (1994:81) the ergative and instrumental cases are marked identically in Kiranti languages. And, so is in Dumi, both the ergative and instrumental cases are marked by the suffix <-a>. The ergative case marks the agent of a transitive verb in the past tense. Similarly, an instrumentally marked argument can occur with an infinitive. The instrumental is used to mark a tool, inanimate or not, by which an agent accomplishes an action. The instrumental case indicates the instrument, implement or means, with which an action is acted and is marked by the same suffix as the ergative <-*a*> in Dumi as in (2).

(2) a. *aŋu-a*    *tɨkdaru-a*
1S-ERG    stick-ISN
*swalembi*    *si-d-u*
snake    kill-PST-1S
'I killed the snake with a stick.'

b. *ani-a*    *bitˢʰu-a*
2S-ERG    knife-ISN
*ki*    *a-kok-t-i*
yam   cut-PST-2/3S
'You cut yam with a knife.'

c. *tʔutʔo-a*    *betʰo-a*
grandpa-ERG   khukuri-INS
*su*    *kok-n-i*
meat    cut-PT-3s
'The grandpa cut meat with a khukuri.'

## 3.3 The genitive

The genitive case (GEN) denotes ownership, possession or belonging and can be added to nouns. There are two different markers:<-po> and <-bim> for employing genitive cases. These two markers are used in different situations for the same meaning of possessiveness. The genitive case

marker <-po> is commonly affixed to animate nouns only as in (9). It is primarily employed to signal the syntactic relationship, viz., dependent relationship between the head noun and some other word in a noun phrase. In Dumi, it is marked by the suffix '-*po*' and it occurs in nouns or pronouns as in (3).

(3) a. *o-po*    *pepe*
1s-GEN   elder brother
*soŋsa*    *ham-mo-t-a*
tall    MS-NPT-2s
'My elder brother is tall.'

b. *pabi-po*    *kim*
papi-GEN    house
*kʰanuksa*    *go-t-a*
nice    be-NPT-2/3s
'Pabi's house is nice.'

c. *dəkʰlə-bim*    *syar*
head- GEN    louse
'head louse (louse grown on the head).'

## 3.4 The comitative

The comitative case is employed to denote accompaniment. In Dumi, this case is instantiated morphologically by the suffix –*bika* or -*kajo* as in (4).

(4) a. *aŋu-lai kʰliba-bika*  *ŋinna lo-t-a*
1s-DAT dog-COM  fear   NPT-3s
'I am afraid of the dog.'

b. *tʔu:tʔu*   *pipi-kajo*    *kʰu-tˢ-i*
child   grandma.-COM  go-NPT-3s
'The child went with grandmother.'

c. *ɨm-kajo aŋu*    *hu-t-ɨ*
3s-COM 1s    come-NPT-2d.excl
'He and I will come.'

## 3.5 The dative

Dative marker originally is not found in Dumi. The ergative and dative markers are usually applied only once to coordinated nouns (Ebert, 1994:82). The primary objects may enjoy different roles such as benefactive, recipient in the clause. In Dumi, the primary object is marked by the dative suffix <–*lai*> as in (5).

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(5) a. *mama-a*      *aŋu-lai*
    mother-ERG    1s-DAT
    *sodza*      *a-be-n-u*
    money      MS-give-NPT-2s
    'Mother gave me money.'

  b. *ɨm-a*      *aŋu-lai*
    3s-ERG    1s-DAT
    *dza*      *a-tu-tˢ-o*
    rice      MS-keep-NPT-1s
    'He kept rice for me.'

  c. *nana-a*      *ɨŋkɨ-lai*
    elder sister-ERG    we (incl)-DAT
    *dza*    *kap-n-i*
    rice    add-PT-1s
    'Elder sister served rice to us.'

In fact, there is not used the suffix <*-lai*> as in modern fashion as the dative marker in the traditional Dumi as in (6). The dative marker is probably borrowed from Nepali '*-lai*' (Ebert, 1994:82). There is borrowed dative marker <-lai > from Nepali and is used frequently and unknowingly in Dumi,

(6)  a. *ɨm-a*    *najem-ø*
    3s-ERG  Nayem-DAT
    *sodza*    *bi-t-a*
    money    give-NPT-3s
    'S/he gives money to Nayem.'

  b. *pabi-a*    *ɨm-ø*
    Pabi-ERG    him/her-DAT
    *dza*    *bi-t-a*
    rice    give-NPT-3s
    'Pabi gave rice to him/her.'

  c. *mammu-a*  *aŋu-ø*
    they-ERG   me-DAT
    *dudu*  *a-be-to-nu*
    milk    MS-give-NPT-3p
    'They give milk to me.'

## 2.6 Locative case

In Dumi, locative case is marked by the post position <*-bi*>, <*-tubi*>, <*-tˢɨnobi*> as accordance with the directional situations. There are different locatives specifying higher, lower and same-level specifying the vertical dimension. It marks the spatial meaning, or location as in (7).

(7) a. *kʰliba*    *kim-bi*    *mo-t-a*
    dog    house-LOC    be-NPT-3s
    'The dog lives at the house.'

  b. *kim-tubi*    *bausa*  *bru-tˢ-i*
    house-LOC  fox    howl-NPT-3s
    'The fox howled above the house.'

  c. *lam-tˢɨnobi*    *pʰɨli*  *go-t-a*
    path-LOC    cave  be-NPT-3s
    'There is a cave below the path.'

## 2.7 Allative

In Dumi, the allative case markers are different with respect to the directional situations like <*-hu*> or, <*-ja*> for horizontal, <*-tu*> for upwards and <*-ju*> for downwards, which express the meaning of motion 'to' or 'towards' suggesting destination and goal as in (8).

(8) a. *ɨm*    *kim-hu*    *kʰu-tˢ-i*
    3s    house-ALL    go-PT-3s
    'S/he went towards house.'

  b. *pepe*    *map-tu*
    elder brother    up-ALL
    *ham-kʰu-tˢ-i*
    MS-go-PT-3s
    'Elder brother went upwards.'

  c. *dusu*    *ta-ju*    *hə-je*
    friend    below-ALL    arrive-PT-3s
    'Friend arrived downwards.'

## 2.8 Ablative case

In Dumi, there are two different ablative suffix <*-lamka*> or, <*-laka*> 'from' and 'via' which respectively mean 'coming from' and coming via as in (9).

(9) a. *pipi*    *dʰəran-lamka*
    friend    Dharan-ABL
    *ham-hə-pi-ju*
    MS-arrive-PT.3s
    'Grandmother arrived from Dharan.'

b. *ɨm-laka    hud-u-m*
   he-ABL    take-PT.1S-PERF
   'I got (it) from him.'
c. *tuku-laka        tand-a*
   above-ABL       bring.down-PT.2
   *dzak ˙ a       wou*
   slowly         EXC
   'Bring it down from up there!'

Similarly, in Dumi, there is also the ablative suffix *<-bika>* 'from' and 'then' which means 'going from' as in (10).

(10) a. *tam-bika       pʰiŋ-o-m*
        here-ABL       send-PT.1s
        '(I) sent from here.'
    b. *papa    kim-bika*
        father   house-ABL
        *ham-lam-tʰij-u*
        MS-move-PT.3s
        'Father moved from the house.'
    c. *asnəmka-bika    hu*
        yesterday-ABL   rain
        *ma-ji-na              ŋa*
        NEG-rain-NPT.3s       PRT
        *go-t-a*
        be-NPT.3s
        'It has not rained from yesterday.'

## 4    Typological implications

There are not any typological studies on the structural features in Dumi language. The analysis of grammatical case marking of this language reveals a number of features of typological interest. The case marking is fundamentally governed by the coding of transitivity in this language.

Dumi grammatical roles, such as subject, agent and patient are distinguished from one another by means of a nominal and a verbal marking strategy, which can be considered to be equally important in distinguishing the arguments of the verb from one another.

The subjects of the transitive clauses are exclusively marked by the ergative case suffix <

a> in Dumi. The objects and the subjects of the intransitive clauses are left unmarked. However, like in other Tibeto-Burman languages having ergative-absolutive case marking strategy, the primary objects are marked by dative case suffix *<–lai>* (i.e. borrowed from Nepali language) in Dumi.

Quite contrary to the common features of the syntax of Bodic languages of Nepal, Dumi exhibits the presence of dative subject construction, it may simply imply that under the influence of Nepal, Dumi adopts dative subject construction in its syntax.

Table 3 presents the main features of the grammatical case marking in Dumi vis-à-vis the general characteristics of marking in Bodic and Himalayish languages.

**Table 3: Case marking in Dumi vis-à-vis Bodic languages**

| Case marking | | Bodic | | Dumi |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | BDC | HLH | Language |
| 1 | Marking transitivity | √ | √ | √ |
| 2 | Marking transitivity: consistently | √ | × | √ |
| 3 | Marking transitivity: split | × | √ | × |
| 4 | Marking by case suffixes | √ | √ | √ |
| 5 | Marking primary objects | √ | √ | √ |
| 6 | Marking dative subjects | √ | × | √ |

Table 3 shows that Dumi is consistent with the major characteristic features of case marking of the Bodic languages.

## 7 Summary

To sum up, an effort has been made to characterize Dumi case system in terms of semantic notions. The subject of transitive verbs is put in the case of the agent, which is formed by adding the suffix <-a>, but not in case of the subject of intransitive verbs. In this paper, we analyzed the grammatical case marking in the Dumi language. In this language, grammatical cases, viz., ergative, instrumental, genitive, comitative, dative, allative and ablative are marked by case suffixes in order to code syntactic relations in the clause. The main 'adaptive imperative' of case marking in this language is to code the transitivity in par with the ergative-absolutive case marking strategy. There is no grammatical gender in Dumi and it reveals many consistencies with the characteristics case marking features of the Bodic languages of Nepal. The Dumi language has adopted the dative subject construction under the influence of Nepali as the contact language though there is not used any dative marker in the traditional Dumi language. It seems that one case marker may denote more than one relation and vice-versa.

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| ABL | ablative |
| ABS | absolutive |
| ALL | allative |
| BDC | Bodic |
| COM | comitative |
| d | dual |
| DAT | dative |
| ERG | ergative |
| EXC | exclamation |
| excl | exclusive |
| GEN | genitive |
| HLH | Himalayish |
| incl | inclusive |
| INS | instrumental |
| LOC | locative |
| MS | marked scenario |
| NEG | negative |
| NPT | non-past |
| p | plural |
| PERF | perfective |
| PRT | particle |
| PT | past |
| s | singular |
| SEQ | sequential |

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# Negation in Koyee: A typological perspective

## Tara Mani Rai

*Negation in Koyee is realized as <ʌ->
and <meʔ> which are marked phenomenon.
They are examined in terms of the form and
function. The negative forms are observed under
identificational 'be' verb, existential 'be' verb, non-
past and past declarative constructions, non-past
and past interrogative constructions, tag
questions, imperative and optative constructions.*

## 1 Introduction

This paper discusses the negation embedded in
Koyee from functional typological perspective
developed mainly by Payne (1997) and Givón
(2001). Koyee [*kojiː*][1] is one of the Rai Kiranti
languages of the Himalayish sub-group within
Tibeto-Burman group of Sino-Tibetan language
family. The term 'Koyee' refers to the people as
well as the language they speak. What they call
their language is *koji: bʌʔʌ*. This is one of the
endangered and least studied languages of Nepal
spoken by around 26,41speakers (Census, 2001) in
Sungdel and Dipsung village development
committee in Khotang district.

This paper is organized into four sections. In
section 2, we present the theoretical aspect of the
negation as well as the negation inherent in Koyee
language. Section 3 discusses the typological
implications of negation in Koyee among some

other Kiranti languages. In section 4, we
summarize the findings of the paper.

## 2 Negation

In terms of truth value, negation (Neg-assertion)
occupies the extreme end on the scale of
propositional modalities (Givón, 2001). The
ranking of the epistemic modalities by the truth
value is presupposition > R (realis)-assertion >IRR
(irrealis)-assertion> NEG-assertion[2] (*ibid*: 369). It
is a marked phenomenon in all the languages of
the world. According to Payne (1997), negation
can be analyzed as lexical, morphological and
analytic typologically across the languages of the
world. Lexical negation describes a situation in
which the concept of negation is an essential part
of the lexical semantics of a particular verb. In
morphological negation, the morphemes that
express negation, on the other hand, can be with
the verb. Analytic negation, on the other hand, can
be expressed either by negative particles or by
finite negative verbs.

The negative markers in Koyee have been
discussed in the §2.1, §2.2, §2.3, §2.4, §2.5 §2.6,
§2.7, §2.8, §2.9 along with its distributions.

## 2.1 Existential 'be' verbs

The marker <ʌ->[3] stands for a negative form of
the exitential 'be' verb as in (1a-b) and (2a-b).

(1)  a.  *aŋ ibi mutʌ*

    aŋ    ibi    mu-tʌ
    1SG   here  be-NPST.1SG

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[1] The original speakers of this language prefer to be
called by Koyee. However, Hanβon (1991) has
mentioned that renderings like Koi or Koyi [sic] (Koyee)
from Koyu or Koyo appeared to result through a strong
tendency in this language to pronounce a disyllabic of
two vowels, not as diphthongs. As the ethno names like
Koyu in Bhojpur, Koi, Koimee in Udayapur are
prevalent where they do not speak Koyee language.
Koyu people in Bhojpur have adopted Bantawa
language whereas Kirati Rodung (Chamling) language
by the Koi/Koimee people in Udayapur.

[2] Givón(2001) states the negation and propositional
logic as:a) Presupposition= taken for granted to be true
(necessary truth) b) R-assertion= strongly asserted to be
true (factual truth) c) IRR- assertion= weakly asserted to
be not true (possible truth) d) NEG-assertion= strongly
asserted to be not true (falsely)

[3] The negative marker <ʌ-or *a*-> is interchangebaly
used. However, the marker <ʌ-> is preferred to be much
more than the marker <*a*->.

'I am here.

   b.  *aŋ ibi ʌmutʌ*

     aŋ      ibi      ʌ-mu-tʌ
     1SG    here   NEG-be-PST.1SG
     'I am here.'

(2)  a.  *umu jambi mʌdi*

     umu   jambi  mʌdi
     3SG   there  be- PST.3SG
     'She was there.'

   b.  *umu jambi ʌmʌdi*

     umu   jambi  ʌ-mʌ-di
     3SG   there  NEG-be- PST.3SG
     'She was not there.'

The examples 1(a-b) and 2(a-b) show that the affirmative sentences with exitential 'be' verbs negated in Koyee. The existential 'be' verb *<mo>* in the non-past and *<mʌ>* in the past is prefixed with the negative marker *<ʌ->*.

## 2.2 Identificational 'be' verb

(3)  a.  *an bulukʌm mina*

     an      bulukʌm mina
     2SG    rich    man
     'You are rich man.'

   b.  *an bulukʌm mina meʔ*

     an      bulukʌmi mina meʔ
     2SG    rich    man   NEG-be.NPST.1SG
     'You are not rich man.'

(4)  a.  *aŋ   pas tsʰuktsu*

     aŋ      pas    tsʰukts-u
     1SG    pass   be.IDN. PST.1SG
     'I passed.'

   b.  *aŋ pas ʌtsʰuktsu*

     aŋ      pas    ʌ-tsʰukts-u
     1SG    pass   NEG-IDN-PST.1SG
     'I did not pass.'

The examples (3a-b) and (4a-b ) presented above show that the affirmative sentences with identificational 'be' verbs changed into the negative sentences.The identificational 'be' verb in the non-past is negated by negative marker *<meʔ>*

whereas the past is prefixed with  the negative marker *<ʌ->*.

## 2.3 Non-past declarative constructions

In Koyee, the negative marker *<ʌ->* appears to be the prefix in the main verbs as in (5a-b) and (6a-b).

(5)  a.  *uma kim inda*

     um-a    kim     in-da
     3SG-ERG house   sell- NPST.3SG
     'S/he sells the house.'

   b.  *uma kim ʌinda*

     um-a    kim     ʌ-in-da
     3SG-ERG house   NEG-sell- NPST.3SG
     'S/he doesnot sell the house.'

(6)  a.  *an kʰutsa*

     an       kʰuts-a
     2SG     go-PST
     'You go.'

   b.  *an ʌkʰutsa*

     an       ʌ-kʰuts-a
     2SG     NEG-go-PST
     'You didnot  go.'

In non-past declarative constructions in Koyee as in (5a-b) and (6a-b), the marker *<ʌ->* appears to be the neagative marker. This is realized as the prefix in the main verb.

## 2.4 Non-past interrogative constructions

Negation in the non-past interrogative construction is also marked by *<meʔ>* as in (7a-b).

(7)  a.  *idʌ aŋu lʌpʰja*

     idʌ     aŋu    lʌpʰja
     this    1POSS   shoes
     'Is this my shoes?'

   b.  *idʌ aŋu lʌpʰja meʔ*

     idʌ     aŋu    lʌpʰja   meʔ
     this    1POSS   shoes  NEG
     'Is this not my shoes ? '

The above mentioned examples (7a-b) show that the negation in non-past interrrogative constructions. Unlike  non-past declarative

sentences as in §2.4, non-past interrogative constructions employ the marker *<meʔ>* to denote the negative marker in Koyee.

## 2.5 Past declarative constructions

The marker *<ʌ->* stands for a negative form in the past declarative constructions in Koyee as in (8a-b) and (9a-b).

(8)  a.  *kʰiba hoʔo*

        kʰiba     hoʔo
        3SG       bark- PST.3SG
        'The dog barked.'

    b.  *kʰiba ʌhoʔo*

        kʰiba     ʌ-hoʔo
        3SG      NEG-bark- PST.3SG
        'The dog did not bark.'

(9)  a.  intsia olon hʌptsasi

        *intsi-a*      *olon hʌpts-a-si*
        1DU.Incl-ERG milk drink- PST.1DU.Incl
        'We (two) drink milk.'

    b.  *intsia olon ʌhʌptsasi*

        intsi-a olon     ʌ-hʌpts-
        1DU.Incl-ERG milk NEG-drink-
        -a-si
        PAST.1DU.Incl
        'We (two) drink milk.'

We realize that even in the past declarative constructions, the negative marker *< ->* is used as prefix.

## 2.6 Past interrogative constructions

The marker *<ʌ->* appears to be negative marker in the past interrogative constructions in Koyee.

(10)  a.  *umuwa dza dza*

        umu-wa       dza     dza
        3SG - ERG     rice    eat.PST
        'Did s/he eat rice?'

    b.  *umuwa dza ʌdza*

        umu-wa       dza     ʌ-dza
        3SG-ERG      rice    NEG-eat.PST
        'Did s/he not eat rice.'

## 2.7 Imperative constructions

The marker *<ʌ->* is one of the negative markers that is found as the negative imperative constructions in Koyee. It always preceds the verb stem.

(11)  a.  *kimgo huŋa*

        kimgo        huŋ-a
        house LOC    enter- NPST
        'Enter the house.'

    b.  *kimgo ʌhuŋa*

        kimgo        ʌ-huŋ-a
        house LOC    NEG-enter- NPST
        'Enter the house.'

## 2.8 Tag-question

Tag-question takes *<ʌ->* whether in the past or in the non-past as negative question-tag as in (12a-b).

(12)  a.  *ramwa dza dzada dza kʰa*

        ram-wa    dza dza-da    ʌ-dza
        Ram -ERG     rice eat- NPST NEG-eat
        kʰa
        PART
        'Ram eats rice, doesn't he?'

    b.  *ramwa dza ʌdza dza kʰa*

        ram-wa    dza ʌ-dza     dza kʰa
        Ram- ERG rice NEG-eat.PST eat PART
        'Ram did not eat rice, did he?'

## 2.9 Optative sentences

In Koyee, the marker *<ʌ->* appears to be the form of negation as in (13a-b).

(13)  a.  *umuwa kʰiba kʌldune*

        umu-wa      *kʰiba*    *kʌldu-ne*
        3 SG -ERG    dog     chase.PST.3SG-
        OPT
        'May he chase the dog!'

    b.  *umuwa kʰiba ʌkʌldune*

        umu-wa  *kʰiba ʌ-kʌldu-ne*
        3 SG -ERG dog   NEG-chase.PST-OPT
        'May he not chase the dog!'

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## 3 Typological implications

The most common negative strategies in any language are those used to negate the entire proposition (Payne, 1997:282). Kiranti negative verb forms cannot always be derived from the positive forms in a straightforward way. Further, negation is formed different ways in the past and non-past (Ebert, 1994). Most of the negative affixes seem to originate in *mVn*, which appears in various reduced forms as prefix or as suffix, and often both together (*ibid*: 40). The table1 presents how the Kiranti languages employ the negative markers with the evidences she has put forward.

Table1: Comparison among some Kiranti languages[4]

| | Khal. | Thul. | Cam. | Koyee |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| verbal: | | | | |
| NPST | /mu-/ | me-/mi | pa/mna | meʔ/ʌ-pa-aina |
| PST (+IRR) | /mu-/ | me-/ | pa- | ʌ |
| nominal: | /mu-/ | mi- | mi- | ʌ- |

The table 1 presents that Koyee has the negative markers as <meʔ> and <ʌ-> in the non-past whereas Khalng employs <mu->, Thulung <me-/ mi->, Camling <pa-/ mna/ pa-aina >and <mi->. In the past tense, Khaling <mu->, Thulung <me->, Camling <pa-> whereas Koyee exhibits <ʌ-> as the negative markers. Unlike Koyee and Camlingm, we can view that Khaling and Thulung share the closer morpheme <mu-> and <me-> . In the case of nominal, unlike Koyee the negative forms are realized as <mu->in Khaling, <-mi> in Thulung, <mi-> in Camling.

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[4] The data placed in the table are derived from Ebert(1994). The full form of the above mentioned languages are: Khal=Khaling, Thul= Thulung, Cam= Chamling(Chamling), Dum= Dumi.

## 4 Conclusion

In Koyee, prefix <ʌ-> is realized as morphological negation whereas <meʔ> can be realized as constituent negation in Koyee. Non-past declarative construction, past declarative constructions, identificational 'be' verb in the past tense, existential 'be' verb in the past, identificational 'be' verb in the past, imperative and optative constructions exhibit the negative marker <ʌ-> in Koyee whereas non-past interrogative constructions, identificational 'be' verb in the non-past employ <meʔ>. Table 2 presents the form and functions of the Koyee in detail.

Table 2: Forms and functions of negation in Koyee

| Marker | Gloss | Function |
|---|---|---|
| <ʌ-> | NEG | non-past declarative construction, past declarative constructions, identificational 'be' verb in the past tense, existential 'be' verb, identificational 'be' verb, imperative and optative constructions |
| <meʔ> | NEG | non-past interrogative constructions, identificational 'be' verb in the non-past |

**Abbreviations**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | = | First person |
| 2 | = | Second person |
| 3 | = | Third person |
| DU | = | Dual |
| ERG | = | Ergative |
| GEN | = | Genitive |
| Incl. | = | Inclusive |
| LOC | = | Locative |
| NEG | = | Negative |
| NPST | = | Non-past |
| OPT | = | Optative |
| PART | = | Particle |
| PL | = | Plural |
| POSS | = | Possessive |
| PRF | = | Perfective |

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| PST | = | Past |
| SG | = | Singular |

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# Women literacy in Nepal: An ethnolinguistic perspective

*Ambika Regmi*

## 1 Introduction

This paper is an attempt to look at the ethnolinguistic (linguistic and cultural) complexities and their bearing in the women literacy in Nepal. Since time immemorial, Nepal lying in the lap of the Himalayas has been a multilingual, multiethnic, multireligious and multicultural country. With 92 plus languages of four language families, Nepal houses different communities with different cultural settings. In a developing country like Nepal linguistic and socio-cultural setting plays a vital to promote women literacy. There exist deep-rooted cultural evils such as dowry, early marriage, *kumari, deuki, jhuma, chabadi, kamlaris, etc,* in Nepal. Teaching materials in general do not explain both the good and bad aspects inherent in the culture. Moreover, literacy programmes in general are conducted in the language of wider communication, not in the respective mother tongues of the speech community. In Nepal efforts have been made for women literacy/empowerment from both governmental and non-governmental sectors. However, Nepal has achieved a little success in women education. The hindering conservative aspects of orthodox Nepali culture, the women in Nepal are still deprived of basic literacy.

This paper is organized into five sections: Section 2 briefly makes an overview of the linguistic and cultural complexity in Nepal. In section 3, we discuss the bearing of linguistic and cultural complexity in the women literacy in Nepal. Section 4 presents some ways for promoting literacy in Nepalese context. In section 5, we present the summary of the paper.

## 2 Linguistic and cultural complexity

Only 26.4 % of the total population of female has basic literacy skills. There has been ethnic, caste and gender disparity which has trapped many people into a vicious cycle of poverty in Nepal. The girls, no matter whether they belong to caste system or indigenous groups in comparison of boys are still deprived of better education. Moreover, the girls belonging to a 'lower caste' are more suffering from the gender inequalities as they are deprived of education. The fact is that numerous programs were/ are being launched by various organizations and the government to maintain the gender equality and empower the women, the prevailing complex linguistic and cultural setting of Nepal has prevented these marginalized groups from progressing. Linguistic and cultural aspects play a vital role in strategies to promote women literacy in a multilingual and multicultural country like Nepal

## 2.1 Linguistic complexity

Nepal presents a complex linguistic situation. As per 2001 census, at least 92 different living languages are spoken in Nepal, though other studies list 123 living languages. Kusunda, previously thought to be extinct, is also spoken by some people in Nepal. Some language families have large numbers of languages and some have only a small number of languages. In terms of number of speakers, the Indo-Aryan language family is the largest, but in terms of the number of distinct languages, the Tibeto-Burman language family is the largest. The major languages of Nepal (percent spoken as mother tongue) are Nepali (49%), Maithili (12%), Bhojpuri (8%), Tharu (6%), Tamang (5%), Newari/Nepal Bhasa (4%), Magar (3%), Awadhi (2%), Bantawa (2%), Limbu (1%), and Bajjika (1%). The remaining languages are each spoken as mother tongue by less than one percent of the population, for example Dura. Nepali, written in Devanagari script, is the official, national language and serves as *lingua franca* among Nepalese of different ethno-linguistic groups.

There are 57 Tibeto-Burman languages in Nepal. There are at least two major branches of Tibeto-Burman language family the Himalayish branch (the pronominalizing branch) and the Bodish

branch (the branches closely related to Tibetan). These branches can be further divided into many sub-branches or clusters.

## 2.2 Cultural complexity

The Nepal Census 2001 reported 103 social caste/ethnic groups, some of them comprising less than 0.1 per cent of the population. These were classified first into 35 categories and then into 10 major groups. This classification has been based on (a) socio-cultural background, (b) ecological region, (c) population size, (d) the kind of housing unit occupied, (e) literacy and educational attainments, and (f) access to jobs in emerging better-paid modern sectors and prestigious occupations entailing power and control over national resources.

The rich cultural heritage of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, has evolved over centuries. This multi-dimensional cultural heritage encompasses within itself the cultural diversities of various ethnic, tribal, and social groups inhabiting different altitudes, and it manifests in various forms: music and dance; art and craft; folklores and folktales; languages and literature; philosophy and religion; festivals and celebrations; and foods and drinks.

The 2001 census of Nepal has identified that 80.6% of the population follows Hinduism as their main religion. Another major religion is Buddhism which is practiced by about 11% of the population. There is also a practice a syncretic blend of Hinduism, Buddhism and/or animist tradition). About 3.2% of the population is Muslim and 3.6% of the population follows the indigenous Kirant religion. Christianity is practiced officially by less than 0.5% of the population in Nepal.

With a multiplicity of groups, Nepal has several cults, and gods and goddesses, which co-exist with the major religions. In its long cultural history, Nepal has always remained a land of religious harmony. There exist deep-rooted cultural norms such as dowry, early marriage, *kumari, deuki, jhuma, chabadi, etc,* in Nepal. Some of the major deep rooted social norms in Nepalese society may be enumerated as follows:

a) Badi, a traditional mobile community of professional entertainers socially and culturally excluded by the feudal system as well as treated as so-called untouchable specialized in making musical instruments, classical singing and dancing and fishing;

b) Deuki: A girl traditionally offered to god/goddess (mostly in western part of Nepal);

c) Jhuma: A girl traditionally offered to god/goddess;

d) Kumari: A girl from Shakya family appointed as a living goddess till menstruation;

e) Dalit: A traditionally so-called untouchable community under Hindu religion, downtrodden underprivileged community socially excluded, culturally mistreated and educationally backward class so called untouchable;

f) Kamaiya/Kamlaris: the children for landlords who give a portion of land for cultivation to Tharu community on the condition that they send their young daughter or sisters to work in their houses;

g) Chaubadi: Keeping the women in a secluded hut for period of menstruation in western remote part of Nepal

## 3 Bearing of linguistic and cultural complexity in the women literacy

In Nepal, since time immemorial the gender inequality has existed because of linguistic and cultural complexity at two levels: the household level and community level. Such inequality has been the major hurdle for the promotion of the women literacy in Nepal.

### 3.1 Household level

It is said that inequity against women occurs from birth to death. As a process of socialization, in Nepal, every member learns the gender roles in the house. In Nepalese society, the male is found to be authoritarian toward female members of the family. The daughters are taken as liabilities in Hindu society and culture. Parents and other

family members have a preference to sons over daughters.

If a son is born, a big celebration is held but when a daughter is born the family does not rejoice. Discrimination between sons and daughters is manifested through differential child care, food provision, clothing, education, play, work and social mobility. Most parents do not want to invest on their daughters because they become someone else's property. However, in indigenous nationalities like Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu and Tamang, there is no discrimination between sons and daughters.

The daughters of the Terai community in common with the daughters in the neighbouring country India have been tortured from dowry system locally referred to as *Daijoo/Tilak*. A bride incapable of bringing enough dowries is not only harassed in her home but also physically tortured.

In Hindu society a women is treated as untouchable for four or five days during menstruation. In this period the girls are not encouraged to go to attain the class especially in remote villages. There are also cases of dropping the schools after the menstruation. However, untouchability is not practiced by indigenous groups in Nepal. In Western Nepal, Hindu women must live in a small hut called *Chhaupadi* or in a cowshed during menstruation and delivery. Dalit women have been traditionally treated as "untouchables" and they are not encouraged to study in the schools.

Child marriage is still prevalent in most areas of Nepal. Young married girls experience the deprivation of education in Nepal. Polygamy is widely practiced, whereas polyandry is still followed by mountain communities such as the Dolpali, Lhopa, Baragaunle and Manange.

## 3.2 Community level

Aside from inequalities in the family, the community also has certain attitudes towards women affecting their status in society.

In the Western Terai region, *kamaiya* bonded labor is still prevalent though it was abolished by the law. All the family members of such laborers were exploited by their landlords throughout their lives by engaging them in agricultural and domestic work. After gaining freedom from bonded labor, the laborers have a difficult time making a living due to the inability of the government to provide for them. There are also practices of *Deuki, Jhuma and Kumari* in particular society in Nepal. Due to some traditional religious practices, some women lose their freedom. For example, in Baitadi, a district in the far-western region, some poor girls are purchased by rich or high caste people and offered to the gods as *Deuki*. Later, these girls become prostitutes. In the mountain region, Buddhist families offer their second daughters to the monasteries where they live a life of *Jhuma*. They must practice celibacy for life. The Newars of Kathmandu Valley believe in a goddess called Kumari. For them, the women should adhere to Kumari. Hence, they should live in temples until they menstruate. After menstruation, they are no longer eligible to be treated as a Kumari and many of them remain single because of the belief that whoever marries them would die. Women of one of the Dalit caste groups called Badi are forced by the society to engage in commercial sex as their only profession.

It is claimed that in Nepal there is no right on woman's body. A Nepali woman does not have any right to her own body. She has no right to ensure her reproductive health. She has no right to decide when to become pregnant, how many times to become pregnant, and whether or not to terminate pregnancy. Decisions about such matters are usually done by men and women have to follow them faithfully.

Hindu values have a direct bearing on gender discrimination. Some of them are: *dhilo paye, chhora paye* ("let it be late, but let it be a son"), *chhora paye swarga jaane* ("the birth of a son paves the way to heaven"), *chhori ko janma hare ko karma* ("a daughter is born with a doomed fate"), *chhora paye khasi, chhori paye pharsi* ("if a son is born, the event is celebrated by sacrificing a goat, if it is daughter, a pumpkin is enough"), *mare paap, pale punya* ("it is a sin if the groom kills the bride, charity, if nurtured") and *swasni machecko buddhi pachhadi* ("women are always shortsighted").

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Basically, three factors are accountable for gender disparity in Nepal. They may be referred to as patriarchy, hegemony or dominance of Hindu cultural values, and cultural diversity.

Since Nepal is a patriarchal society, husbands exercise their control over their wives' labor, production, sexuality, mobility and economic resources including property. This is manifested in the religion, legal system, political institution, media and educational institutions. But indigenous women have a better position and status than that of Hindu women. Their position in public places is not good. Many of them are coerced to Hinduization thanks to the loss of their traditional language, religion and culture. In such cases, the males of indigenous communities may be even stricter than their Hindu counterpart in exploiting, subjugating and oppressing women.

Due to Hegemony Hindu cultural values, especially, the women belonging to "low caste" or Dalits and indigenous ethnic groups have been doubly victimized as one as women in general and the other as Dalit or indigenous women. Even after the establishment of democracy in Nepal, the disparity could not be ended practically in Nepal. No doubt, Nepalese society is characterized by the diversity in caste and ethnicity, religion, language, region, ecology and culture.

As noted earlier, Nepalese society is socially and culturally diverse. A significant impact is realized not only on the attitudes towards women and gender relations but also is manifested in caste and ethnicity, language, and religion.

In Nepal, non-Hindu ethnic group are discriminated. The women belonging to other nationalities like the Madhesis and Muslims are discriminated by the state because they speak their own mother tongue. Hindu women are more privileged than non-Hindus such as Animists, Buddhists, Lamaists, Islam and Christians. Those living in far-western, mid-western development regions are more disadvantaged than that of living in western, central and eastern development regions because the latter have more access to education and health services and information.

## 4 Strategies for promoting women literacy in Nepal

As noted earlier complex linguistic and cultural setting of Nepal have a profound bearing on the gender disparity and disempowerment of women in Nepal. The total socio linguistic situation has not yet been identified in Nepal as the socio-linguistic survey is being carried on for the last two years. Another important reality is that anthropological survey has not yet been conducted in Nepal. Thus it is not easy to state which speech community is living in which cultural setting. Many speech communities share the same type of cultural setting. In Nepal attempts have been made to encourage the girls from every speech community to get educated. However, here is the disparity in the enrollment of girls and boys in the school. The primary education is not practicable and suitable in the complex linguistic and cultural situation of Nepal. The first reason is that the medium of instruction in the school is compulsorily Nepali, language of wider communication in Nepal. The children from non Nepali speech community can not understand what the teachers explain in Nepali in the class on the one hand, the Nepali language used in writing the text books is not understandable to the average students from non Nepali speech communities on the other. The use of Sanskritized vocabulary may hinder the comprehension of the text even to Nepali speaking students. The subject matters of the subjects like social studies are foreign to the children. They are compelled to study the cultural aspects of the dominant language speech community. Due to the lack of understanding of the subject matter the students do not become interested in the study and drop the school. Especially, the girls from non Nepali speaking communities have been disadvantaged from such type of education system in Nepal. To improve this situation in Nepal we propose multi-lingual education in non Nepali speaking communities. As we know that different communities have there own social and cultural customs which have been deep rooted since long. The social customs also vary in terms of caste/ethnic groups, language, religion and geography. The culture which has hindered the women to progress should be

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gradually refined. Unless the women are not aware of the bad aspects related to their religion and culture it is not possible to promote gender equality and empower the women in Nepal. The main strategy for this is to educate the women in such a way that they become ready to not to go behind the cultural evils in their daily activities. If primary education is imparted in the respective languages of the speech communities especially the girls would be highly encouraged. The curriculum should be framed in such a way that it includes the information of the local cultures: good and bad aspects, local technology and local knowledge. The curriculum should be devoted to impart the knowledge directly related to the life of the women. Such knowledge may include rearing babies, farming and other skills which can generate income in the family. Such curriculum may include the knowledge of maintaining the community forest managed by women. This will create awareness in women which will promote gender equality and empower women in Nepal.

As other strategies have been ineffective to promote women literacy and empower the women in Nepal we have to think very seriously to impart at least primary education in mother tongue by preparing teaching materials containing the subject matters suited for the local needs and socio cultural setting. This is a fact that it is a very ambitious matter to produce teaching materials suited to respective speech community of specific cultural setting. As linguistics and cultural complexities have been accountable for the gender disparity and disempowerment of women in Nepal, sooner or later this approach has to be considered if Nepal is to achieve the millennium development goals in stipulated time.

## 5 Conclusion

Nepal is generally characterized by linguistic and cultural complexities from the time immemorial. Such complexities have their bearing in the women literacy and women empowerment in Nepal. Women literacy is undeniably important in a developing country like Nepal. Women literacy is considered to be central to economic, social and human development in general. By removing inequalities through literacy we can give societies

a better chance to develop. Unless women have a better literacy, economies of a country do not grow faster. Literacy is also an important human right. In Nepal, the issues of women's literacy has been raised by a number of organizations and the government has also launched programs to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. However, deep-rooted and long-held beliefs in Nepal are unhurried to change. Caste and gender discrimination has affected access to education. Children from 'lower caste' homes and girls are the ones falling behind in enrollment numbers and also in class performance. Since education in Nepal is not a universal right and it is not really free, economically challenged.

"Promote gender equality and empower women" is one of the major Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were developed and signed in September 2000. The major target to realize this goal was to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. It is possible only through women literacy in a developing country like Nepal. Unless girls are educated based on the curriculum fortified by the analysis of cultural aspects in the respective mother tongues the situation cannot be improved.

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# Overlap in Nepali spoken interaction

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*This paper analyzes the expression and function of overlap in Nepali spoken interaction. Important functions of overlap are cooperation, turn taking, and requests for postponement. The frequency of overlap depends on the activity type, the relationship among the participants and other background factors of the interaction in which it occurs.*

## 1 Background

Overlap is a situation where 'more than one participant talks at a time' in conversation. It has become one of the central issues in spoken language analysis especially in conversation analysis. For long, attempts have been made to deal with overlaps while analyzing spoken interaction, as they are frequent, complicated and tricky at the same time and pose a challenge to both transcription and automatic recognition of spoken language.

Overlap is discussed in Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and more thoroughly in Jefferson (1986, 1973, and 2004). Bhadra (2004) has studied overlap in Nepali conversation while dealing with turn taking in Nepali. All the mentioned works use the Conversational Analysis (CA) model that is intended as a sociological approach to conversation. A slightly different model of analyzing spoken interaction is provided by Activity based Communication Analysis (ACA), developed by Jens Allwood (1976) which is pragmatically oriented and based on social activities.

In this paper we will use the ACA model to analyze overlap in Nepali spoken interaction. Before we proceed with the analysis, it may be appropriate to review some of the differences between the CA and ACA models briefly based on Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), Jefferson (2004) and Allwood (2007).

1. CA takes *turns* as the basic units of conversation whereas ACA takes *contributions* as the basic unit of spoken interaction. Contributions include both vocal verbal units and gestures. The term *utterance* is used for spoken (vocal verbal) contributions.

2. CA assumes that a system of turn taking allocates single turns to single speakers. A fundamental feature of conversation is that one party talks at a time. ACA assumes that though single turns are allocated to single speakers, other speakers often contribute simultaneously with gestural and vocal feedback.

3. CA takes interactive sequences of contributions to be organized by 'adjacency pairs' e.g. question – answer etc. which are the result of social convention whereas ACA takes interactive sequences of contributions to make up 'exchange types', e.g. question – answer etc., which are the result of an interplay between evocative functions, commitments, obligations and evaluations.

4. CA claims that a speaker has the right to speak until a turn transition relevance point (TRP) occurs, where another speaker can take over. ACA adds to this also an account of the obligations and commitments of speaker and recipient, e.g if a question is asked, the speaker has a commitment to a desire for information, which corresponds to an obligation for the listener to evaluate if he/she is willing and able to accept the suggested task and provide the information.

5. For CA overlap, though not uncommon in conversation, results from a situation where there is competition between two speakers to grab the next turn around a TRP (transition relevance point). Overlaps are seen as brief because among two overlapping speakers one should drop out in order to resolve the overlap and recover the ideal situation i.e. one-party-talks-at-a-time. In ACA, overlaps are not seen as mainly resulting from competition but rather from the need to give feedback in interaction. Such feedback is often brief and supportive rather than competitive.

Though the perspectives vary both CA and ACA deal with overlap and probably agree on some basic facts about overlaps e.g. that overlaps occur when more than one participant speaks at a

time and that overlaps have a function that can be analyzed.

Next, we briefly present our ACA inspired methodology.

## 2. Methodology

The data used in this paper has been taken from a social activity based spoken language corpus of Nepali. The corpus has half a million transcribed words based on about 60 hours of audio and audio-visual recordings. The transcriptions are made in Devanagari of naturally occurring conversations outside of studio. The corpus includes data from 17 social activities namely Shopping, Discussion, Task-oriented formal meeting, Dinner conversation, Conversation while working, Hotel, Academic seminar, Radio talk show, TV talk show, Interview, Hospital, Classroom interaction, Phone, Market Place, Task oriented informal meeting, Honor, Fortune telling, Formal discussion, Thesis defense, and Elicitation. The transcription also includes pause, silence, and overlap as central features of spoken language.

We have studied overlapped units along with the whole utterances in which they occur as their immediate linguistic context. The transcription system that we have followed in the examples is based on the Gothenburg Transcription Standard (GTS).

- Examples are transcribed in IPA, which is equivalent to the phonemic Devanagari transcription in the corpus.

- All the examples begin with Dollar symbol '$' followed by a Roman uppercase letter and a colon. The contents between two dollar symbols are utterances.

- The gloss in English follows the example utterances; this is done for the sake of simplicity since the overlaps need to be easily observable in the examples.

- The glosses are only close to but not exact or equivalent to the original meaning in Nepali; most of the emphatic particles are not glossed.

- There are only Roman uppercase letters followed by colon in the English glosses to indicate the speakers.

- The speakers have been anonymized in these examples, thus only the Roman letters have been used.

- Overlap onset is marked with a left square bracket and overlap offset is marked with a right square bracket.

- Identical numbers follow the opening and closing pairs of brackets to indicate the corresponding overlaps across the utterances.

- Pauses are marked by slashes - single slash for short pause, double slashes for medium pause and triple slashes for long pause. The pauses have linguistic value.

- A vertical line or bar within angle bracket indicates silence. Silence is only the passing of time, where the communicative function is not necessarily known.

## 3. Overlap in Nepali spoken interaction

This section contains a discussion on Nepali overlap from various perspectives.

### 3.1 Number of speakers

All participants in spoken interaction can, in principle, contribute to overlapping utterances. An overlap between two participants occurs when two participants speak at the same time, as in 1.

(1) $J:   mero nam ḍipenḍr ʌḏikari [$^{10}$ m ]$^{10}$

  $C:   [$^{10}$ ke ]$^{10}$ bʌnnu ḅo

  'J:   My name is Dipendra Adhikari [$^{10}$ m]$^{10}$

  C:   [$^{10}$ What ]$^{10}$ did you say'

                    (V001022001)

In this example participant C overlaps with participant J, at the end of J's utterance with a negative feedback phrase (clarification) which has the functions; Contact, not Perception, not Understanding This overlap is at the place where a piece of information has been completed and another is beginning. The place can be taken as a Transition Relevance Point (TRP) in the CA model since it is supported by the completion of

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a chunk of information and change in prosodic features. However, if we go beyond the two overlapping utterances and regard the whole activity the two utterances are a part of, it is not a completion point and perhaps not even a TRP. The reason is that the activity is a formal discussion where participant J is taking his turn to ask questions or make comments on a presentation. Thus, J's utterance will be complete only when he has introduced himself and asked a question or made a comment. Although this is also known to participant C, he overlaps with J since he wants to know J's name and note it down for when he himself needs to address J, while responding to J's query or comment later. With regard to the overlapped part of J's utterance, is not clear whether it is an Own Communication Management Memory Processing unit or part of the Nepali pronoun *mʌ* 'I'.

An overlap of several persons occurs when more than two participants speak at the same time, as in 2.

(2)    $D:    om ḅurḅubʌsso ṭʌ [$^{131}$ ɦo ni ]$^{131}$

        $C:    [$^{131}$ ɦalnu nʌ ṭʌ ]$^{131}$

        $H:    [$^{131}$ aũtsʰʌ ]$^{131}$

        $A:    [$^{131}$ ɦo ]$^{131}$

        'D:    Om bhurbhuvashwa [$^{131}$ is ]$^{131}$

        C:    [$^{131}$ Enchant please ]$^{131}$

        H:    [$^{131}$ Can you say ]$^{131}$

        A:    [$^{131}$ yes ]$^{131}$'

                    (V001005001)

In this example four participants overlap with each other. Participant D is holding the floor and the others' overlap at the end of D's utterance. The example is an extraction from a dinner conversation where participant D chants a part of a secret hymn for Hindus in Sanskrit. This is normally not said loudly so most people are not familiar with it and believe that if someone claims to know it, they actually do not. In this context participant C requests D to chant it, participant H asks whether participant D knows it, and participant A supports with positive feedback.

## 3.2 The context of overlap

The local context of an overlap can be described by giving the position where it occurs within an utterance i.e. utterance initial, utterance medial, or utterance final.

An utterance initial overlap is a result of the beginning of an utterance overlapping with another utterance, as in 3.

(3)    $B:    [$^4$ mero ]$^4$

        $A:    [$^4$ tsʰoro ]$^4$ tsʰoro tsaɦija ba lai

        'B:    [$^4$ My ]$^4$

        A:    [$^4$ Son ]$^4$ son is needed for father'

                    (A002011003)

In this example, participants B and A start talking at the same time, whereupon B drops out. It is a simultaneous start resulting in an utterance an initial overlap where one participant drops out to resolve the overlap and the other participant continues speaking. In this way, perception and understanding and cooperation to achieve the global goal of the activity are facilitated.

Besides occurring initially and finally, overlaps can occur in medial position as in 4.

(4)    $B:    ʌ kʌṭi boṭ ḅʌnja ni guli boṬ ḅʌnja // jo pʰulḍa po jã kʌsṭo rʌmailo ɦuntsʰ ɦʌi [$^{13}$ dẓʌrrʌrʌr ]$^{13}$ pʰulḍa ṭʌ

        $A:    [$^{13}$ ʌ̃ ]$^{13}$

        'B:    O guli boT means how many plants // when it blossoms here it is really beautiful no [$^{13}$ full blossom ]$^{13}$ while blossoming

        A:    [$^{13}$ yes ]$^{13}$'

                    (V001007006)

In this example, A overlaps giving feedback to B, in medial position, replying to B's eliciting word ɦʌi (no). The overlap (like most overlaps) has no turntaking or interruption function, it is

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supportive feedback encouraging the interlocutor to continue.

Utterance final overlaps occur when a participant begins speaking before the speaker holding the floor has completed his/her utterance as in 5.

(5)  $B:   fiʌin befiosʌi b̤ʌko fiũ [² fiʌdzur ko ]²

     $A:   [² kʌt̤i ]² ber sʌmʌe befios b̤a t̪ʰjo

     'B:   No I became unconscious [² yours ]²

     A:    [² how much ]² time (you) became unconscious'

                                    (V001014033)

In this example, taken from a doctor patient conversation, the doctor A uses a question word that overlaps with the end of the patient B's utterance, to ask B to specify his description.

Besides utterance position, it is also interesting to consider how pauses and silences relate to overlaps.

An example of how, in Nepali, overlaps can follow pauses, can be found in 6.

(6)  $B: < | > tsar nʌmmʌr ma sʌnd̤ʌr / [⁷²
          sʌnd̤ʰb̤ ]⁷² b̤ʌ tsʰ

     $C:   [⁷² sʌnd̤ ]⁷²

     $C:   sʌnd̤ʌb̤ b̤ʌ tsʰ jo [⁷³ kʌmpjut̤ʌr ]⁷³ ko
           fio ki t̤ʌpaĩ [⁷⁴ le fio jo tsʌĩ ]⁷⁴ milaunʌ
           launus fiʌinʌ sʌnd̤ʌrb̤ gʌrnu pʌro ʌb
           ʌli t̤ʌlʌ auns t̤ʌ / prist̤ nʌmmʌr sat̤ʰi
           ma dzanus

     'B:   < | > Reference at number four / [⁷²
           sandabh ]⁷² is there

     C:    [⁷² Sandabh ]⁷²

     C:    it has become sandabh [⁷³ computer ]⁷³
           of it is or you [⁷⁴ did it this ]⁷⁴ get
           corrected no it should be changed into
           sandharbha now please see a bit below
           / go to page number sixty'

                                    (A001023004)

In this example, B produces an incomplete word preceded by a pause. Also following the pause, C overlaps with B, trying to complement B, using the same word as B.

We have also found the overlap followed by silence. This is one of the overlap resolutions described in CA (Jefferson, 2004: 45). Usually, one of two simultaneously starting participants drops out to get a one-at-a-time situation. Sometimes, however, both participants stop speaking which results in a silence before one of them continues to speak as in 7.

(7)  $A:   [⁴⁷ ʌni apʰʌi le ]⁴⁷

     $B:   [⁴⁷ apʰʌile dzannʌ pʌrjo ]⁴⁷ < | >
           makuro ko dzalo ma dz̤ĩga pʌsjo
           pʰʌse dzʌst̤o fio jo

     'A:   [⁴⁷ Then self ]⁴⁷

     B:    [⁴⁷ Self should know ]⁴⁷ < | > fly
           entered into spider's net it seems
           that it has been trapped'

                                    (A002011003)

In this example, the overlap is produced by a simultaneous start followed by silence that is then is broken by participant B, after the silence.

### 3.3 Expression length, function and content words

Overlaps can be limited to one word or can stretch over many words. It can involve both content words and function words.

Thus, overlaps can vary as to whether they involve one word or multiple words or whether they are content words or function words as well as to whether they involve simultaneous or partly sequential utterances.

Both single word overlaps and multi word overlaps can be found in Nepali spoken interaction, as in 8 and 9 respectively.

(8)  $B:   es ma pʌni [² tsʰʌ̃d̤ʌi tsʰʌ ]²

     $C:   [² ʌ̃ ]² ʌ̃ tsʰʌ

     'B:   In this also [² it is there ]²

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C:   [<sup>2</sup> yes ]<sup>2</sup> yes it is'

In this example, one word of C's feedback phrase overlaps with B, at the end of B's utterance.

(9)   $B:   ɦĩ̃ ʌn ʈʌ bagmukʰe ɦʌru piʈunja ɦʌru [<sup>20</sup> sʌppʌi pʰultsʰʌ ]<sup>20</sup>

      $A:   [<sup>20</sup> bagmukʰe kʌsʈo ]<sup>20</sup> ɦuntsʰʌ mʌi le ʈ ḏekʰja tsʰʌinʌ

      'B:   mm then Baghmukhes and Pitunyas [<sup>20</sup> all blossom ]<sup>20</sup>

      A:   [<sup>20</sup> What Baghmukhe ]<sup>20</sup> is I have not seen yet'

In this example, the two initial words of participant A's utterance overlaps with the two final words of B's utterance.

Both function words and content words have been found as overlaps, as in 10 and 11.

(10)   $B:   kei tsʰʌinʌ pʌila ʈʌ nwaũ̪ḍa kʰeri m tsiso pani le nwaũtsʰu nwaũ̪ḍa kʰeri tsilaũ̪ʈʰjo [<sup>4</sup> eso dziu ]<sup>4</sup> ma ʈʌ tsilaune kuro aiɦaltsʰ tsiso pani le ɦʌi ʈjo ʈesʈʌi ɦo

       $A:   [<sup>4</sup> m ]<sup>4</sup>

       $A:   ɦĩ̪ḍnʌ garo ḅʌko oreko ʈʌ tsʰʌinʌ

       'B:   There is nothing such earlier while bathing mm (I) have a bath with cold water while bathing it used to itch [<sup>4</sup> just body ]<sup>4</sup> on itching is normal while bathing it does not matter

       A:   [<sup>4</sup> Mm ]<sup>4</sup>

       A:   do you have difficulty in walking'

In this extraction from a doctor patient conversation, A's GFB CPU unit *m* overlaps with B's utterance in medial position. The overlap has a supportive,

cooperative function as A waits and begins her turn after B completes his turn.

(11)   $C: < | > ʈesʈʌi ḅʌjo kja [<sup>19</sup> baʈabʌrã̪ḍ nʌi ]<sup>19</sup>

       $B:   [<sup>19</sup> ʌbʌ kʌsʈo ɦuntsʰʌ ]<sup>19</sup> ḅʌne ni

       'C:   < | > It has become as you said [<sup>19</sup> environment ]<sup>19</sup>

       B:   [<sup>19</sup> Now what happens ]<sup>19</sup> that'

In this extract from a telephone conversation between colleagues, participant C's final content word is overlapped by the initial part of B's utterance.

Overlaps can also occur when content words have a function use as in 12.

(12)   $B:   ʌni [<sup>3</sup> ke tsʰʌ ]<sup>3</sup>

       $A:   [<sup>3</sup> ke tsʰʌ ]<sup>3</sup> sʌr ʌrʈʰok kʰʌbʌrkʰabʌr

       'B:   And [<sup>3</sup> how is it going ]<sup>3</sup>

       A:   [<sup>3</sup> How is it going ]<sup>3</sup> sir other news'

In Nepali, food questions like *'Have you had your tea?'* or *'Have you had your meal?'*, health questions like *'Is your health good?'*, and news questions like *'What is the news?'* can be used as greetings or post greeting sequences. In the above extract, from a telephone conversation between friends, a news question overlaps with the same question in the following utterance.

In the following extract from a radio talk show, there are overlaps in two successive utterance pairs, see 13.

(13)   $A:   [<sup>82</sup> ɦʌdzur ]<sup>82</sup>

       $B:   [<sup>82</sup> ek pʌisa ]<sup>82</sup> tsuroḍ kinjo ḅʌni ḍui ʈa aũ̪ʈʰjo

       $A:   [<sup>83</sup> ek pʌisa ko ]<sup>83</sup>

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$B:     [$^{83}$ euḍa pʌisa ]$^{83}$ ko

'A:     [$^{82}$ Yes ]$^{82}$

B:      [$^{82}$ One paisa ]$^{82}$ if cigarette is bought there would have been two

A:      [$^{83}$ With one paisa ]$^{83}$

B:      [$^{83}$ One paisa ]$^{83}$ of'

(A002011005)

B's overlapping unit in the first utterance pair is repeated by A, in A's next turn. B then overlaps with A, paraphrasing the same unit. The overlapping unit is a phrase meaning 'one Paisa' that is used by A to elicit feedback on the correctness of his/her perception/understanding as well as to show interest and by B to give such feedback by repeating what A said.

## 3.4 Functions of overlap

As we have seen, the overlap in Nepali spoken interaction can be used for supportive cooperation. It can also be used to take a turn or to request the postponement of a conversation.

The cooperative function often occurs through the use of feedback, as when a participant in the listener role gives feedback to a participant in the speaker role. Such feedback has crucial role in achieving the goal of communication – shared understanding. A participant who gives such feedback is co-operating with the other participant in the achievement of the overall goal of communication. The overlap in example 14 below gives an example.

(14)  $B:     tjã kʰas ṭesṭo pʰul sul [$^{87}$ bãgʌitsa ṭʌ mʌi l ṭ ]$^{87}$ kei pʌni ḍekʰin tjã [$^{88}$ tʰenʌ ]$^{88}$ tjo dẓar purʌi uɦi [$^{89}$ ḍubo ]$^{89}$ dẓar [$^{90}$ ke ]$^{90}$ tjo tʰjo

$A:     [$^{87}$ kei tʰenʌ ]$^{87}$

$A:     [$^{88}$ ɦim ]$^{88}$

$A:     [$^{89}$ ɦʌdzur ]$^{89}$

$A:     [$^{90}$ ɦʌdzur ]$^{90}$

$A:     ɦʌdzur

B:      There was no such flower and other [$^{87}$ garden I ]$^{87}$ did not see anything there [$^{88}$ there was nothing ]$^{88}$ that grass all the same [$^{89}$ conch grass ]$^{89}$ grass [$^{90}$ what ]$^{90}$ that was there

A:      [$^{87}$ nothing was there ]$^{87}$

A:      [$^{88}$ mm ]$^{88}$

A:      [$^{89}$ yes ]$^{89}$

A:      [$^{90}$ yes ]$^{90}$

A:      yes'

(V001013005)

In this extract from an interview, A overlaps many times giving feedback to B's utterances. The first overlap expresses agreement by reinforcing and complementing B's utterance, the other three overlaps give feedback expressing contact, perception, understanding and probably agreement.

When a participant tries to take a turn from another participant, the overlap is commonly used, as in 15.

(15)  $B:     ã̃ [$^{2}$ tjo tʌ ɦinnu pʌrtʰjo ]$^{2}$

      $A:     [$^{2}$ tu ṭummun ḍekʰi ]$^{2}$ nʌrʌnkoṭ ɦiḍintʰjo re bʌnne

      'B:     Yes [$^{2}$ (they) used to walk ]$^{2}$

      A:      [$^{2}$ From Tummun ]$^{2}$ to Narankot (they) used to walk as it is said that'

(V001013004)

In this extract from an interview, A overlaps with the final part of participant B's utterance and then continues while B stops speaking and lets A have the turn.

A request for postponement occurs when a participant in the listener role requests a participant in the speaker role to stop speaking for a while because he/she has to deal with something else before returning to the conversation, as in 16.

(16)  $H:     pʌilo kura [$^{5}$ ṭʌ ]$^{5}$

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$B:    [⁵ ekkʌi tsʰin ]⁵ fiʌi

H:     First thing [⁵ is ]⁵

B:     [⁵ For a moment ]⁵ please

<div align="right">(V001022001)</div>

In this extract from a formal discussion, B is requesting H to wait for a moment since B is not yet ready to start.

### 3.5 Overlap activity-wise

The number of overlaps does not seem to depend on activity type in a simple way. The following table presents selected examples from three different activity types of different nature in the Nepali spoken language corpus that show the variation in number of overlaps per minute between different instances of the same activity type.

Table 1: Overlaps in activity type 1 - shopping

| Activity recordings | Duration | Overlaps | Overlaps /minute |
|---|---|---|---|
| V001001002 | 0:14:16 | 107 | 7.64 |
| V001001001 | 0:15:49 | 137 | 8.56 |
| V001001004 | 0:17:57 | 195 | 10.83 |
| V001001003 | 0:17:10 | 247 | 14.52 |
| Mean | | | 10.39 |

Activity 1 - Shopping includes bargaining, thus more overlaps are expected in this activity type. As expected, a higher number of overlaps is found in this activity, with a mean value of 10.39 per minute. However, there is also a large variation in the number found in different recordings, from a minimum of 7.64 to a maximum of 14.52 per minute.

Table 2: Overlaps in activity type 7 – conversation while working

| Activities | Duration | Overlaps | Overlaps /minute |
|---|---|---|---|
| V001007002 | 0:18:42 | 26 | 1.36 |
| V001007004 | 0:17:28 | 65 | 3.82 |
| V001007007 | 0:26:26 | 149 | 5.72 |
| V001007001 | 0:16:53 | 187 | 11.00 |
| Mean | | | 5.48 |

The expectation concerning number of overlaps in this activity may be lower than for shopping, given the assumption that working needs more concentration and less talking. This prediction is also borne out if we consider the mean value 5.48 overlaps per minute. However, as we can see, the variation between instances of the activity is very large. The highest number of overlaps is 11, which is close to the highest number of overlaps in shopping, but the three other instances of the activity all have a lower number of overlaps than the instance of shopping that has the lowest number. Again the large variation means that we should be careful in claiming a relation between activity type and the number of overlaps.

Table 3: Overlaps activity type 11 – radio talk show

| Activities | Duration | Overlaps | Overlaps /minute |
|---|---|---|---|
| A002011007 | 0:25:35 | 1 | 0.03 |
| A002011008 | 0:15:00 | 1 | 0.06 |
| A002011006 | 0:31:18 | 169 | 5.45 |
| A002011005 | 0:29:43 | 165 | 5.50 |
| Mean | | | 2.76 |

In the radio talk show the number of overlaps is lower (mean value 2.76) than in shopping and conversation while working. In this activity type the variation between instances is lower too. The highest number of overlaps in this activity type is 5.5 and the lowest number is 0.03 per minute. So here it is perhaps a little safer to assume an influence of the activity type on the number of overlaps.

### 3.6 Overlap and relationship between participants

We have seen from the above that there is no simple one-to-one correspondence between activity type and number of overlaps. The tables show fairly large variation in the frequency of overlaps. However, it is possible to go deeper in our analysis. If we consider the radio talk show, all the four recordings belong to the same activity type but they have different backgrounds.

The two talk show recordings with the highest number of overlaps have been taken from a program that is run by a senior journalist aged

above 80. The participants in this program are also from the older generation. The host encourages the invitees to speak, he reminds them of past events, etc. and makes the environment familiar and friendly. The host repeats what the invitees say, he supplies information from shared background knowledge, he provides feedback and elicits consensus. As we have seen, most of the activities we have studied have overlaps. This is also true in these two radio talk shows, where encouraged and interested invitees also produces overlaps. The feeling of solidarity and mutual cooperation that is present in the whole activity seems to lead to an intermediately high number of overlaps in these two recordings.

If we instead turn to the two recordings with the lowest numbers of overlap, they come from talk shows that are run by a journalist apprentice, who meets a layman walking on a street, and then asks about his life, while walking together with him. The invitees in this unexpected situation seem hesitant and control themselves, feeling that the host is alien, maybe also a high profile person. Perhaps this feeling of alienation is behind the fact that these recordings have the lowest cases of overlap.

## 4. Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the above discussion. We have seen above that the ACA model is relevant and useful to account for some of the functional aspects of overlaps. Overlaps can be located in initial, medial or final position of an utterance. They can follow pauses and precede silence. In terms of length, there are both single word and multi word overlaps, and both function word and content words may overlap. Repetition is common when content word overlap. Content words are also found to be functioning as function words in many cases. We have noted three functions of overlaps, i.e., cooperation, turn taking, and requests for postponement. The frequency of overlaps has a relation to activity type, reflected in the mean values, but it does not have a simple one-to-one correspondence with the activity type. It is also based on the relationship among the participants, which is reflected in the large variation in number of overlaps per minute between instances.

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# Duration of consonants in Bhujel

Dan Raj Regmi

## 1 Introduction

This paper examines the duration of consonants in Bhujel, an endangered and preliterate language spoken by about 3,923 ethnic Bhujel, most of them living along the Mahabharata mountain range of Tanahun, Gorkha, Chitwan and Nawalparasi districts of Nepal. Natively referred to as *pukʰgyal ŋur* (*pukʰgyal* 'Bhujel' and *ŋur* 'language') this language belongs to the east Himalayish languages of Himalayish section of the Bodic branch of Tibeto-Burman language family (Regmi, 2007). Bhujel exhibits the difference in length between different classes of sounds such as voiceless, voiced, aspirated, voiced obstruents and sonorants.

This paper is organized into five sections. In section 2, we present speech data corpus for the measurement of the durations of the consonants. Section 3 deals with the difference in length between different classes of sounds. In section 4, we examine the effect of the position in the syllable on the duration. Section 5 summarizes the findings of the paper.

## 2 Speech data corpus and tools

Bhujel has 31 consonant phonemes. They show four-way contrasts: place of articulation, manner of articulation, voicing and aspiration. Table 1 presents the inventory of consonants in Bhujel.

Table 1: Inventory of consonants

| p  pʰ<br>b  bʰ | t  tʰ<br>d  dʰ | | | k  kʰ<br>g  gʰ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| m  mʰ | | n  nʰ | | ŋ  ŋʰ | |
| | | c  cʰ<br>j | | | |
| | | s | | | h |
| | | r  rʰ | | | |
| | | l  lʰ | | | |
| w  wʰ | | | y  yʰ | | |

Bishnu Bhujel (56), Ait Bahadur Bhujel (35), and Jit Kumar Bhujel (19) were chosen as consultants. They are the residents of Tanahun district. Table 2 shows target words used for the measurement of the consonants in onset and coda positions:

Table 2: Target words used for measurement

| | Onset | coda |
|---|---|---|
| p | /pam/ 'vagina' | /cop/ 'milk' |
| pʰ | /pʰam/ 'white' | /copʰ/ 'cut' |
| b | /baŋ/ 'stone' | |
| bʰ | /bʰaŋ/ 'hemp' | |
| t | /te/ 'a marker' | /at/ 'one' |
| tʰ | /tʰe/ 'other' | /atʰ/ 'eight' |
| d | /dar/ 'a kind of wood' | /at/ 'one' |
| dʰ | /dʰar/ 'sharp edge' | |
| c | /co/ 'son' | /tec/ 'strength' |
| cʰ | /cʰo/ 'move' | /tecʰ/ 'grave' |
| j | /jo/ 'propitious day' | /tej/ 'sperm' |
| k | /kam/ 'mouth' | /dak/ 'stain' |
| kʰ | /kʰam/ 'cut' | /dakʰ/ 'reach' |
| g | /gam/ 'village' | /dag/ 'net' |
| m | /ma/ 'also' | /cim/ 'bulb' |
| n | /na/ 'be' | /cin/ 'clitoris' |
| ŋ | /ŋa/ ' I' | /ciŋ/ 'unclear' |
| mʰ | /mʰe/ 'fire' | |
| nʰ | /nʰi/ 'day' | /minʰ/ 'attack' |
| ŋʰ | /ŋʰa/ 'fish' | /tuŋʰ/ 'trunk' |
| r | /rao/ 'hot' | /mar/ 'cut' |
| rʰ | /rʰao/ 'work done' | |
| l | /la/ 'band' | /mal/ 'unfinished' |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lʰ | / lʰa/ 'arrow' | | |
| s | /sin/ 'liver' | /bas/ 'rest ' | |
| h | /hin 'sell' | /bah/ 'shoulder' | |
| y | /yaŋ / 'fly' | /say/ 'nap' | |
| yʰ | /yʰam/ 'grasshopper' | | |
| w | /waŋ/ 'come' | /saw/ 'centipede' | |
| wʰ | /wʰaŋ/ 'as, like' | | |

Each target word given in Table 2 was recorded for ten times in isolation from each consultant. The target words were selected with a particular sound in a minimal pair. Each consonant sound has thirty utterances in total.

Each waveform file in Praat[1] was manually examined. The duration of each consonant was measured taking into account of the shape and size of wave form, spectrogram, formants and pitch. The average and the standard deviation of the duration of each sound in the onset and coda positions were calculated in Excel. Figures are presented in order to show the comparison between acoustic characteristics of different classes of sounds in Bhujel.[2]

**3 Duration**

Bhujel shows significant difference in length between different classes of sounds, i.e., differences between voiceless, voiced, and aspirated sounds; voiced obstruents (b, d, g) and sonorant stops (m, n, ŋ); and sonorant stops (m, n, ŋ) and other sonorants.

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[1] Praat is computer software for speech analysis and synthesis written by Paul Boersman and David Weenink at the Department of Phonetics of the University of Amsterdam.
[2] Moseley (ed. 2007:323) notes Bhujeli, which belongs to Chepangic branch of Tibeto-Burman language, is a severely endangered language of the world.

**3.1 Voiceless vs. voiced**

Table 3 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each voiceless and voiced consonant in Bhujel across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 3: Durations of voiceless and voiced consonants (in milliseconds)

| | Duration | | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| p | 0.0233 | b | 0.12715 |
| t | 0.0355 | d | 0.05461 |
| k | 0.0703 | g | 0.08152 |
| Avg | 0.0430 | | 0.08776 |

Table 3 shows that the voiceless sounds on the average are shorter than the voiced sounds. Figure 1 presents this phenomenon more clearly.
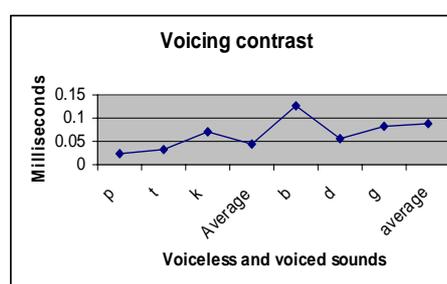


Figure 1: Duration of the voiceless and voiced consonants

Figure 1 distinguishes between the voiceless and voiced sounds in Bhujel in terms of acoustic durations. On the average, the voiceless sounds /p, t, k/are shorter than the voiced sound /b, d, g /.

**3.2 Voiceless unaspirated and aspirated**

Table 4 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each voiceless unaspirated and aspirated consonant in Bhujel across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

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Table 4: Duration of voiceless unaspirated and aspirated (in milliseconds)

|     | Duration  |       | Duration |
| --- | --------- | ----- | -------- |
| p   | 0.02332   | pʰ    | 0.12715  |
| t   | 0.0355    | tʰ    | 0.05461  |
| c   | 0.08345   | cʰ    | 0.12173  |
| k   | 0.0703    | kʰ    | 0.08152  |
| Avg | 0.0531425 |       | 0.09625  |

Table 4 shows that aspirated consonants in Bhujel across all the language consultants have a longer duration than that of voiceless unaspirated. This is presented in Figure 2.
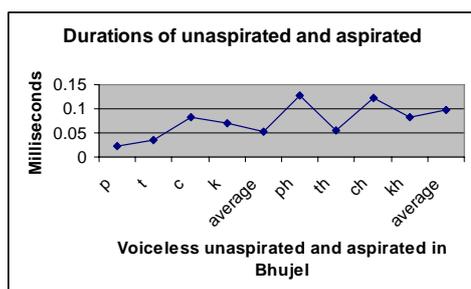


Figure 2: Duration of the voiceless unaspirated and aspirated

Figure 2 shows the acoustic distinction between the voiceless unaspirated and aspirated sounds in Bhujel in terms of durations. On the average, /p,t,c,k/ have shorter durations than /pʰ,tʰ,cʰ,kʰ/.

### 3.3 Voiced and voiced aspirated

Table 5 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each voiced and voiced aspirated consonant in Bhujel across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 5: Duration of the voiced and voiced aspirated (in milliseconds)

|     | Duration | | Duration |
| --- | -------- | ----- | -------- |
| b   | 0.12715  | bʰ    | 0.17916  |
| d   | 0.05461  | dʰ    | 0.117    |
| g   | 0.08152  | gʰ    | 0.1821   |
| Avg | 0.08776  |       | 0.15942  |

Table 5 shows that voiced aspirated have a longer duration than voiced consonants in Bhujel across all the language consultants. This can be presented through Figure 3.
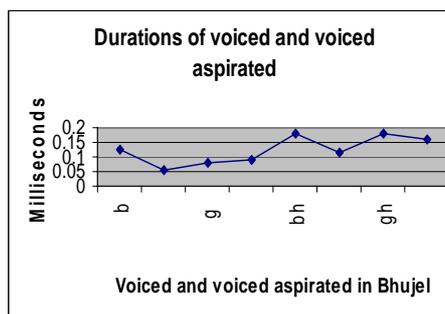


Figure 3: Durations of the voiced and voiced aspirated

Figure 3 shows the acoustic distinction between the voiced and voiced aspirated sounds in Bhujel in terms of durations. The figure shows that voiced aspirated sounds /bʰ, dʰ, gʰ/ have longer durations than the voiced sounds /b, d, g/. The acoustic variation between voiceless, voiced, and voiceless aspirated and voiced aspirated can be shown through oscillograms.

Figure 4 show the variations in air pressure of voiceless stop /p/, voiced stop /b/, voiceless aspirated /pʰ/ and voiced aspirated /bʰ/ in oscillograms.
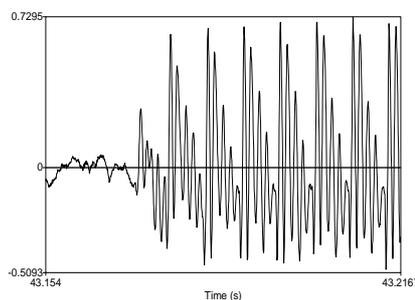


Figure 4 (a) Voiceless stop/p/

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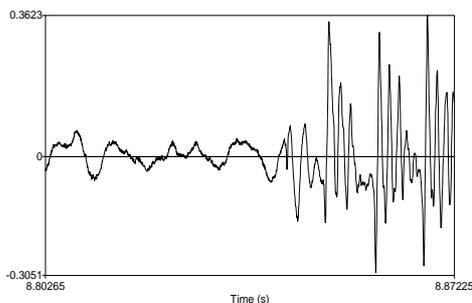
Figure4 (b) Voiced stop/b/
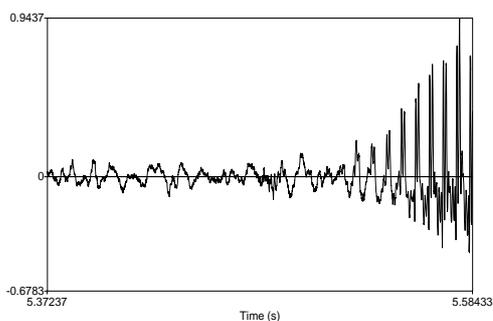


Figure 4(c) Voiceless aspirated/p$^h$/
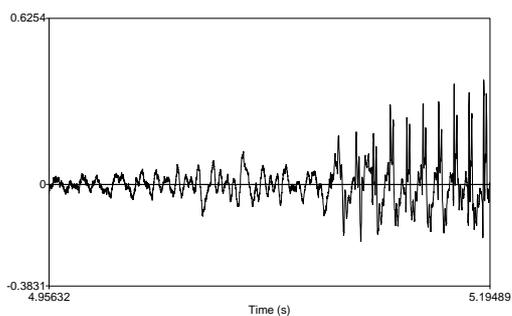


Figure 4(d) Voiced aspirated /b$^h$/

Figure 4(a-d) records the variations in air pressure between voiceless, voiced, and voiceless aspirated and voiced aspirated in Bhujel. The voiced sound /b/ (Figure 4(b)) in Bhujel shows up on the oscillogram as larger patterns than the voiceless sound /p/ (Figure 4(a). Apart from this the voiceless aspirated stop /p$^h$/ (Figure 4 (c)) and voiced aspirated stop /b$^h$/ (Figure 4 (d)) show the long voiced onset time.

## 3.4  Obstruent stops  and sonorants

Table 6 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each obstruent and sonorant across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 6: Durations of the obstruents and sonorants(in milliseconds)

|  | Duration |  | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| b | 0.12715 | m | 0.12833 |
| d | 0.05461 | n | 0.15653 |
| g | 0.08152 | ŋ | 0.1767 |
| Avg | 0.08776 |  | 0.15385 |

Table 6 shows that the sonorants have a longer duration than the obstruents. The duration of the sonorants is almost double of the obstruents. This can be presented through Figure 4.
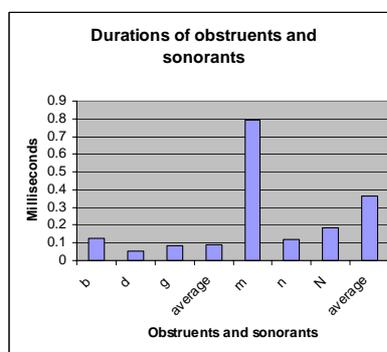


Figure 4: Duration of the obstruents and sonorants

Figure 4 shows that the sonorants /m, n, ŋ/ have a longer duration than the obstruents /b, d, g/.

## 3.5  Aspirated voiced obstruent stops  and aspirated sonorants

Table 7 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each obstruent aspirated and sonorant aspirated in Bhujel across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 7: Durations of voiced obstruents and sonorant aspirated (in milliseconds)

|  | Duration |  | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| bʰ | 0.17916 | mʰ | 0.19663 |
| dʰ | 0.117 | nʰ | 0.14133 |
| gʰ | 0.1821 | ŋʰ | 0.2103 |
| Avg | 0.15942 |  | 0.18275 |

Table 7 shows that the sonorant aspirated have a longer duration than the voiced obstruents. Unlike the difference between unaspirated voiced and sonorants the difference between voiced aspirated and sonorant aspirated is much less. This can be presented through Figure 5.
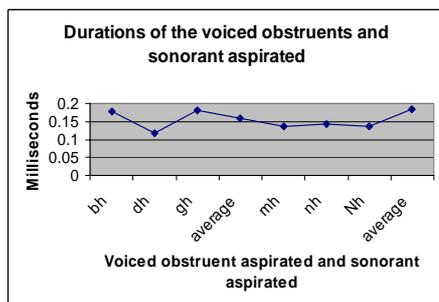


Figure 5: Duration of voiced obstruents and sonorant aspirated

Figure 5 shows that the sonorant aspirated /mʰ, nʰ, ŋʰ/ have a longer duration than the voiced obstruent aspirated /bʰ, dʰ, gʰ/.

### 3.6 Sonorant stops and other sonorants

Table 8 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each sonorant stops and other sonorants in Bhujel across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 8: Duration of sonorant stops and other sonorants (In milliseconds)

|  | Duration |  | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| m | 0.12833 | r | 0.09245 |
| n | 0.15653 | l | 0.0900 |
| ŋ | 0.1767 | y | 0.1025 |
|  |  | w | 0.1299 |
| Mean | 0.15385 |  | 0.1037 |

Table 8 shows that the sonorant stops have a longer duration than other sonorants. This can be presented through Figure 6.
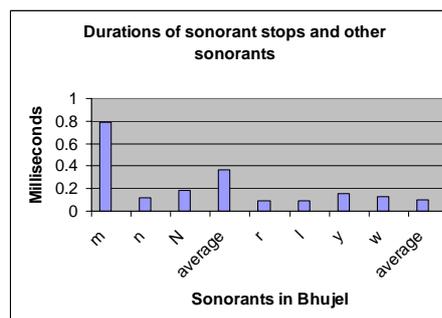


Figure6: Duration of the sonorant stops and other sonorants

Figure 6 shows that the sonorants/m, n, ŋ/ have a longer duration than the other sonorants /r, l, y, w/.

### 3.7 Non-aspirated and aspirated liquids and approximants

Table 8 presents the measurement of the durations of the average value of each non-aspirated and aspirated liquids and approximants across all the language consultants in milliseconds.

Table 8: Duration of non-aspirated and aspirated liquids and approximants

|  | Duration |  | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| r | 0.09245 | rʰ | 0.12631 |
| l | 0.0900 | lʰ | 0.11636 |
| y | 0.1025 | yʰ | 0.14826 |
| w | 0.1299 | wʰ | 0.1638 |
| Avg | 0.1037 |  | 0.13868 |

Table 8 shows that the aspirated liquids and approximants have a longer duration than non-aspirated liquids and approximants. This is presented in Figure 7.
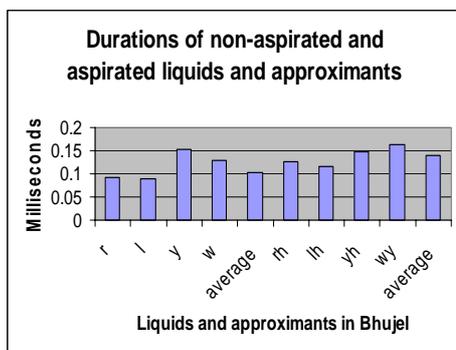
Figure7: Duration of non-aspirated and aspirated liquids and approximants

Fig 7 shows that the aspirated liquids and approximants $/r^h, l^h, w^h, y^h/$ have a longer duration than non-aspirated liquids and approximants $/r, l, y, w/$

## 4 Effect of syllable position on the duration

Different classes of sounds show different duration in terms of their position in onset and coda in the syllable.

### 4.1 Voiceless non-aspirated and aspirated sounds

Table 9 presents the duration of the voiceless non-aspirated and aspirated sounds in onset and coda positions.

Table 9: Duration of voiceless non-aspirated sounds in onset and coda positions (in milliseconds)

| Duration | | | Duration | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Onset | Coda | | Onset | Coda |
| p | 0.023 | 0.080 | $p^h$ | 0.127 | 0.051 |
| t | 0.035 | 0.071 | $t^h$ | 0.054 | 0.037 |
| c | 0.083 | 0.080 | $c^h$ | 0.121 | 0.051 |
| k | 0.070 | 0.089 | $k^h$ | 0.081 | 0.042 |
| Avg | 0.053 | 0.080 | | 0.096 | 0.045 |

Table 9 shows the duration of the voiceless unaspirated sounds in Bhujel /p, t, c, k/ and aspirated sounds $/p^h, t^h, c^h, k^h/$ in onset and coda positions. In onset positions, as a general tendency, the unaspirated sounds are shorter than the sounds in coda positions. However, the aspirated sounds behave quite opposite to the unaspirated sounds. The aspirated sounds are longer in onset positions than in coda positions. This is presented in Figure 8.
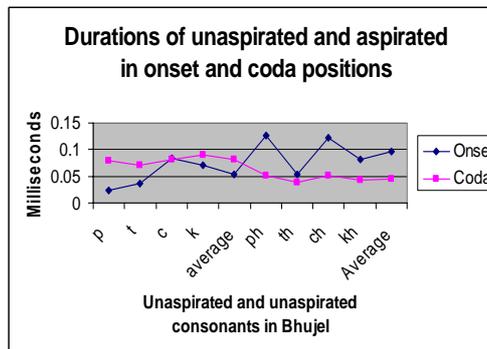


Figure 8: Duration of unaspirated and aspirated sounds in onset and coda positions

Table 9 presents the duration of sonorant stops and sonorant aspirated in onset and coda positions.

| Duration | | | Duration | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Onset | Coda | | Onset | Coda |
| n | 0.156 | 0.209 | $n^h$ | 0.141 | 0.223 |
| ŋ | 0.176 | 0.218 | $ŋ^h$ | 0.210 | 0.250 |
| Avg | 0.166 | 0.213 | | 0.175 | 0.237 |

Table 9 shows the duration of the sonorant stops in Bhujel /n, ŋ / and sonorant aspirated sounds / $n^h, ŋ^h/$ in onset and coda positions. Both classes of sounds have longer durations in coda positions than in onset positions. This is presented in Figure 9.

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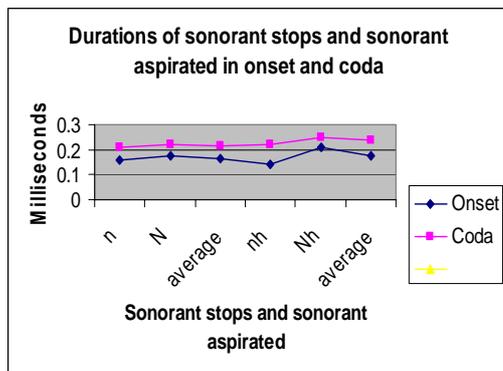
Figure 9: Duration of sonorant stops and sonorant aspirated in onset and coda positions



Fig 10: Duration of voiceless stops and sonorants in onset and coda positions

## 4.2 Voiceless stops and sonorants

Table 10 presents the durations of voiceless stops and sonorants in onset and coda positions.

Table 10: Duration of voiceless stops and sonorants in onset and coda positions
(in milliseconds)

| Duration | | | Duration | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Onset | Coda | | Onset | Coda |
| p | 0.023 | 0.080 | m | 0.128 | 0.213 |
| t | 0.035 | 0.071 | n | 0.156 | 0.209 |
| k | 0.070 | 0.089 | ŋ | 0.176 | 0.218 |
| Avg | 0.043 | 0.080 | | 0.153 | 0.213 |

Table 10 shows that the difference in the durations between unaspirated stops / p, t, k/ and sonorants /m, n, ŋ / in onset position is bigger than in the coda positions. In onset positions the sonorants are almost four times longer than the voiceless unaspirated stops. However, in coda positions the same sounds are longer than unaspirated stops only by less than three times.
This is also shown in Figure 10.
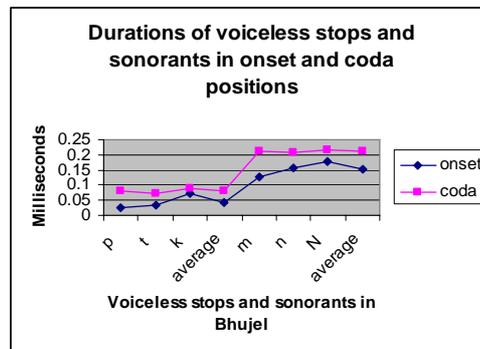
## 5 Summary

In this paper, we looked at two important aspects of the physical properties of consonant sounds: the difference in length between different classes of sounds and the effect of the position in the syllable on duration in Bhujel. The findings of the paper are as follows:

a) On the average, the voiced sounds /b, d, g/ are twice longer than the voiceless sounds /p, t, k/.

b) The sonorant aspirated /mʰ, nʰ, ŋʰ/ have a longer duration than the voiced obstruent aspirated /bʰ, dʰ, gʰ /.

c) The sonorants /m, n, ŋ / have a longer duration than the other sonorants /r, l, y, w/.

d) The aspirated liquids and approximants /rʰ, lʰ, yʰ, wʰ/ have a longer duration than non-aspirated liquids and approximants /r, l, y, w/ in Bhujel.

e) In onset position, as a general tendency, the voiceless unaspirated sounds are shorter than in coda positions. However, the aspirated sounds are longer in onset positions than in coda positions.

f) Both sonorant stops /n, ŋ/ and sonorant aspirated sounds /nʰ, ŋʰ/ have longer durations in coda positions than in onset positions.

g) Bhujel sonorant sounds in onset positions are much longer than the voiceless unaspirated sounds in the coda positions.

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# Case marking in Hayu

## Sulochana Sapkota

## 1 Introduction

Hayu is a seriously endangered language of Nepal. It is one of the Kiranti languages. As in other Kiranti languages, in this language too the same name is used for both its speakers and the language they speak. Thus, we can say 'Hayu people' and 'Hayu language'. 'The HH Hayu inhabit in an area between 50 and 100 kilometers south east of Kathmandu in the valley of the Sun Koshi and across the Mahabharat range to the south.' (Michailovsky 1988). There are many villages in this area but the language is currently spoken in only two, Murajor in Ramechhap District and Manedihi in Marin village, Sindhuli District. My data is based on Murajor village of Ramechhap District and my language consultants were Gyan Bahadur Hayu and Bishnu Bahadur Hayu.

Hayu was first studied by Hodson (1857) during his retirement in Darjeeling and rediscovered and studied by Michailovsky and Mazauden (1973), Michailovsky (1988) in the village of Murajor.

This paper attempts to briefly describe different types of case and case marking in the Hayu language.

## 2 The case system

The case is the most important inflectional category of the noun and pronoun, as tense is the most important inflectional category of the verb. Case is the grammatical category by which a noun form expresses its relationship with the verb. However, expressing the relation of a noun form to another noun form has also been accepted as case relation, i.e. the genitive. Case can be established on morphological, syntactic or semantic criteria. The grammatical categories such as number, gender, definiteness and honorific are considered as the inherent categories for nouns, which mark the relationship between the head and its dependent within the noun phrase. However, the case is regarded as a relational category of the noun phrase, which indicates the relationship of

the noun contracts in a clause or the sentence. This paper mainly deals with various case forms like ergative, instrumental, ablative, dative, locative and genitive/ possessive as well as the morphology of ergative case.

### 2.1 Types of case and case markers

Following are the Hayu case markers and their equivalences with Nepali.

Alignment of cases

| Cases | Inflection |
|---|---|
| Ergative | ha |
| Instrumental | ha |
| Dative | ha |
| Possessive | mu |
| Locative | noŋ/he |
| Genitive | mu |
| Ablative | kʰen |

## 3 Case realization

Every noun phrase in the Hayu language must be selected for one of the seven categories of case when they are used in the clause or sentences. Let's see how each case is realized in noun phrases in Hayu.

### 3.1 Ergative case

Ergative case usually indicates the subject of transitive verbs. The ergative marker in Hayu is /-ha/ as in (1)

(1)  tami-ha       kolu hobu yĕko
     daughter-ERG one  snake see-PST
     'The daughter saw a snake.'

### 3.2 Instrumental case

The instrumental case is used for expressing the instrumentality of an action or it expresses the material cause of an event, i.e., in an animate object used for doing a particular work. In instrumental case the same marker -*ha* is used as in an ergative case.

(2) romi-ha     kamũ  sãco-ha  hukom
    wife-ERG   door   key-INS  open-PST
    'The wife opened the door with a key.'

### 3.3 Dative case

This case is used to express either inherent or a causal association of a thing or a person with other thing or person. In Hayu, dative case also uses the same marker *-ha*.

(3) ram-ha sita-ha bekcyaŋ  hat-uŋ
    Ram-ERG Sita-DAT book  give-PST
    'Ram gave a book to Sita.'

### 3.4 Possessive/genitive case

This case is used for expressing the relationship of something or someone with something or someone. This case is of the possession.

This case in Hayu noun phrase is marked by *-mu*

(4) hari-mu    kem   jekta-mu
    Hari-POSS  house   old be-NPST
    'Hari's house is old.'

### 3.5 Ablative case

Ablative case is used to express the separation of a thing or person from another thing or person. In this language it has a limited function of indicating the place/ location from which a person object is separated. In Hayu, ablative case is marked by *-khen* as in (5).

(5) mi  siŋtoŋ-khen   hobu   sit-kom
    That man-ABL     snake   kill-PST
    'The snake is killed from that man.'

### 3.6 Locative case

The locative case is used to express the location of an item/place. The locative case is marked by *-noŋ* and occurs only with inanimate class of nouns as in (6).

(6) gha  mi  ti-noŋ   jewa  ho-cuŋ
    I-ERG that water LOC cloth  wash-PST
    'I washed my cloth in that water.'

### 3.7 Nominative case

This case usually indicates the subject of the intransitive verbs in a sentence. The Hayu language lacks the nominative case as in (7)

(7) a. tawo im-cem
    son  sleep-PST
    'Son slept.'
  b. tami doŋ
    daughter come.PST
    'The daughter came.'

## 4 The morphology of ergativity in Hayu

The ergative subject in Hayu is invariably and obligatorily marked with the case inflection *-ha*. It is suffixed to a nominal stem as in (8).

(8) a. romi-ha  sãco-ha  kamu hu-kom
    wife-ERG key-INS door open-PST.3SG.Ag
    'The wife opened the door with the key.'
  b. guha/gha gotha buti dza-koŋ
    I.ERG hand-INS rice eat-PST.I.SG.Ag
    'I ate rice with the hand.'

In examples (8a-b) we have just tried to show how the ergative subjects morphologically in the clauses realize ergativity.

The pronominal ergative subjects are also invariably marked with the case inflection *-ha* as nominal subject. The following table reveals the ergative marking on pronominal in Hayu in Table 1.

**Table1: The ergative marking on pronominal in Hayu**

| Pronominal | Ergative marking |
|---|---|
| gu   'I'<br>gukhata  'we' | gu-ha /gha<br>gukhata-ha |
| gon  'you' {2s}<br>gonche  {2d}<br>gone (khata)  {2P} | gona /gon-ha<br>gonche-ha<br>gonekhata-ha |
| mi(nd) / komi (fd)<br>'he,she | mi-ha/komi-ha |
| mikhata 'they' | mikhata-ha |
| komikhata 'they' | komikhata-ha |

The third person pronouns *komi* is only used for human but *mi* is not limited to human referent.

Table 1 shows that the ergative case marking *-ha* is consistently suffixed to the singular and plural pronouns whereas the ergative marker *-a* is restricted to the singular first and second person pronouns as *gha* 'I ' and *gona* 'you'. Moreover, the nominal and pronominal in Hayu also inflect for number. The relative position of the inflectional categories affixed to these nominal and pronominal can be presented in (9)

(9) Noun/pronoun – Number-ERG

    a. gu-khata-ha     'we'
    b. kaco-khata-ha   'friends'
    c. uri-khata-ha     'dogs'

In these examples, the ergative case marker *-ha* in Hayu is suffixed to number inflections following the nominal and pronominal.

**5 Conclusion**

The above discussion shows that the Hayu language has mainly seven types of cases marked with the different case particles as (*-ha*, *-mu*, *-noŋ*/*he*, -kʰen,) but the nominative case lacks the case particle.

To sum up, this ergative morphology in Hayu is characterized by a set of properties. It is morphologically marked with the case marker *ha.* In an unmarked construction, the ergative subject appears clause initially usually in a transitive past clause. Like the nominative subject, it shows agreement with the verb in the first person singular pronoun subject.

  **Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | First person |
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |
| ABL | Ablative |
| DAT | Dative |
| GEN | Genitive |
| INS | Instrumental |
| LOC | Locative |
| PST | Past |
| NPT | Non-past |
| SG | Singular |
| PL | Plural |
| IMP | Imperative |
| ND | Near distal |
| FD | Far distal |

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# Language policy in federal Nepal: Sharing from some federal states

Suren Sapkota

*From the initial stage, language has been the major factor in the nation politics. This article tries to sightsee some discourse of language policy in relation to federal structure that is going to transform from the unitary kingdom. Furthermore, it tries to share some experiences of India, Canada and South Africa.*

## 1 Introduction

Nepal is a linguistically diverse nation. To understand the intricacies of the language problems and the multilingual and multicultural make up of the nation, several background factors need to be considered. Geographical and ecological variables, power politics, economic alternatives and limitations, migrations of people, religion, social stratification and the political history of the legionnaire directly impinge upon language. Recent changes relating emergence of modern democratic federal nation has a significant impact on current language policy along with process of transforming Kathmandu centered Unitary Kingdom into Federal Democratic Republic to provide equal excess and participation for all with full of justice. The issue of language and federal structures have immerged so heavily that has been regarded as one of the most significance matter in recent years. Here, a brief history of language matter in Nepal, relation of language and federal structure with some experiences from India, Canada and South Africa have been presented.

## 2 Language matter in Nepal: a brief look

There is a long history of strife over languages in Nepal. Since Nepal is a multilingual country, the debate over the issues of languages spoken within country has been one of the most fertile factors in Nepalese political history. The language politics got emerged mainly with the political change of Multiparty Democracy in 1951 and reached at the climax and its ratio got down slowly with the coup of the then King Mahendra in 1960. After this the issue of language got declined in its surface level for about 30 years during the period of Panchayat

regime. The issue got climaxed with the restoration of democracy in 1990 in the Nepalese politics. With the Maoist insurgency started in 1996 and mainly after 2000 when Nepal Communist Party Maoist raised voice in favor of ethnic languages of Nepal it brought a new wave in language politics in Nepal. When Nepal adopted the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 after the restoration of democracy, the linguistic issue was made more contextual. As this constitution declares restructuring the state ending all forms of exploitations including linguistic one, and the promotion of inclusive democracy, the scope of language issue has further been accelerated.

The then Government suppressed the Limbu language in 1778 and 1870, and the Nepalbhasa Movement has begun (based in Calcutta) in 1926 (Lawati, 2007:32). After Nepali language was declared the national language in 1930, it is believed Rana rulers encouraged Nepali speaking Brahmins to move to other parts of the country to spread Hindu culture. After 1946, they banned publications in Nepalbhasa except religious texts where as other kind publications were permitted after the end of Rana rule. Under the 1951 Interim Constitution, Hindi became a medium of instruction in Terai schools, until 1957 (Dahal, 2000:167). And again during the brief period of democratic government under the 1959 Constitution, Nepalbhasa, Hindi and Maithili were declared national languages. Again during the Panchayat Constitution Period, broadcasting in Nepalbhasa and Hindi was discontinued and the regime declared 'one language, one dress, one nation (Pyakurel, 2007:1).' Language has always been found to be viewed by the government as a tool of national unity. In 1955, a government committee recommended a child entering primary school should be taught in Nepali so that other languages will gradually disappear and greater national strength and unity will result (Whelpton, 2005:184). The 1948 Constitution proposed that the language of Legislature was to be Nepali, whereas the 1951 Constitution made no

mention of language. While the 1959 Constitution declared Nepali to be the official language, a provision repeated in the Panchayat Constitution. Otherwise there was no other mention of language in Nepal's Constitutions until that of 1990.[1] During the 1980s, ethnic sentiments were rising, for an example, in 1985 *Nepal Matribhasa Parisad* (Nepal Mother-Tongue Council) was set up, to campaign for mother tongue education (Ibid:183 ). When the 1990 Constitution was being drafted, the demands included equality for all languages, mother tongue instruction and state action to preserve languages. The then Chair of the Constitution Recommendation Commission (Bishwanath Upadhyaya) is reported to have said that "95 percent of the recommendations brought before the commission had been related to marginal issues such as culture, language, and religion (Kr amer, 2002:186)."

However, despite this dismissive attitude, there are language provisions in the Constitution of 1990. It provisioned Nepal as a multilingual Kingdom, and Nepali in Devanagari script as an official language, rest of other languages spoken as their mother tongue in Nepal and each community shall have the right to operate schools up to the primary level in its own mother tongue for imparting education to its children and they have right to preserve and promote its language, script and culture. Beside these provisions, it was  mentioned the persuasion of the state to strengthen the national unity by promoting healthy and cordial social relations amongst the various linguistic groups along with other communities by helping in the promotion of their languages, literature, scripts, arts and cultures within the State Policies. But the level of implementation of this constitutional provision was found less effective in real sense because the State Policies cannot be enforced in the courts and do not make any sort of commitment to encourage languages, but permit communities themselves to do so. Apparently, the introduction of these provisions did encourage communities to develop their languages, initiating classes in their mother tongue. And there were even some classes in government schools in some of the languages (Subba and Subba,

2003:3). However, in using local languages other than Nepali (namely Newar and Maithili) by some local authorities, the Supreme Court ordered to stop using these local languages unless the government makes clear provisions regarding the use of them as official language.

Language issues, in fact, were introduced in the election manifestoes of Nepali Congress for election under the 1990 Constitution: such as primary education in mother tongues and "consideration of minority languages in state owned media, (Hachhethu, 2007:143)" and the CPN (UML) brought constitutional provisions which promised to end discrimination on the grounds of language (Ibid.144). Indeed, when the Congress was in government during 90s, Language Recommendation Commission was set up and news broadcasts were made in eight different languages. At present, limited broadcasting is made in 18 languages and school textbooks have been translated into 13 languages, though the content tends to retain its dominant culture emphasis (Yadava, 2007). In recent years, there have been claims for positive policies on language – including the national declaration on linguistic rights in 2000 (Kr amer, 2002:189). These claims are for mother tongue education and use of other languages with Nepali in public and private spheres.

The Interim Constitution 2007 constituted that everyone within the country is equal, and there must not be discrimination just because a person is of a certain sex, or ethnic group or caste, or speaks a certain language or believes in a certain religion. Discriminating while providing goods, services or facilities against someone because of any of those reasons must be something for which a person can be punished under the law.

## 3 Discourse of language policy

The federal state is the result of political contract among different ethnic and linguistic groups and communities through the written constitution. Nepal is now on the same process of being federalization. The political leaders and constitution makers should think those in their mind while making constitution through the Constituent Assembly. When we see the world's federal states, they are found to be seen as (a) one cast one language-one state, (b) one cast one language-multi state and (c) one state-

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[1]  Other than knowledge of Nepali being a requirement for naturalization (Panchayat Constitution).

multilingual/multiethnic. If the state is reconstructed only on the basis of caste and language, there may be the possibility to fall the nation into an endless debate and conflict. India and Nigeria are the examples of having this type of conflict. In fact, federalism is the philosophy of democratic political nation system to strengthen unity among different variation and inequality.

Most of the models regarding the state reconstructing have found to be utilized some common basis like ethnic/linguistic/cultural identity, economic possibilities, the excess and complementary of natural resources. Some of them have emphasized the historical place of ethnic/linguistic/cultural groups, and have given less priority and significance to geographical complementary (Sharma and Khanal, 2009:34). This is because the different political parties, ethnic and linguistic groups have their own understanding about the ethnic/linguistic/ cultural points and areas. As a result, some have claimed some areas as their own, while other have reclaimed on contrary to the previous claims. For example, the Kochila State that comprised of three districts viz. Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari that proposed and claimed by Maoist Party have been reclaimed as Limbuwan by Limbuwan Party, and moreover the other parties of the Terai have been demanding those districts to be included within a single state of the whole Terai region as a single autonomous Madhesh Pradesh. The same area has been proposed by the name of Birat Pradesh by the CPNUML Party, Bijayapur by Govinda Neupane, Purbi Terai (East Terai) by Pitamber Sharma, Mithilanchal by Surendra K.C. and Amresh Narayan Jha, Far-East State by Chandra Kanta Gyawali, Rajbanshi Autonomous Area by K.B. Gurung, Morang Mandal State by Babu Ram Acharya and so on.

Similarly, Magar have claimed the two areas of their residency claiming that these were belong to their ancestral areas from Surkhet to Tanahun and Ramechap to Dhankuta as Magarant State. Likewise, Tharu also have been demanding to put the areas of Tharu majority areas into Tharuwan State (Ibid. 2009:35). We find mainly two significant issues in existence in course of restructuring the state. The first issue can be the development of all the languages of Nepal and provide mother tongue education in schools up to proper level as the medium of instruction. The second significant issue can be the determination of the languages in day to day administrative function of the nation and their criteria for using them. These can be the contact languages of the central and state government of federal Nepal.

In the process of federalization of the state, firstly, the present unitary nation should be divided into different self-governing units. So many views, opinions and proposals were presented in the process of federalization of the country. Altogether there are four alternatives. The first proposal proposed by the Madhesi Parties is the tri-state federal structure of Himal, Pahar and Madhes (Terai). The next alternative is the federal structure on the basis of caste and language. The third is the states from Himal to Terai with geographical, ethnic and linguistic variation and adjustment with its own eco-political and autonomous states. The last or fourth alternative is of mixed type. In this type, if we can, the states will be determined on the basis of multiethnic and multilingual states bearing in mind the historical and cultural territory and density of the population. This last alternative can be suitable in our context. While doing so with the last alternative, some states will be of ethnic identity, some are of linguistic identity and rest of others carries geographical identity. The present settlement position of people in Nepal shows that except Nepali and Maithili linguistic communities, no other communities will have their states with majority. It will be long term utility of federal Nepal that if we restructure the nation on the basis of presence of density of ethnic and linguistic communities with their geographical, economic and political possibilities. The federal Nepal should develop and provide legal provision to all the languages spoken in Nepal. But it is equally important in acculturation of using them of a clear constitutional provision for the language used for formal usage of the nation. Otherwise, by using it as a catalyst, seasonal language and ethnic issues for the short term political opportunity will be mushroomed almost overnight. Language is the fundamental right for every individual. There will be revolution if nation band them in using them. If the nation leaves it openly then any individual searches nationally and internationally highly accepted language(s) in accordance with his/her priorities and adaptability

for facilities and opportunities. The use of English language in almost all the countries can be the example.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 recognized all the languages spoken in Nepal as their mother tongue are national languages. There is no doubt that federal Nepal by its present constitution too, will be multilingual. Though the constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1991 also mentioned Nepal as multiethnic and multilingual, it bends the use of them in nation system. Language movements rose. Even after the Peoples' Movement II in 2006, the interim constitution has provisioned only a single language for government's administrative purpose i.e. Nepali language is recognized as a medium of official usage. But as it opened the use of mother tongue in local level and local offices, this can be an upward step of opening constitutional door for the transformation of Nepal towards multilingual nation. An agreement between the government and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum in 2008 says that (a) mother tongue, (b) Nepali language and (c) English language i.e. a tri-lingual policy in the government, administration, education and international communication that should be recognized in the constitution. In this way after the Peoples' Movement II in 2006 Nepal has been up-warding towards multilingual nation system. English language has been used as a means of international communication and quality higher education. But the main issue here is not of English but of Nepalese languages especially the mother tongues.

After entering into the federalism, Nepal, no doubt will transform into the multilingual nation system. The states can use the local languages in their administration and offices for governmental purposes. For the central government and in-between central and state government and among different state government there will be necessity of one or more link language(s). In other countries, we cannot find any particular criteria for practicing use of language.

The constitutions of quite old federal states remain quiet in the use of language in their constitutions. In the constitution of U.S.A., Australia, Brazil and Mexico there is no mention of administrate or link language. In the USA and Australia, English language is found to be in practice and Brazil uses

Portuguese while Mexico uses Spanish. Some countries like Argentina, Spain, Malaysia, Venezuela etc. though they practice federalism, use only a single language for their governmental purposes. English and Amharic languages got constitutional recognition in Nigeria and Ethiopia respectively. In Russia and Austria there is only one language in central and provincial languages in different provinces are found to be used. India, Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, South Africa etc. have been practicing the multilingual federalism. They are often cited for their liberal language policies. Post-apartheid South Africa, for example, has accepted 11 languages to address some ethnic communities. But with the passage of time, English, although fifth on the list, has emerged as the most preferred language there. Efforts to promote Africans as the first language have not produced encouraging results (Adhikari, 2010). Meanwhile, leaders of various ethnic communities appear to have realized that the Nepali language is one vital foundation to establish the collective identity of the diverse ethnic groups that make up the nation.

There will be no the situation of using only a Nepali language as a language of administration after entering into its federal structure. The subject of language is certainly related to the structuring of the provinces. There can be the situation of using two or three major local languages including Nepali within a single province. Likewise, it will be necessary to get information in their mother tongue while getting clearance and doing self-protection in the government offices for which the state have to provide the translator (Khanal, 2008:48).

## 4 Some experiences

Every country is different and has adopted its own approach for its own circumstances. It is, nonetheless, useful and important to look at how other countries are grappling with similar issues. In this part, experiences of the nations like India, Canada and South Africa have been mentioned to know how these countries managed and utilized the languages they have.

### 4.1 Indian experience

Indian federalism was re-organized along linguistic lines beginning in the 1950s as a result of agitation by Telugu speakers in South India. The Constitution

provides that Hindi is the official language but that for 15 years English could continue to be used for the purposes for which it has previously been officially used. The Constitution deals with many aspects of language use. An important aspect is the development of Hindi, for which, the Official Language Commission was formed. The design was that Hindi should ultimately be the national official and generally used language, but it was envisaged that positive efforts would be made to develop this language, and the other languages listed in the English Schedule could be drawn on for this purpose. The Commission must include members 'representing'- presumably speaking – these English Schedule languages.

English is still extensively used. It was given a special status, in the sense that the Constitution provides that it will continue to be used in the text of national laws, and in the Supreme Court and High Courts (though an individual state could prescribe the use of any other language in the High Courts or in state laws).[2] Communication between states and between a state and the Union, were to be in English unless both parties to communications agreed to use Hindi.[3] Individual States could designate 'any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language/s to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State.' After the reorganization of the states on linguistic lines, we find that for example Kerala has Malayalam as its official language; Tamil Nadu has Tamil, Andhra Pradesh Telugu, and Nagaland English.[4]

In India there are several significant infringements on the autonomy of individual states for the protection of minorities within them. The National Government may if 'satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognized by that state, direct that such language shall also be officially recognized throughout that state or any part thereof' for the purposes that the government specifies.[5] And every State and every local authority must endeavor to provide 'adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belong to linguistic minority groups', and furthermore the Government may 'issue directions' to any State for this purpose.[6] As a back-up to these provisions, there will be a 'Special Officer for linguistic minorities' 'to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under this Constitution and report to the President', which again impinges on the states, though no specific action by states is referred to.[7]

Sikkim State can be a particularly interesting example for us. In the 2001 Census of India, Limbu speakers were 6%, Lepcha 7%, Hindi 7%, Bhutia 8%, and Nepali 63% of the total population of Sikkim.[8] The government of Sikkim does support other languages in various ways. The first is by making all the main languages 'official languages' – Sikkim has 11 of them.[9] Members of the legislature may use any of the languages, and interpreters are provided. The Sikkim official government Gazette is printed in all the languages, as well as in English. After Nepali the linguistic communities of Sikkim mostly use English and Hindi as their second language. As a result of this pattern of bilingualism it is found that in spite of recognition of the indigenous languages on Sikkim (namely Bhotia, Lepcha, Limbu, Rai, Tamang, Gurung, Mangari, Newari, and Sunwar) accorded by the Government of Sikkim the Nepali occupies predominant place in

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[2] Though in the latter case the authoritative text would be the published English translation, and in the case of prescribing another language for use in the High Court the approval of the national government is required (Art.348).

[3] Art.346.

[4] There is an Official Language Department within the Ministry of Home Affairs, and you can read the Official Languages (Use for Official Purpose of the Union) Rules on its website at *http://www.rajbhasha.gov.in/d olru leseng .htm.*

[5] Art.347- this mentions 'the President' but this means acting on the advice of the Government, which actually makes the decision.

[6] Art.350 B.

[7] Art.350A. this and Article 350B were inserted in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the States.

[8] See the web site of Linguistic Survey of India *http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/ling_sikkim.html*

[9] Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha, Limboo, Newar, Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Sherpa, Tamang and sunuwar – under the Official Languages Act, 1977.

the state of Sikkim followed by English, Hindi and Bhotia.

In the education system, the general medium of instruction in government schools is English. Government schools include teaching of local languages. Kindergarten is English only, classes 1 to 4 English language and grammar, and a second language (Hindi, Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcah or Tibetan). Up to class 10 English is used with a second language and an optional third language, from the same choices. The higher secondary requires English and a second language. The Sikkim State Institute of Education has recommended the medium of instruction at primary level should be the mother tongue which as we have seen is a policy of the Constitution of India. Nepali occupies the first rank both as a language and as a mother tongue in the State of Sikkim as per 2001 census.

### 4.2 Canadian experience

Canada is linguistically diverse. As a consequence of colonization, the majority of the total population use English language in Canada. There is also a very large French speaking population that is mainly concentrated in one province: that is Quebec. The mother tongue of 59% of the population as a whole is English, and of 23% French. Sixty-eight percent know only English, 10% only French, and 18% both Language has been central to constitutional conflict in Canada for over 150 years.[10] It has been a driving force in Canadian constitutional development. Different languages and communities now see themselves as competing nations, sharing in the same state defined by language. This took place in mid 19th century and again since 1960s in another round of Quebec nationalism. The first way Canada responded to the fact of linguistic diversity was federalism. Canada is, perhaps, the oldest federation in the world. What Canada did was it created federalism on the basis of language communities. It created one province in which there was clear majority of French speakers; in the other provinces, there were English speaking majorities.

There is implied power in the Canadian constitution for provinces to adopt their own official language, which might be different from the national official language. Different provinces have responded differently to this provision. The English speaking provinces use English as their official language and the official language for the internal working of the government, for public services, for the legislature, for the Courts, and most government services. There is one exception: that of minority language education where the minority French speaking community is large enough.

Quebec has a unique mixture of politics. Linguistically, it is different from other parts of Canada. French is its official language. Quebec has had the power under Canadian federalism to create a public education system, including a university system, which operates in French. This has been a powerful tool for Quebec to preserve its identity. But there are also publicly funded English-language universities. The internal language of public service in Quebec is French, unlike in other parts of Canada. In addition, public services there are offered in French, with some accommodation for English speakers. The legislature is bilingual, and the laws are in both languages. The courts are also bilingual.

However, the interesting thing about Canada is that federation is not only way in which the country has responded to its linguistic diversity. It has taken measures that could equally be taken by a non-federal state. The national government of Canada declared both French and English to be the official languages (at the national level) in its constitution and statutes.[11] This was a dramatic change from the time when English was the national language. In order to respond to the demands by Quebec, from the 1960s that its linguistic needs be accommodated or it might secede and become independent, Canada responded by transforming the country both symbolically and practically.

The national civil service works in French as well as English. The national civil servants in Quebec come from Quebec and the local population receives national services in their own mother tongue. This is very different from other countries where the national civil servants might come from outside the religion and might not serve the local population in

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10   See:   *http://canadaonline.about.com/cs/statistic s/a/statslang.html*

11   See:   *http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/themes/ constitution1_e.html*

their mother tongue. There are many parts in Canada that have been officially designated as bilingual regions so that every one could use French and English interchangeably.

In Quebec, French is the dominant working language of the national government; in the rest of Canada, including the capital, the dominant working language of the government is English. English serves also as a link language between different organs of the federal government. But French has secured a permanent place with in the federal state and has gained more prominence than it used to. The federal government communicates with citizens in different languages across Canada. And, French and English are used in politics, Supreme Court and legislation. In fact, the Supreme Court and the national parliament have been bilingual since 1867.

There is a C(ommissioner of) O(fficial) L(anguages) with the mandate to work for

• The equality of English and French in parliament, the Government of Canada, the federal administration and the institutions subjects to the Act;
• The preservation and development of official language communities in Canada; and
• The equality of English and French in Canadian society.[12]

It is also interesting to note the steps that Canada takes to enforce its laws on language. The COL investigates complaints, and can recommend a corrective response. The Commissioner also has the functions of auditing governmental institutions compliance with the language policy, of promotion and education, and of monitoring of proposed policies. The language rights are legally enforceable, and the COL may intervene in legal proceedings about language rights.

## 4.3 South African experience

South Africa has 11 official languages- 2 European and the rest African.[13] As well as providing that 'the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of' indigenous languages- which refers to the languages of the 'Bushmen'. The Constitution goes on to say:

> The national government and provincial governments may use any particular official language for the purpose of government, taking into account usage, practically, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and performances of the population as a whole or in the province concerned; but the national government and each provincial government must use at least two official languages.

In fact the national government operates mostly in English and Africans, though some provinces have adopted these languages plus the most common Africans language in use in the province. The Constitution requires the setting up a Pan South African Language Board.[14] With the functions to promote, and create conditions for, the development and use of all official languages, the indigenous languages, and sign language, and promote and ensure respect for all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, and for languages used for religious purposes. It also says that all official languages must enjoy 'parity of esteem and must be treated equitably.' The Language Board prefers the mandate in its legislation: to create 'conditional for the development and for the promotion of the equal use and enjoyment of all the official languages.' A committee of the legislature reviewing independent bodies suggests that this is being unrealistic as well as being contrary to the constitution: the 'equal' use and enjoyment of all those 'would have enormous and far reaching social, political, business and resource implications would not be possible.'[15] The Act that sets up the Board envisages it monitoring the observance of the constitutional provisions in the use of languages and any new laws and policies dealing with language matter at any level of government.

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[12] See the Commissioner's website at *http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/html/mandate_mandat_e.php.*
[13] For information on South Africa's languages see *htt://www.southafrica.info /ess_info/ sa_glance/demographics/language.htm.*

[14] See *http://www.pansalb.org.za/home.html.*
[15] Report of the ad hoc Committee on the review of Chapter 9 and Associations: A report to the National Assembly of the Parliament of South Africa (2007) at p. 121.

The next independent commission with overlapping functions The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities that function to protect the rights and interests of these communities and their members, and to promote harmony among communities. It has the power to receive complaints, and has received a small number including a language issues. The parliamentary committee now proposed that these two bodies to merge into the Human Rights Commission.

In terms of policy, under the resist regime that ended in the early 90s, mother tongue was the medium of instruction for black children. This used to blame as a device to keep black children 'in their place' and to prevent them becoming well educated, successful and politically active. The law now allows school governing bodies - which includes parents to decide on the language of instruction. This democratic ideal has serious short- comings. Parents want their children to learn in English, unaware of the importance of the early years being in the mother tongue. Governing bodies may use the language to keep children of some races out. On the other hand, teachers often cannot communicate well in languages that are local where they teach. One writer has said that 'The African languages remain on the margins of power and are used mainly as vehicles for transmission of cultural heritage from generation to generation,' even though they are politically more visible (Kamwangamalu, 2000). He suggested that more needs to be done too create incentives for people to value and learn those languages.

## 5 Summary and conclusion

In order to solve the existing problems, languages in Nepal must be studied in three dimensions: language as a right, language as a resource and language as a problem. Their right to develop their own languages must be recognized in practice. For this Nepal can adopt a tri-lingual policy: Nepali, English and respective mother tongues to conduct official business. But there is a major difference between Nepal in comparison to India and South Africa; (countries which have adopted English) Nepal is never colonized. There is not the same history of British administration in Nepal as there was in India and South Africa. Adopting English as one of the languages of public administration in Nepal would be a significant change from the existing practice as India and South Africa had pre-existing colonial administrations left behind by the British and operating in English. Having a multilingual policy is something that Nepal having incredible linguistic diversity, can deliver services in many languages. But it can use different languages in different contexts.

There may be multiple ways in which exclusion could be responded to. And even within a federal constitution the range of options open to Nepal was broad. Though federalism is demand of the time, it alone cannot be the answer to all. Because the situation of Nepal is extraordinarily complex as there are two constitutional transitions taking place simultaneously. In this context, the Canadian language policy may be helpful for Nepal in implementing its language issues to some extends. But it should be in our circumstances because the status of a language in one context does not determine its status in another context. It might be impossible, in particular, for government to offer services in the national language or in local languages, even if another language was the internal working language of the government.

The second point can be official language policies have a double importance. They are practically important because they determine access to policies and courts. And they are of enormous symbolic importance because they communicate to minority language speakers about what the countries identity is. So the goal of entrenching both English and French as dual official languages in Canada is to communicate to the French speakers that they are equal partners in the country: that their language does not have second class status and they are not second class citizens.

Moreover, in order to frame an appropriate policy, timely and need based language and cultural policy, to develop harmony and cooperation among various linguistic groups, to settle cultural and linguistic problems, to define the role of languages and to conduct high level academic research regularly, special and most representative high-power linguistic and cultural commission should be organized.

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The preliminary draft made by expired Constituent Assembly Committee to decide the basis of cultural and social solidarity (though it has some possible challenges for both Constituent Assembly and the federal government) has made insightful recommendations regarding all the languages spoken in Nepal. The recommendations that it has made are seen to be implemented in the constitution.

As the awareness among people of a common linguistic community identify springing from their shared experience serves the building bloc of national integration. It is important for the government to accord due place to each language and cultures so that linguistic diversity in the nation attempts to foster purpose politics of nation building.

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# Linguistic fieldwork revisited on Puma

## Narayan Sharma

*This paper is an attempt to present the research methodology, ethical issues, sampling, and the roles of people in linguistic fieldwork for the graduate student's doctoral project. The linguistic fieldwork depends, of course, on the goal of the particular project, which in turn determines the kinds of methodologies and data that will be effective and contributive.*

## 1 Background

The purpose of this paper is to present the methodology, ethical issues, sampling, and the roles of people in linguistic fieldwork. The paper also argues that linguistic fieldwork depends, of course, on the goal of the particular project, which in turn determines the kinds of methodologies that will be effective. In connection with this, I argue that recording of texts and direct elicitation both play crucial role to meet the objectives of fieldwork. In August 2010, as a doctoral candidate in field linguistics at School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS), the UK, I embarked on my fieldtrip to Nepal to conduct fieldwork for my doctoral project 'Morpho-syntax of Puma'. Puma, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the eastern part of Nepal by approximately 4000 people, is an endangered Kiranti language. My field site was in Khotang district of eastern part of Nepal.

Actually it was my second fieldtrip to field site as I had already been there as a research assistant while working on DoBeS (Dokumentation Bedrohter Sprachen/ Documentation of Endangered Languages) funded Chintang and Puma Documentation Project (CPDP) (2004-2008).

## 2 Ethical issues

Throughout the entire lifetime of the CPDP, I have had excellent rapports with local community which was always greatly facilitated by transcribers and research assistants. Even if I was doing research in my own country, and I had already been to the local community before, I would need to seek some kind of formal approval from the local community and the central body of their community where I am conducting my own doctoral research. Though I do have already a good rapport with native language speakers and the community, I did this all formalities to placate potential language activists with a promise that the current research is for my doctoral research. Simply going to a local community would be a warm welcome but it was worthwhile taking permission from all concerned bodies.

I took the consent for conducting fieldwork in the assigned topic from the Central institutional body of Kiranti people, Kirant Rai Yayokhkha (the apex body of Rai Kiranti people), and Puma Rai Tupkhabangkhala (the apex body of Puma).

## 3 Research methodology

This study is field and corpus based, descriptive, and linguistic research. Consequently, recording and transcribing of text and elicitation with native speaker is the heart of the source. The collected materials (data) are interpreted and analyzed using documentary linguistic methods.

### 3.1 The recording of text

The recording of speech from different genres is the core of linguistic fieldwork. The text collection, its transcription and translation, and glossing are important tools for understanding and learning languages.

### 3.2 Direct elicitation

In this method native speakers are asked for translations of sentences using a contact language, Nepali and sometimes even English to collect material for verbal paradigms, TAM (time, aspect and modality: Dahl's (1985) TAM questionnaires) and compound verbs. Eliciting verb paradigms is really a tedious, repetitive and challenging job.

Both recording of text and direct elicitation are essential tools which have their own variety of uses. Since none of them are sufficient for all

linguistic analyses, both of them should not be overlooked (Mithun 2001).

## 3.1 Monolingual research

Monolingual research is based on different factors: objective of research, the status of language and language speaking areas, limitation of time and fund etc. Language learning is important to get the right data. Everett (2001) argues that monolingual research is the preferred fieldwork method, which should not be limited but should be made the method of choice.

This method would be ideal when the native speaker is monolingual. In the context of Nepal, Westerners should learn the Nepali language, the lingua franca before embarking fieldwork to remote villages. No matter whatever language s/he is going to study.

## 4 The role of people

Depending on the involvement in my research and the amount of contribution they provide to my dissertation, I'm using the term 'contributor(s)', 'transcriber(s)' and 'research assistant(s)'. The role that my 'informants' play is:

(a) contributors: the native speakers who help me speaking something (story, myth, song, descriptive account, ritual etc.) in Puma language

(b) transcribers: the native speakers who help me transcribing the text and translating into Nepali, and occasionally eliciting of data

(c) research assistants: the native speakers who help me negotiating in the community with the contributors, involving in recording, transcribing, and translating into Nepali, and eliciting of data

(d) researcher: negotiating with research assistant, transcribers, and contributors as well, recording, transcribing, checking transcription and Nepali translation, and translating into English. The researcher is an author.

## 4.1 The terminology 'informants'

In the fieldwork, everyone needs people's help either to negotiate in the community to record and learn the language or to elicit data and to do monolingual research. Many linguists and fieldworkers refer different terminology to anyone particularly a native speaker who is going to help them as an employee of the researcher or as a volunteer to work on the language in different ways: informants (Abbi, 2001), language-helpers (Crowley, 2007), consultants (Bowern, 2008), CPDP (2004-2008), Everett (2001), teachers (Hinton, 2002), contributors (Stuart, 2009). As the term 'informants' is still in use by some fieldworkers, many people feel uncomfortable being referred to in this way (Crowley, 2007).

The other term 'language consultant' itself has its own negative connotation particularly in developing countries where such professional experts are hired on highly paid salary for short term to provide expertise in the specific area.

## 4.2 Choosing language contributors

Our research and study goals depend on the native speaker's willingness to help. Good personal relationship with the native speakers of the community is always blessing keeping good relationship with the community either. For my PhD research, based upon the earlier known basic information about language contributors, they are selected with the help of my research assistant attempting at making the sample representative and inclusive from all Puma speaking Village Development Committees. Besides attempting making sample inclusive, my other aim was not to repeat the same language contributors who helped already for the CPDP. We did not find many youth speakers in the village. They went to India and other Arabian countries to make ends meet as most of the Puma's living standard is below the average.

Abbi (2001) mentions that one willing informant is better than ten unwilling ones. That's quite true and I had the same kind of personal experience during the CPDP. While working on the CPDP, one informant was asked to help us for verb paradigms in Kathmandu. When I started eliciting paradigms of di-transitive verb, not a single paradigm was done in couple of sittings in two days either as he was too talkative or too willing to give unnecessary information than what was actually required. If I was not well familiar with the basic verb paradigmatic system in Puma, there was the maximum possibility of distorting the template of verb paradigm. He seemed to have

been actually willing to help but the only problem he had was being unable to sort out what was required.

I think it is worthwhile sharing of one of my colleague's experience while eliciting basic sentences in Bote, an endangered Indo-European language spoken in western part of Nepal particularly along the river side. When they started eliciting basic sentences such as 'The bird is flying in the sky', and 'I ate rice in the morning'. Then he questioned my colleagues that 'there was no bird in the sky' and how it was possible to fly in the sky. Similarly, he replied responding the second example in this way: 'I have not had rice since yesterday evening'. How could I say, 'I ate rice in the morning' without having any rice? So, choosing informants/ language contributors is really challenging, and we should always get information about the speaker before selecting them.

### 4.3 Gift for language contributors

It would be really good if we could pay all language contributors for their time and effort. Whether language contributors require payment for their help or not entirely depends on local cultural customs. On the one hand, the payment would be taken as an insult to them; on the other hand, non-payment would be exploitation them. However, all Nepalese especially in the village still think that the guests are God. So they never expect any payment from the guest researcher. It is absolutely an embarrassment for them to be paid for helping to him/her. They consider this moment as a great opportunity to serve the god. If they could serve the god well, then the god would be pleased and their wishes would have been fulfilled. It is humiliating for the villagers to be paid for talking to a guest even in India (Abbi, 2001).

However despite their rejection to take money, gifts such as clothes, t-shirts, chocolates and their own photographs and their own contribution in CD or DVD could be given. In my first field visit for my own research, all contributors who have contributed me have been sent their own photographs as a token of remembrances, and all of them are expected some kinds of gifts in my second visit.

### 4.4 Incentive for transcriber/research assistant

As transcribers and research assistants work several hours per day either with the researcher or themselves transcribing and translating, they must be paid. However, employing a particular person can have a negative effect as they will have sound economic status in the community (Everett, 2001). A few language activists in the community also accused my research assistant of selling their language. However, it is up to the speech community to decide about the unpleasant situation.

In contrast, non-payment to them would be exploitation, which is unimaginable. So, the native-transcribers have been paid for the time they spend transcribing the text and translating into Nepali. As transcribing is a tough business and crucial and time consuming, they are paid with higher incentive than standard Nepal Government official rates. It is very difficult finding any native speakers who can transcribe on their own and who can also help the researcher to all responding all possible queries raised by him.

### 4.5 The concept of 'outsiders'

When we go to the field site for the first time, then we are always treated as 'outsiders' and are looked at with suspicion. Being a Nepali but most significantly having already worked in Puma, I am fortunate conducting fieldwork in my own country and in the language in which I have been engaged for last seven years, and have no problem at all to be in the village. Definitely strange people are looked suspiciously unless and until their purpose of visiting in the village is known to the villagers whether they are from the same country or from aboard.

When the researcher is Westerner or white person, then s/he is looked more suspiciously and many questions are raised at the same time. The local people call them 'Gora' or 'Gorini'. Then they start gossiping that either s/he has come to their village for missionary purpose to exploit people by offering money or s/he has a multi millions project for the village but local people will be exploited offering very nominal incentive. It is important to bear in mind is that Westerners are always

considered wealthy having a lot of money in Nepali society.

## 5 Language of elicitation

As the major lingua franca of the area where I am working is Nepali, which is also the official language of the country, it is my medium of elicitation. All language contributors are bilingual as they speak both Nepali and Puma fluently. Abbi (2001) makes distinction between the target language, the contact language and the meta-language for eliciting data. Some of my transcribers who have completed their bachelor's degree do not feel comfortable using directly English as a language of elicitation. Nepali was the language of linguistic elicitation in the CPDP.

I tried using English as a language of elicitation for my doctoral research, but they again asked me to translate into Nepali. Nepali is typographically more similar to the local language Puma than English is. Moreover, the word order of Nepali and Puma has same SOV than English SVO. That is why, they prefer Nepali as an elicitation language rather than English. However, still there are different kinds of semantic and grammatical distinctions in Puma and Nepali. Nepali, for instance, does not have separate inclusive and exclusive pronouns in the first person plural. Similarly, Nepali has dative construction whereas Puma has possessive construction. As a result, the researcher should be aware of using Nepali as an elicitation language.

## 6 Metadata

Getting background information and geographical varieties about the language and the speaker is important. This type of metadata is different for pure linguistic purpose and other sociolinguistic and anthropological purposes.

For my research, the date and the place of recording and the name of the contributor, and the topic in which s/he is going to talk about if possible have been uttered just before starting recording. Besides these, the age, gender, education and clan have also been collected. This metadata is in English as it is easier using data for future potential researchers and even for language speakers who do not speak their language at all.

### 6.1 Meta-documentation

Metadata is the additional but essential information for archiving and management. Austin (2010) mentions that in the broad sense of meta-documentation, the aspects such as the identity of stakeholders, the attitudes of language contributors, the methodology etc. Without the proper information of metadata, it would be obscure for future researchers who wish to use any particular data.

### 6.2 Sampling

I visited all of five Puma heartland areas of Khotang district, and Beltar of Udaypur district, where I stayed for more than two years during the documentation project. A total of 45 language contributors both male and female were selected from five VDCs of Khotang district and one from Udaypur district. However, the preference was given to female because their language tends to be less influenced by the dominant languages (particularly the Nepali language).

For the recording of narratives, myths, folk tales, life history, elderly people (up to 89 year old!) were chosen as they are regarded as the guardian of the oral tradition and literature. Table 1 shows the detailed of sample data.

| VDCs | No of contributor | Gender | | Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | M | F | |
| *Diplung* | 25 | 16 | 9 | Pre-literate |
| *Mauwabote* | 9 | 9 | 0 | Literate |
| *Cisapani* | 4 | 2 | 2 | Primary |
| *Pauwasera* | 3 | 3 | 0 | Secondary |
| *Devisthan* | 2 | 1 | 1 | Higher Level |
| *Beltar* | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| *Total* | 45 | 32 | 13 | Total |
| | 15-30 | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| | 30-40 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| | 40-60 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| *Age* | 60-70 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| | 70-80 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| | 80-90 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| | Total | 32 | 13 | 45 |

| VDCs | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | |
| Diplung | 11 | 6 | 17 |
| Mauwabote | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| Cisapani | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Pauwasera | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Devisthan | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Beltar | | | |
| **Total** | **32** | **13** | **45** |
| Age | | | |

Table 1: Sampling of language contributors

## 6.3 Parameters

In order to make the sample as scientific, fair and balanced as possible, language consultants were selected on the basis of four parameters: knowledge of Puma language with fluency, gender, age and education level.

### 6.3.1 Age and gender

The language consultants were selected to represent different age, sex and education groups. Their age ranged from 19 to 89 and there were 13 females and 32 males.

### 6.3.2 Education

Of the language consultants selected, 17 were preliterate, 6 literate, 7 primary, 8 secondary and 7 higher level.

## 6.4 Recorded genres

### 6.4.1 Narrative

Crowley (2007) says that narrative monologues are relatively easy for the linguist to transcribe and translate. As I heard from senior linguists that languages are not made for the pleasure of linguists. Here is not only the matter of easiness but also the matter of how to find out new patterns of the language.

Narrative would also be the great source for finding out new patterns in the language. I would like to share my personal experience of the CPDP that we were able to explore antipassive (*-kha* verb) while analyzing the recorded narrative text 'folk tale'.

### 6.4.2 Conversation

The conversation between more than two people, of course, makes transcription extremely difficult as people are likely to overlay the speech. It is really complicated to transcribe overlay speech to the native speaker either. For ethical reasons, it's not possible to record natural speech without letting them know. To rely solely on texts is to miss an important data source (Dixon, 2010). There are likely to be some special construction patterns in conversation which we would not be able to find out when recording other texts.

Besides narrative and conversation, some young contributors sang songs and told poems whereas others provided descriptions, daily account, and ritual.

### 6.4.3 Questionnaires/ basic sentences

Using questionnaire or basic sentences is still the most widely and commonly used method for linguistic research. But, Dixon (2010) warns that the only way to understand the grammatical structure of a language is to analyse recorded texts but not elicited sentences. However, in this research, the basic sentences are in English but the language for eliciting is in Nepali as the research

assistants/ transcribers feel comfortable with the contact language. Sometimes I had to create hypothetical situation and sometimes to explain the context to him/ her before s/he starts translating text into their language. While eliciting verb paradigms in Puma, I found direct elicitation was quite useful.

## 6.5 The size of the corpus

A total hour of audio and video recording is 08:35:03. Out of total 83 sessions, all sessions have been transcribed in Puma and translated into Nepali. WAV and MP4 files have been created for all sessions.

### 6.5.1 Metadata (Session) status

Out of total recorded sessions 83, all sessions have been transcribed in Puma and translated into Nepali. WAV and MP4 files have been created for all sessions. About 50 sessions have been ready for archive so far. Table 2 shows the current status of sessions.

| |
|---|
| Total hours of video recording: 06:26:56 |
| Total hours of audio recording: 02:08:07 |
| Total hours of recording: 08:35:03 |
| Total recorded sessions: 83 |
| Total transcribed sessions |
| Without using 'Transcriber': 59 |
| Re-transcribed sessions using |
| 'Transcriber' and glossed: 24 |

Table 2: Session

## 6.6 Text transcription

In the early stages, I sat down with a research assistant/transcriber for transcription and glossing. It is quite natural and expected that native speaker also can make a mistake while listening and transcribing due to various reasons such as tongue-slip, using incorrect lexicons, mispronunciation, violating basic grammatical constructions. One thing should be kept in mind is that there is much more chance of unknowingly correcting transcription from native speakers. So researcher should be aware about that they are trained in proper way.

We generally transcribed text in three ways: by a researcher and a transcriber, by a transcriber only, and by a researcher only. I always double-checked the text we transcribed making sure they are authentic. Research assistants and transcribers are responsible for transcribing, and translating into Nepali. But being a researcher Nepali native speaker, he would check again Nepali translation for making standardization of the language whereas free English translation is the solely responsibility of the researcher.

## 7 Technology

### 7.1 Recording equipments

It would have been harder for me sorting out needy and proper equipments if I was not consulted with ELAR staff Tom. The list of equipments using for recording are as follows:

(a) Audio Recorder
(b) Canon camcorder
(c) Stereo microphones
(d) Lavalier microphones
(e) Canon Powershot Digital Camera

### 7.2 Software

The given below software have been used for text and media files.

(a) Transcriber for transcription
(b) Toolbox for translation and glossing
(c) ELAN for audio-video with text
(d) Handbrake to convert original video format (MTS/ AVCHD) into MP4
(e) Kigo Video converter to convert original video format (MTS/ AVCHD) into MP4

## 8 Adjacent languages

In all of these VDCs and in most of the settlements the Puma are in the majority. However, there is a significant numbers of Nepali-speaking Chetry, and there are also several households of Bantawa, Camling (other Rai groups), Kami and Sarki (Nepali speaking lower castes). Puma is being rapidly supplanted by Bantawa and Camling (the major Kiranti languages), and Nepali, the national Indo-Aryan lingua franca. As a result, the language is on the verge of extinction.

## 9 Precautions

I was unexpectedly hospitalized for a week in Kathmandu just after few days back from London.

No one can be escaped from unexpected sickness but precaution is better. On the other hand, our fieldtrip became most adventurous when we got stuck in the middle of the steep landslide and could not go ahead. Luckily we were able getting back and survived.

One of the language contributors of Bhirgau of Cisapani VDC asked us money for his help though none of the others did. Later we came to know that a westerner paid him for his anthropological research. It is against local cultural norms as he was only exception asking payment in the community.

## 10 Conclusion

The building of trust and good relationship between the researcher and language contributors is essential. All language contributors are stakeholders of the research and their role and involvement should be identified in the meta-documentation. Both recording of text and even direct elicitation are important tools for linguistic analysis. The present study is field and corpus based, descriptive, and linguistic research. Different genres such as conversation, description, narrative, poetry, singing and ritual should be recorded to find out various new patterns of language.

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# Attitude towards English: A study on higher secondary ESL students

Sabita Kumari Suaro and Smita Sinha

## 1 Introduction

Success in ESL learning depends upon complete personal participation of the learner such as physical, intellectual and emotional involvement to send and interpret linguistic messages. The factors that affect the effective English language learning are motivation, age, aptitude, attitude, language anxiety, gender, amount of exposure to the target language, socio-economical factors, personality factors and so on. Positive attitude towards learning of English as second language is dependent upon learners' views of the language, learning environment, the learning situation, and how they view the target language and its speakers. This together with other variable factors such as the desire to learn, and past experience with learning a new skill, may affect or significantly contribute to language learning outcome (Gardner,1982). Similarly, success or failure in learning a language is determined by the degree of favorable dispositions that students hold towards the language and also towards learning it and towards the target language group and their culture.

The construct of attitude includes three components: cognitive, evaluative and behavioral. Wenden (1991 as cited in Karahan 2007) provides an explanation as to what each of these components involves. The cognitive component of attitude involves beliefs or perceptions about the objects or situations related to the attitude. The evaluative part of attitude is formed when the objects or situations related to the attitude generate likes or dislikes. The third component, the behavioral one, appears when certain attitudes tend to prompt learners to adopt particular learning behaviors. The belief that English speakers are mostly poor and uneducated would be an example of the cognitive element of attitude; while the degree to which a student likes or dislikes speakers of the language being studied can be an instance of the affective component. Students' intentions or actions, such as, attempting native-like pronunciation, seeking out native speakers of the language, or intending to continue language study are examples of the behavioral element of attitude. Each component of attitude is important since the connection among affective, cognition, and behavior changes primarily when there is disagreement within the components.

Attitudes are not inherent in a person but are developed due to one's own experiences right from childhood and hence can also be modified by experience. The acquisition of a second language depends on a modification of attitudes, knowledge, and behavior towards the members of the target language group. Indeed changing students' attitudes towards the English language speakers and their community and culture is necessary for success in learning English. In general, teachers, parents and the community in which students live need to take responsibility for changing students' attitudes. Students come to the class with their own attitudes towards learning English and if some of these attitudes are negative, teachers must try to modify these attitudes to make leaning possible in a desired way. Cook (2008) states that the one of the goals of language teaching includes changing students' attitudes towards the target language culture. For improving student's attitudes, it is important to measure the students' attitude towards English language by the language teachers. To quote Bernard Spolsky (1969:273) "In a typical language learning situation there are a number of people whose attitude to each other can be significant; the learner, the teacher, the learner's peers and parents and the speakers of the language." According to T.K. Pramanik (1988), the role of attitudes in second language learning is very complex because a learner comes across a number of people whose attitudes to each other seem to be significant. Hence, attitudes consist of a cluster of factors: the attitude of the learner, his attitude to second language learning, attitude to second language teachers, peer attitude and the attitude of the parents. All these factors appear to

be playing different roles in different situations of second language learning inside and outside the class.

## 2 Aim of the present study

The main purpose is to see if the students have positive attitude towards learning English as second language. Many studies, such as Sinha et al. (2011a, 2011b) state that although the arts and science colleges students of Odisha score quite higher marks in their higher secondary examinations, most of them do not meet the global standard in English language tests. This is turn affect the career in futures which demands both technical skills and soft skills. Therefore, it is very important to know whether the higher secondary students who aspire to become doctors and engineers and so on hold positive attitude towards English language or know. Their future success can be predicted from their attitude towards English which is the global language in trade, commerce and science and so on.

## 3 Methodology and measurement

Descriptive research design was used for this study to interpret tribal students' perception towards English language. The design for the study was a one shot case (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). The design was used as a reference point to collect information regarding various aspects of ESL learning. The instrument was sufficient to obtain the data needed to achieve the purpose of the study. The questions used were closed ended and exploratory in nature.

 The instrument for the research is a questionnaire based on five point summated scale developed by Likert in 1932. It requires the individuals to make a decision on their level of agreement, generally on a five-point scale (i.e. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or in reverse order) with a statement. The number beside each response becomes the value for that response and the total score is obtained by adding the values for each response, hence the reason why they are also called 'summated scales' (the respondents score is found by summing the number of responses). Dumas (1999) suggests, 'this is the most commonly used question format for assessing participants' opinions of usability'.

## 4 Administrations

The sample for the survey was drawn through simple random sampling method at a reputed higher secondary school/junior college of Odisha out of which 120 are male and 80  are female.

Each identified student was given the survey form (appendix) .The directions were given in English. All the participant were explained the purpose of the survey and were asked to be honest in answering .The survey consisted of two parts. Part A consisted of the background information of the respondent. Instead of giving the names of the respondent, an abstract sample number was given. This was done with the purpose of maintaining privacy on the respondents' view/attitude about English language learning and English language in general. Part B deals with questions on Attitude towards English learning, Attitude towards English language itself Attitude towards English learning skills. Attitude towards sociolinguistics & socio-psychological factors Attitude towards selfesteem/efficacy/confidence on a five point scale. The respondent was asked to circle the answer that is close to their feelings. They were given time to think before answering the items..

Attitude questionnaire consisted of thirty-three structured questions      (items) adapted and developed from the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery (Gardener & Lambert 1972)

The focus was on four sub-scales of attitude factors as follows:

a) Attitude towards English learning items (1-6)
b) Attitude towards English language itself items (7-10)
c) Attitude towards English learning skills items (11-15)
d) Attitude towards sociolinguistics and socio-psychological items (16-21)
e) Attitude towards self-esteem/efficacy/ confidence items (22-33)

## 5 Human factors and ethical issues

Care was taken to deal with the sensitive and subtle issues of the attitude test. The participants were explained the purpose of study and care was taken to maintain the secrecy of the individual

views as far as possible to save the participant from embarrassment. Guidelines provided by American Psychological Association (1982) for conducting research with human samples were followed as far as possible. The researchers were well aware of the ethical and professional responsibilities

## 6 Scoring and interpretation

To score the survey, each respondent received scoring as per the following criteria: For question number 1, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 point from 1-5 were given in ascending order with strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5points).For the rest of the questions points were given in descending order- that is 5 points to strongly disagree to 1 point to strongly agree. Three points were given to neutral or not answered questions.

The scores for each sub section as well as a composite raw score was calculated. The scores on complete subscale range from 165-33. For individual groups the raw score ranges are as given in Table 1.

Table 1: Score towards Atttitude

| Question | Score | Area |
|----------|-------|------|
| 1-6 | 6-30 | Attitude towards English learning items |
| 7-10 | 4-20 | Attitude towards English language itself items |
| 11-15 | 5-25 | Attitude towards English learning skills items |
| 16-21 | 6-30 | Attitude: socio–linguistic & socio-psychological items |
| 22-33 | 12-60 | Attitude: socio–linguistic & socio-psychological items |
| Total | 33-165 | |

It is considered that a total raw score of 99 and above is considered as positive score.

## 7 Data analysis

The study used a descriptive statistics to analyze the data from the exploratory survey. Microsoft excel program was used to analyze data. Average raw scores of samples category in terms of gender,

medium of school education and, socio-economic status of parents were calculated to see the result.

## 8 Results

The survey shows interesting results. Contrary to the expectation of the researchers the mean scores show positive attitude towards English language (Table 2). This table shows that the total mean raw score and the mean raw score on the basis of gender. It is interesting to know that while the mean raw score of the entire sample is 116.73. The mean raw score of boys is 115.4 and that of girls is 118.73. All the scores are positive. Fig (1) makes a comparative chart to show the result.

Table 2: Mean raw score on the basis of gender

| Total | Boys | Girls |
|-------|------|-------|
| 116.73 | 115.4 | 118.73 |

The above table shows that girls have more positive attitude than the boys although there is not much of different between the total mean raw score and on the basis of gender.

Similarly, Table 3 shows that the mean score in attitude towards self esteem is 40.73, attitude towards social linguistic and socio psychological item is 24. While attitude towards English language learning item is 20, the attitude towards English language itself and learning skill are 16 as represented in Table (3).

Table 3: Total mean score item-wise

| Question | Raw Score |
|----------|-----------|
| 1-6 | 20 |
| 7-10 | 16 |
| 11-15 | 16 |
| 16-21 | 24 |
| 22-23 | 40.73 |

Table 3 suggests that while the students show greater score is self esteem they show comparatively poor in English language itself and in learning skills items.

Similarly, table (4) shows the mean raw score on the basis of mother tongue.

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Table 4: Mean raw score on the basis of mother tongue

| Odia | Bengali | Telugu | Hindi |
|------|---------|--------|-------|
| 117  | 117.40  | 116    | 115   |

The above table shows that Bengali speakers have better score followed by Odia speakers .Hindi speakers have the lowest score. Although the speakers have some differences in the scores, the differences are marginal .This can be represented in Table 4.

Table (4) gives the idea about the difference on mean score on the basis of mother tongue.

Table (5) shows the mean raw score on the basis of socio economic status.

Table 5: Mean raw score on the basis of socio – economic status

| LIG | MIG | HIG    |
|-----|-----|--------|
| 113 | 117 | 119.05 |

This shows that while the students coming from higher income group have more positive attitude than students from other two groups. The students from middle income group score higher than those from lower income group. The reason probably is higher income group parents are more cautious about their children developing positive attitude towards English language learning followed by parents of middle income group. The above score can be represented graphically in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that attitude towards English language learning increases as the socio – economic condition of the students also increases that is to say the higher the socio – economic status, more positive is the attitude. In other wards, socio – economic back ground and the positive attitude towardsEnglish are proportionate.

## 9 Conclusion

 In this paper, survey was conducted on attitude towards English language by the higher secondary ESL students using various variable such as gender, mother tongue and socio – economic status. The mean raw scores of each variable were also calculated. The average scores show positive attitude

Although there are no drastically significant differences between individual variables noticed, still the study is significant in the sense that there are small differences, found in the scores between HIG and LIG background students. In the present study  we found that factor such as socio economic status of parents contribute to some extent in developing higher positive attitude towards English language by the ESL higher secondary learners of Odisha.

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# Subordination in Santhali

Indresh Thakur

*This article is an attempt to analyze subordination from formal and functional perspectives in Santhali, an Austro-Asiatic language of North Munda family spoken in southern east of Nepal. It includes relative clauses, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, and converbs.*

## 1 Introduction

Subordination is distinct from coordination in that in subordination, one clause is grammatically dependent on other. Subordination involves the conjunction of two clauses with the help of subordinators or subordinating conjunctions. Unlike coordinators, the subordinators assign unequal rank of the clauses and render one of the clauses subordinate to the other (Yadav 1990(a): 343). Subordination includes relative clauses, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, and converbs. They are described in the following pages:

## 2 Relative Clauses

As cited in Payne, 1997, a relative clause is one that functions as a nominal modifier (Keenan 1985). Relative clauses are typically found as modifiers of a noun. Relative clause is used for various types of sub-clause which are linked to part or all of the main clause by a back-pointing element, usually a relative pronoun.

Basing on the relative position of the head NP vis-a-vis the relative clause there are four types of relative clauses in Santhali: postnominal, prenominal, internally headed, and headless:

## 2.1 Post nominal

In a postnominal relative clause the head NP occurs outside the relative clause, and the relative clause follows the head NP. The following examples are illustrative:

(1) a. *dilip   [ʌkʌi   iɲ   ʌl*
     dilip   ʌkʌi   iɲ   ʌl
     Dilip   REL   1.SG   Ol
     *tsiki   tsiʌɲ]   uni*

     tsiki   tsiʌ-ɲ   uni
     Chiki   teach-1.SG   3.SG
     *oɽaʔe*       *sen-ina*
     oɽaʔ-e       senina
     house-3.SG.AN   go-PST
     'Dilip who teach me Ol Chiki went home.'

b. *una*       *pʌtʌb*
     una       pʌtʌb
     DEM.DIST.INAN   book
     *[ukaɽa iɲ hulaɲ*
     ukaɽa   iɲ   hula -ɲ
     REL   1.SG   yesterday-1.SG
     *kiriɲlida]*       *una*
     kiriɲ-lida   una
     buy-PST DEM.DIST.INAN
     *aʔina*
     aʔ-ina
     lose-PST
     'The book that I bought yesterday lost.'

c. *sundʌr   [ʌkʌi   mʌndzʰi*
     sundʌr   ʌkʌi   mʌndzʰi
     Sundar   REL   village
     *haɽam kanai]*
     haɽam   kana-i
     chief   be.PRS-3.SG.AN
     *heʔakana*
     heʔ-akan-a
     come-PROG-PRS
     'Sundar who is village chief is coming.'

d. *uni   sabaguʌm   [ʌkʌiren*
     uni   sanaguʌ-m   ʌkʌi-ren
     3.SG fetch-2.SG   REL-GEN
     *bitkil*       *iɲaʔ*
     bitkil       iɲ -aʔ
     buffalo       1.SG-GEN
     *kʰet   ʌtiŋkidai]*

khet ʌtiŋ-kida-i
field graze-PST-SG.AN
'Fetch him whose buffalo grazed my field.'

Sentences (1a-d) are all postnominal relative clauses as the head NPs *dilip, una pʌtʌb, sundʌr,* and *uni* occur outside the relative clauses and the relative clauses follow the head NPs.

## 2.2 Prenominal

In a prenominal relative clause the head NP occurs outside the relative clause precedes the head NP. The following examples illustrates:

(2) a. *[ʌkʌiṭa kuɽa abin*

ʌkʌiṭa kuɽa abin
REL boy 2.SG.H

*pʌtʌb-bin imad-ija]*

pʌtʌb-bin imad-ija
book-2.SG.H give-PST

*uni iɲiŋ ɲelkida*

uni iŋ -iŋ ɲel -kida
3.SG 1.SG-1.SG See-PST
'I Saw the boy whom you gave a book.'

b. *[ʌkʌiṭa hʌɽ abin*

ʌkʌiṭa hʌɽ abin
REL man 2.SG.H

*paisabin imad-ija]*

paisa-bin imad-ija
money-2.SG.H give-PST

*uni kumɽu kana*

uni kumɽu kana
3.SG thief be.PRS
'The man whom you gave money is a thief.'

c. *[ukata ul*

ukata ul
REL mango

*ɲurhʌ kan tahena]*

ɲurhʌ kan -tahena
fall PROG–PST

*una*

una
DEM.DIST.INAN

*asise*

asis-e
Ashish-3.SG.NP

*sabkida*

sab -kida
catch–PST
'Ashish caught the mango that was falling.'

d. *[ʌkʌiren gidrʌi*

ʌkʌi -ren gidrʌ -i
REL –GEN son -3.SG.AN

*melare aʔina] uni*

mela -re aʔ -ina uni
fair-LOC lose-PST 3.SG

*ajuhʌɽe ʌdiaṭe*

ajuhʌɽ -e ʌdiaṭe
woman -3.SG.ANmuch

*raʔkan tahekana*

raʔ -kan tahekana
cry –PROG be.PST
'The woman whose son got lost in the fair was crying a lot.'

All the sentences are prenominal relative relative clauses as the head NP of these sentences are outside the relative clauses and follow the relative clause.

## 2.3 Internally headed

In an internal relative clause the head NP occurs inside the relative clause. The main clause too may have the head NP repeated in it, in which case the head NP is preceding by the correlative-demonstrative determiner, usually however, the head NP is deleted and only a correlative demonstrative third person pronoun is used. The following examples illustrate this.

(3) a. *ʌkʌi serpa sʌgʌrmatʰare*

ʌkʌi serpa sʌgʌrmatʰa-re
REL Sherpa Mt.Everest-LOC

*pʌhil dʌme deina*

pʌhil dʌme de-ina
first time climb-PST

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uni      tendziŋe         uni

tendziŋ-e                 3.SG

Tenjing -3.SG.AN

tahekana

tahekana

be.PST

'The Sherpa who climbed Mt.Everest first was Tenjing. '

b. ʌkʌi     nʌtsʌnijã     ʌkʌi

nʌtsʌnijã                 REL

dancer

 ɲindʌi            eneina

ɲindʌ-i            ene-ina

night-3.SG.AN    dance–PST

uni     sundʌr

uni     sundʌr

3.SG    Sundar

miʔ     sai

miʔ     sai

one     hundred

ṭakai

ṭaka-i

money-3.SG.NP

imadija

imad-ija

give-PST

'Sundar gave one hundred rupees to the dancer who danced last night.'

## 2.4 Headless

Headless relative clauses are those clauses which themselves refer to the noun that they modify. e.g.,

(4) *iɲaʔ pʌtʌb kumruie heʔina*

iɲ-aʔ          pʌtʌb    kumrui-e heʔ-ina
1.SG.GEN book thief -3.SG.AN    come-PST
'One who stole my book came.'

In this example, *iɲa pʌtʌb* kumɽui is a relative clause without a head *hʌɽ* 'man'.

## 3 Complement clauses

A prototypical complement clause is a clause that functions as an argument subject or object of some other clause (Noonan 1985, cited from Payne

1997). A complement clause is a clause which completes an accompanying lexical head. Such a suboudinate clause may function as a complement of the subject or a complement of object. In Santhali also there are subject and object complements. e.g.,

(5) a. *rita      dakai          dzʌma*

rita      daka-i.SH.AN    dzʌm-a
Rita      rice-3.SH.AN     eat-PRS

*mente  ṭʰikʌn minaa*

mente  ṭʰikʌn mina -a
COMP   sure    be -PRS
'It is sure that rita eats rice.'

b. *iɲ      nuã*

iɲ      nuã
1.SG    DEM.PROX.INAN

*kʰʌbʌr  [mente biswʌ*

kʰʌbʌr  mente              biswʌ
news     COMP               Bishwa

*bie   paskidai]*

bie   pas-kida-i
B.A. pass-PST-3.SG.AN

*atureɲ andzʌmkida*

atu-re-ɲ andzʌm-kida
village-LOC-1.SG hear-PST

'I heard the news that Bishwa passed the B.A. examination in village.'

Here, sentences 5 (a) ane (b) are the examples of subject and object complements respectively.

## 4 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are those that serve an adverbial function. They modify a verb or a whole clause. Sometimes adverbial clauses are termed adjuncts.
The adverbial clauses in Santhali can be divided into the following tpes: time, location, cause, purpose, conditional and concessive.

## 4.1 Time

The adverbial clauses of time signal temporal as well as sequential relationships and utilize both the strategies of subordination. e.g.,

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(6) a. *tsunɖai eneʔina dzʌb*

tsunɖa-i eneʔ -ina dzʌb

Chunda-3.SG.AN dance-PST when

*sundʌre tumda ru kida*

sundʌr-e tumda ru-kida

Sundar-3.SG.AN drum play-PST

'Chunda danced when Sundar Played the drum.'

b. *dzʌb lʌpit ub geʔtsawakidai*

dzʌb lʌpit ub geʔ-tsawa-kida-i

when barber hair cut-finish-PST-3.SG.AN

*uni paisa hataukida*

uni paisa hatau-kida

3.SG money take-PST

'When the barber finished hair cut he took money.'

c. *una katʰa*

una katʰa

DEM.PROX.INAN story

*andzʌm saũte uni*

andzʌm saũte uni

listen as soon as 3.SG

*tsalauinai*

tsalau-ina-i

go-PST -3.SG.AN

'When he heard this story he went.'

## 4.2 Location

Locative adverbial clauses are introduced by the subordinator *ukaren* 'where/wherever'.e.g.,

(7) a. *iɲ ukaren*

iɲ ukaren

1.SG wherever

*tahẽna am unde*

tahẽna am unde

live.PR 2.SG there

*tahenme*

tahen-me

live-IMP

'Wherever I live you live there.'

b. *am ukaren*

am ukaren

2.SG where

*kuliɲa*

kul -iɲ -a

send-1.SG-PRS

*iɲ unde tsalaa*

iɲ unde tsala -a

1.SG there go-PRS

'I will go wherever you send me.'

c. *iɲ ukare tsʌkriɲ*

iɲ ukare tsʌkri-ɲ 1.SG where

job-1.SG

*ɲama unde tsalaa*

ɲam -a unde tsala -a

get‾PRS there go‾PRS

'I wil go wherever I will find a job.'

## 4.3 Causal

Adverbial clauses of cause are formed by *unte* 'so', *tsidase* 'because' in Santhali. e.g.,

(8) a. *iɲ pʰelina*

iɲ pʰel –ina

1.SG fail –PST

*tsidase iɲ*

tsida -se iɲ

because 1.SG

*bʌiparhaulina*

bʌi –parhau –lina

NEG –read –PST

'I failed because I did not study well.'

b. *paisa tsabaiina*

paisa tsabai -ina

money exhaust –PST

*unate iɲ*

unate iɲ

so 1.SG

*oɽaʔiɲ heʔina*

oɽaʔ -iɲ heʔ -ina

house -1.SG come–PST

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'I came back home because my money was spent.'

c. *inʌ    iɲ    taɽamkida*

  inʌ    iɲ    taɽam -kida

  so much 1.SG    walk–PST

  *se    laŋga*

  se    laŋga

  that    tire

  *tsabainaɲ*

  tsabai – ina -ɲ

  exhaust –PST -1SG

  'I walked so much that I got tired.'

## 4.4 Purpose

The adverbial clauses of purpose typically use the different types of bare infinitival verb form. e.g.,

(9) a. *iɲ    ʌlu    kiriŋ*

  iɲ    ʌlu    kiriŋŋ

  1.SG    potato    buy

  *hʌʈijʌɲ tsalauina* hʌʈijʌ-ɲ

  tsalau-ina  market -1.SG    go-PST

  'I went to the market to buy potatoes.'

b. *soren    tsʌkri    sindra*

  soren    tsʌkri    sindra

  Soren    job    search

  *katʰmanɖu    heʔina*

  katʰmanɖu    heʔ -ina

  Kathmandu    come–PST

  'Soren came to Kathmandu in search of job.'

c. *tsunɖa    sinʌma    ɲel*

  tsunɖa    sinʌma    ɲel

  Chunda    cinema see

  *sʌhʌre    tsalauina*

  sʌhʌr -e tsalau –ina

  town -3.SG.AN    go –PST

  'Chunda went to town to watch a cinema.'

## 4.5 Conditional

A typical, conditional sentences consists of an antecedent (or a condition) and a consequent (Yadav 1990a: 166) . In Santhali the antecedent

represents the event described by the *ente* 'if' – clause, while the consequent represents the event described by the *likʰai (or lekʰan, kʰai)* 'then' – clause. e.g.

(10) a. *ente    iɲ    tseŋẽiɲ*

  ente    iɲ    tseŋẽ-iɲ

  if    1SG    bird-1SG

  *tahenkʰai*

  tahen- kʰai

  PST-COND

  *sirmareɲ    udʌuka*

  sirma-re-ɲ    udʌuk-a

  sky-LOC-1SG    fly-PRS

  'If I were a bird, I would fly in the sky.'

b. *ente    daʔ    likʰai    iɲ*

  ente    daʔ    likʰai    iɲ

  if    rain    COND 1SG

  *hʌʈijʌ    bʌiɲtsalaa*

  hʌʈijʌ    bʌi-ɲ-tsala-a

  market    NEG-1SG-go-PST

  'If it rains I will not go to market.'

c. *ente am    oɽaʔem*

  ente am    oɽaʔ-em

  if    2SG    house-2SG

  *tsalau    lekʰan    iɲ*

  tsalau    lekʰan    iɲ

  go    COND    1SG

  *amaʔ    pʌtʌb*

  am-aʔ    pʌtʌb

  2SG-GEN    book

  *ʌguwʌɲme*

  ʌguwʌ-ɲ-me

  bring -1SG-IMP

  'If you went home , bring me your book.'

d. *ente    abin*

  ente    abin

  if    2SG.H

  *suruŋgabin*

  suruŋga-bin

  Surunga-2SG.H

  *tsala    kʰaibin    iɲ*

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tsala    kʰai-bin      iɲ
go       COND-2SG.H 1SG

*hʌiɲ*              *tsalaa*

hʌi-ɲ              tsala-a
also-1SG          go -PRS
'If you go to Surunga, I will also go.'

## 4.6 Concessive

Concessive clauses reflect a contrast of some sort between the main and subordinate clause, e.g.,

(11) a. *uni      mʌdzte*

    uni       mʌdz –te
    3.SG      good –INS

    *parhaukatehʌ̃*      *pʰel -ina*

    parhau -katehʌ̃    pʰel -ina
    read –SEQCON   fail –PST
    'Although he read well, he failed.'

   b. *biswʌdip*             *seŋge*

    biswʌdip            seŋge
    Bishwadip           friend

    *huikate*             *hʌ̃*

    hui -katehʌ̃
    be –SEQCON

    *dzʰagɽakana*

    dzʰagɽa -kana
    fight –be. PRS
    'Eventhough Bishwadip is my friend he fights with me.'

## 5. Converb

Converbs are used for medicating the simultaneous or sequential actions.

## 5.1 Sequential converb

According to Peterson (1999: 358) the sequential converb suffix in Nepali comprises of the perfective marker *–e* and the conjunctive *–ra*, yielding *e-ra*. In Santhali sequential clause is marked by *-kate*. e.g.,

(12) a. *uni      dzʌmkatee*

    uni       dzʌm –kate -e
    3.SG      eat –SEQ -3SG.AN

*tsalauina*

tsalau -ina
go – PST
'He went having meal.'

   b. *sita      bʰuʔkatee*

    sita       bʰuʔ -kate -e
    dog       bari–SEQ-3SG.AN

    *tsalauina*

    tsalau -ina
    go –PST
    'The dog went barking'

   c. *iɲ       pʌtʌbiɲ*

    iɲ       pʌtʌb -iɲ
    1.SG     book -1SG

    *parhaukate       gitiʔina*

    parhau -kate      gitiʔ -ina
    read –SEQ          sleep–PST
    'I slept having read.'

   d. *sitai             iskul*

    sita -i            iskul
    Sita -3SG.AN      school

    *tsalaukate        heʔina*

    tsalau -kate      heʔ -ina
    go –SEQ           come–PST 'Sita came having schooling.'

## 5.2 Simultaneous converb

The simultaneous converbs function as adjuncts maily to verbs of motion and posture, expressing an accompanying action of the same subject. In Santhali simultaneous clause is marked by the paticle *–tulu*. e.g.,

(13) a. *uni dzʌdzʌmtulue*

    uni dzʌm -dzʌm –tulu -e
    3.SG     eat–eat–SIM 3.SG.AN

    *tsalauina*

    tsalau -ina
    go –PST

    'He went eating.'

   b. *rita       landatulue*

    rita       landa –tulu -e

Rita laugh-SIM -3.SG.AN

*heʔina*

heʔ -ina

come-PST

'Rita came laughing.'

c. *sitai*   *bʰubʰutulu*

sita -i   bʰu -bʰu -tulu

dog -3.SG.AN bark–bark–SIM

*dʌɽkida*

dʌɽ -kida

run –PST

'The dog ran away barking.'

d. *kuɽa*  *raraʔtulue*

kuɽa  ra -raʔ -tulu -e

boy  cry–cry–SIM-3.SG.AN

*dʌɽkida*

dʌɽ -kida

run – PST

'The boy ran away crying.'

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# Converbal constructions in Bhojpuri

## Gopal Thakur Lohar

*Bhojpuri is one of the major New Indo-Aryan languages, third in Nepal, gradually stepping in education system and administration. This paper has chosen one of its non-finite subordinate constructions, viz. converbs: simultaneous & sequential. We'll analyze morphological, semantic and syntactic features of the Bhojpuri converbal constructions from the functional-typological perspectives.*

## 1   Introduction

Similar to most of the South Asian languages, Bhojpuri typically employs non-finite subordinate clauses, instead of finite subordinate clauses so as to realize clause linkage (Yadava, 2005). There are two types of converbal constructions in Bhojpuri: Sequential and Simultaneous. Sequential converbs sequence events in narratives; anterior events or states and Simultaneous converbs express progressive senses; simultaneous events. This paper includes both types of the converbal constructions (also known as 'conjunticve particles/participial clauses', 'absolutives' or *purbkalik/sʌmkalik kriya* 'prior/progressive tense verb') in Bhojpuri and tries to analyze them from functional-typological perspectives.

The paper will be organized into five sections. Section 1 presents introduction to the subject-matter. Section 2 presents the morphological analysis of both the simultaneous and sequential converbal constructions in Bhojpuri. In section 3 their semantics will be discussed briefly. In section 4 syntactic features associated with these constructions in Bhojpuri will be explored from functional-typological perspectives. Finally, the findings of the paper will be summed up in section 5.

## 2   Morphology of the Bhojpuri converbs

The sequential converb in Bhojpuri is formed by attaching the suffix *-ke, -i* and *-ϕ* to the verbal root:

(1)  *raju bʌs cʌʈʰ-ke kaʈʰmanɖu*
     Raju bus ride-SEQ Kathmandu
     *gʌil (ja-il)*
     go-PT.3.S.M
     'Raju went to Kathmandu by bus.'

(2)  *tohʌra    ke    dekʰ-i dekʰ-i pagʌl*
     2.S.GEN ACC see-SEQ        mad
     *bʰʌ-ile    mʌnwa*
     be-3.PT.NH mind
     'I became mad after having seen you.'

(3)  *lʌikʌ kʌfi    cʌl-ʌl*
     boy   say-SEQ walk-3.PT.NH
     'The boy walked after having said.'

The simultaneous converb in Bhojpuri is formed by attaching the suffuix *-t, -ʌt* and     *-wʌt* to the verbal root:

(4)  *hʌm       kʰana kʰa-t   ciʈʈʰi*
     1.S.NOM meal    eat-SIM letter
     *paʈʰ-ni*
     read-PST.1/2/3.H
     'I read a letter while eating rice.'

(5)  *u              ropʌni    kʌr-ʌt git*
     3.S.NH.NOM plantation do-SIM song
     *gʌ-ilʌk*
     sing-3.S.PST.NH
     'He sang a song while planting seedlings.'

(6)  *ʌpne          git ga-wʌt ɖel*
     2.S.H.NOM song sing-SIM grass-container
     *bin le-ni*
     knit take-1/2/3.PST.H
     'You knitted the grass-container while singing a song.'

While we go through morphology of the simultaneous converbs in Bhojpuri, the verb roots like *kʰa* 'eat', *ja* 'go', *nʌfia* 'bathe' take suffix *-t*; the verb roots like *kʌr* 'do', *kʰel* 'play', *bol* 'speak' take suffix *-ʌt*; and the verb roots like *ga* 'sing', *pa* 'get', *bʰa* 'like' take suffix *-wʌt*.

## 3    Semantics of the Bhojpuri converbs

Semantically, Bhojpuri employs both, the sequential and simultaneous converbal constructions.

Sequential converbs are extensively used in narrative and procedural discourses. A sequential converb basically refers to 'anteriority', i. e., the event occurring immediately prior to the event encoded in the following verb, which may be another sequential converb or a finite verb in the matrix clause (Yadava, 2005). In other words, the major function of the sequential converb is to encode the event that is assumed to have occurred prior to the event coded in the matrix predicate (Noonan, 1999):

(7)  *ɦʌm        pani pi-ke        rat*

1.S.NOM water drink-SEQ    night
*kʌʈ-ni*
pass-1/2/3.PST.H
'I passed the night having taken water.'

(8)  *mai     kʰaek kʌ-ke   ɦʌmni ke*
mother food  do-SEQ 1.P    GEN
*kʰia-ke    sut-eli*
feed- SEQ sleep-3.S.NPT.H
'Mother sleeps having food cooked and fed us.'

The converb *pike* 'drunk' happens prior to the finite verb of the matrix clause *kʌʈni* 'passed' in (5) and the converb *kʌke* 'done' happens prior to the other converb *kʰiake* 'fed' before the finite verb *suteli* 'sleep' of the matrix clause in (6).

Apart from the core meaning, i. e., anteriority or temporal priority as shown in (5) and (6), in common with other South Asian languages (Yadava, 2005 and Regmi, 2008), Bhojpuri employs non-specialized sequential converbs exploring a variety of extra-contextual meanings including cause as shown in (7) and and manner as shown in (8):

(9)  a.  *mʌŋru pʌʈʰ-e    na  pa-ke*
Mangru read-PUR NEG get-SEQ
*gʰʌr-e     cʌl  a-il*

home-LOC walk come-3.PST.NH
'Having not allowed to study, Mangru returned home.'

b.  *ɦʌm      sara rat   ro-ke*
1.S.NOM whole night weep-SEQ
*bit-ʌ-ini*
pass-1/2/3.PST.H
'I passed the whole night weeping.'

Like Chantyal (Noonan, 1999), Bhujel (Regmi, 2008) and Maithili (Yadava, 2005), Bhojpuri also employs simultaneous converbal constructions to express an activity that is simultaneous with, or temporally overlapping with, another activity expressed by the matrix predicate:

(10)  *u        dewas ga-wʌt  gʰʌr-e*
3.S.NOM prayer sing-SIM home-LOC
*a-il*
come-3.S.M.PST.NH
'He came home while chanting prayer.'

(11)  *lʌika biskuʈ  kʰa-t   iskul*
boy    biscuit eat-SIM school
*gʌil (ja-il)*
go-3. S.M.PST.NH
'The boy went to school eating biscuits.'

Bhojpuri also employs double simultaneity except the matrix predicate, especially to mark a particular behaviour:

(12)  *tu            tʌ   kʰʌrʰ-wa  kʰa-t*
2.S.NH.NOM EMP grass-MIN  eat-SIM
*pʌni-a        pi-ʌt    cʌl-elʌ*
water-MIN drink-SIM walk-2.NH.NPT
'You walk very slowly.'
(Literally: 'You walk eating grass and drinking water.')

Sometimes, simultaneous converbal suffix adds a further clitic *-e* as emphatic marker to emphasize the situation:

(13)  *lʌiki ro-ʌt-e         cʌl*
girl   weep-SIM.EMP walk
*a-il*
come-3.S.PST.NH
'The girl came weeping.'

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Normally Bhojpuri verb roots take suffix -ʌl to express indefinite as well as past participle aspect. But there are some verbs that further take clitic -e as emphatic marker to express simultaneous converbal context. Sometimes both the suffixes are grammaticalized into -le:

(14) *babuji cor ke pʌkʌʈ-le*
father thief GEN catch-SIM
*ʌ-ini*
come-1/2/3.M.PST.H
'Father came catching the thief.'

Moreover, the simultaneous structure occasionally gives meaning of the sequential one making too narrow escape between the converb and the verb of the matrix predicate:

(15) *lʌika kʰa-t-e sut gʌ-il*
boy eat-SIM-EMP sleep go-3.PST.NH
'The boy slept as soon as he ate.'

## 4 Syntax of the Bhojpuri converbs

### 4.1 Position

Both the converb clauses, sequential and simultaneous, are normally joined to the left of the matrix clause in Bhojpuri. But they can also be postposed as a discourse strategy in marked constructions to express afterthought or focus (Yadava, 2005):

(16) *pias-e lʌoʈ a-il*
thirst-EMP return come-3.PST.NH
*log pani na pi-ke*
people water NEG drink-SEQ
'People returned back thirsty without drinking water.'

(17) *bagʰ jʰʌpʈ-ʌl muɦ*
tiger pounce-3.s.PST.NH mouth
*ba-wʌt*
open-SIM
'The tiger pounced having mouth open.'

### 4.2 Tense, aspect and mood

The tense and the mood of the matrix clause in Bhojpuri have a broad scope which extends to both of the sequential and simultaneous converbs. However, the time reference of the converbs is

secondary (Noonan, 1999), i. e., according to the primary tense of the matrix clause, and thus does not independently establish a time reference in accordance with the moment of speaking:

(18) *raju ciʈʰi likʰ-ke lipʰapʰ mẽ*
raju letter write-SEQ envelop LOC
*dʰʌ-ilʌk*
put-3.PST.NH
'After having written a letter, Raju enveloped it.'

(19) *ɦʌm am kʰa-t gʰʌr-e*
1.S.NOM mango eat-SIM home-LOC
*ʌ-ini*
come-1/2/3.PST.H
'While eating a mango I came home.'

In these sentences, the tense of the sequential (19) and simultaneous (20) converbs match with the past tense of the verbs in the matrix clauses. However, as observed in Regmi (2008: 338), the aspect is inherent in the converbs. Accordingly the sequential converb is associated with the perfective aspect as an indicated action happened to the anterior to that of the verb of the matrix clause. Similarly, the simultaneous converb can be analyzed as imperfective aspect indicating the action simultaneous with that of the matrix predicate.

### 4.3 Negation, question and command

In both of the sequential and simultaneous converbs, the negation, question and command have a narrow scope. In other words, the scope of the negation, question and command does not extend to the sequential and simultaneous converbs. Let's see the scope of the negation first:

(20) *u nʌɦia-ke kʰana na*
3.S.NOM.NH bathe-SEQ meal NEG
*kʌ-ilʌk*
do-3. S.M.NOM.NH
'Having taken bath, he didn't eat.'

(21) *ɦʌm kʌbo pan kʰa-t klas*
1.S.NOM any time beetle eat-SIM class
*mẽ na gʌ-ini*
LOC NEG go-1/2/3.PST.H

'I never entered into the class chiewing beetle.'

Certainly, the scope of negation is restricted to the matrix clauses in (21) and (22). But Bhojpuri has scope of negation with converbs:

(22) *u*        *bina kʰʌ-ile kʌɦio*
3.S.NOM.NH NEG eat-SEQ anytime
*na*    *sut-ela*
NEG sleep-3.S.M.NPT.NH
'He never sleeps without having eaten.'

(23) *u*         *bina muɦ bʌ-ole*
3. S.NOM.NH NEG mouth open-SIM
*na*    *rʌɦ-ela*
NEG live-3.S.M.NPT.NH
'He can't live without opening the mouth.'

In (23) and (24), both the converbs, sequential and simultaneous, have negative aspect. Let's see the question:

(24) *u*         *pʌʈʰ-ke gʰʌr-e*
3.S.NOM.NH read-SEQ home-LOC
*a-il?*
come-3.PST.NH
'Did he return having read?'

(25) *supaʈi kʰa-t*    *kʌon a-il*
nut    eat-SIM who come-3.NPT.NH
*etʌɦã?*
here
'Who came here chiewing nut?'

It is obvious that the scope of question remains restricted to the matrix clauses in (25) and (26). But sometimes emphasis of the question falls on the sequential converbs in Bhojpuri:

(26) *u*         *pʌʈʰ-ke*
3.s.NOM.NH read-SEQ
*kʰa-la*           *ki kʰa-ke*
eat-3.S.M.NPT.NH or eat-SEQ
*pʌʈʰ-ela?*
read-3. S.M.NPT.NH
'Does he eat after having read or he reads ater having eaten?'

As the emphasis falls on the converbs, Bhojpuri has scope of command on both of the sequential and simultaneous converbs:

(27) *bʌiʈʰ-ke pʌʈʰ*
sit-SEQ read
'Read in sitting position'

(28) *bʌja-wʌt ga*
ring-SIM sing
'Sing with playing instrument.'

## 4.4 Control of subject

The subject of a converbal construction can either be a null NP, i. e., PRO or a lexically overt NP in Bhojpuri:

(29) *[PRO_i gʰʌr-e a-ke] anʌnd_i*     *sut*
home-LOC    come-SEQ Anand sleep
*rʌɦ-ʌl*
live-3.PST.NH
'Having arrived at home, Anand slept.'

(30) *[toɦra*       *biɦan*     *bina ʌ-ile]*
2.NH.GEN tomorrow NEG come-SEQ
*kʌono kam na*    *cʌl-i*
any    work NEG walk-3.s.M.FUT.NH
'If you don't come tomorrow, there will have no work done.'

### 4.4.1 The null PRO

As discussed in Yadava (2005), the sequential converbal construction in Hindi and Nepali, the controllers of obligatorily null NP or PROs are the nominative/ergative subjects. As Bhojpuri is a consistently nominative/accusative language, the controllers of obligatorily null NP or PROs are the nominative/accusative subjects. This also holds true for the simultaneous converbs in Bhojpuri:

(31) *[PRO_i kʰana kʰa-ke] lʌika_i*     *sut*
meal         eat-SEQ boy-NOM sleep
*gʌ-il*
go-3.M.PST.NH
'Having taken meal, the boy slept.'

(32) *mʌŋru_i dʰõʈʰai ke [PRO_i dʌrwaja*
mangru dhondhai ACC        door
*kʰol-ʌt] bʰitʌr le gʌ-il*

open-SIM inside take go-3.PST.NH
'Opening the door, Mangru took Dhondhai inside.'

Apart from the nominative subjects, the dative subject can also control the gaps or PROs in the sequential converbal constructions in Bhojpuri:

(33) *[PRO<sub>i</sub> okʌr bat    sun-ke] ɦʌmra<sub>i</sub>*
3.S.NH.GEN saying hear-SEQ 1.S.DAT
*suk<sup>h</sup> bʌr-ʌl*
calm burn-3.PST.NH
'Having heard him, I got happy.'

(34) *[PRO<sub>i</sub> okʌr    nʌk<sup>h</sup>ʈa dek<sup>h</sup>-t] ɦʌmra<sub>i</sub>*
3. S.NH.GEN acting   see-SIM 1. S.DAT
*k<sup>h</sup>is bʌr-ʌt    rʌɦi-e*
anger burn-SIM be-3.PST.NH
'Observing his acting, I was getting angry.'

There has also been shown that the controller of the gap or PRO in a converb cannot be only the matrix subject as shown in (32-35) but also object (36), location (37) or possesser (38) for pragmatic reasons (Yadava, 2005).

(35) *[PRO<sub>i</sub> etʌhã na  a-ke]    ɦʌm*
here        NEG come-SEQ 1.S.NOM
*toɦe<sub>i</sub>    kuc<sup>h</sup>io  na  kʌr*
2.S.DAT anything NEG do
*sʌk-eni*
can-1/2/3.NPT.H
'I cannot do anything for you if you don't come here.'

(36) *[PRO<sub>i</sub> a-wʌt] ɦʌmra<sub>i</sub>  lʌge*
come-SIM        1.S.GEN near
*bẽt           gir gʌ-il*
stick-3.S.NOM.NH fall go-3.PST.NH
'A stick fell down near me while I was coming.'

(37) *[PRO<sub>i</sub> okʌr  i   beɦiwar dek<sup>h</sup>-ke]*
3.S.GEN.NH DEM behavior see-SEQ
*ɦʌmʌr<sub>i</sub>    mʌn ke   cot 1.S.GEN.OBL*
mind DAT strike
*lag-ʌl*
feel-3.PST.NH

'Seeing his/her behavior, my feelings were hurt.'

### 4.4.2 Lexically overt subject

Hindi does not allow nominative/ergative and dative cases to appear on S/A arguments in the sequential converbs; however, an S/A argument is acceptable if it is demoted to genitive case (Yadava, 2005: 448). Though Bhojpuri is a nominative/accusative language, it allows an S/A argument if case is demoted to genitive as Maithili does.

(38) *[toɦira    biɦan    bina ʌ-ile]*
2.GEN.NH tomorrow NEG come-SEQ
*kam                na*
work-3.S.NEU.NOM.NH NEG
*cʌl-i*
walk-3.S.M.FUT.NH
'If you don't come tomorrow, there will have no work done.'

Thus, the S/A argument is sensitive to a specific case feature in Bhojpuri. However, there must be made of certain lexically specified expressions such as time/weather expressions where subject identity is violated (Yadava, 2005: 449):

(39) *pãc bʌj-ke    pʌẽtalis minʌʈ pʌr*
five strike-SEQ forty-five minutes on
*b<sup>h</sup>ojpuri sʌmacar a-i*
Bhojpuri news    come-3.FUT.NH
'The Bhojpuri news will be broadcast at forty-five minutes past five.'

(40) *g<sup>h</sup>ʌr gir-ʌt dʌs admi mʌr*
house fall-SIM ten  persons die
*gʌ-il*
go-3.PST.NH
'Ten persons died while the house went falling.'

## 5   Conclusion

The converbal constructions (Sequential and simultaneous) in Bhojpuri demonstrate a cluster of properties: morphological, semantic and syntactic. Both converbs are expressed morphologically in Bhojpuri. The main function of the sequential converb is to encode event assumed to have

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occurred prior to the event encoded in the matrix clause: a sequence of the events; whereas that of the simultaneous converb is to express an activity that is simultaneous with, or temporally overlapping with, another activity expressed by the matrix predicate. Besides the core meaning, i. e., anteriority or temporal priority in common with other South Asian languages, Bhojpuri employs non-specialized sequential converbs to confer a variety of other contextual meanings, such as cause and manner. In Bhojpuri, the tense and mood of the matrix clause have a broad scope that extends to the sequential and simultaneous converbs. However, the negation, question and command have a narrow scope in both sequential and simultaneous converbs in the language. Moreover, the converbal constructions in Bhojpuri have the same subject as their main clause. The converbal constructions do not only exhibit referential coherence but also temporal coherence in Bhojpuri. Bhojpuri, as Maithili does, allows an S/A argument with demotion of of the case in genitive though the subject identity is violated in certain lexically specified expressions such as time/weather expressions.

**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| A | agentive |
| Acc | accusative |
| DAT | dative |
| DEM | demonstrative |
| EMP | emphatic |
| F | feminine |
| FUT | future |
| GEN | genitive |
| M | masculine |
| NEG | negative |
| NH | non-honorific |
| NOM | nominative |
| NP | noun phrase |
| NPT | non-past |
| PST | past |
| S | singular |
| SEQ | sequential converb |
| SIM | simultaneous converb |

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# Case marking in Byansi (Rang)

Rajendra Thokar

*Chhangru dialect of Byansi (Rang) is considered as a major one. However, Byansi (Rang) spoken in Tinkar village is considered as a distinct variant from the rest. In this paper, an attemp has been made to discuss the variation between them. The comparative analysis is limited only in case marking.*

## 1 Introduction

Byansi people are the main dwellers of the highland of over 3,000m above the sea level in the northernmost area of Darchula district in Mahakali Zone, Far-western Development Region of Nepal. This region, which faces India in the west and China in the north, is called Byans. They speak a distinct Tibeto-Burman language as their mother tongue.

Byansi community is one of the marginalized and endangered speech communities in Nepal. This speech community belongs to Tibeto-Burman family. Byansi community is known to different appellations such as Bynashi, Shauka, etc. The terms 'Byansi' and 'Shauka' are the names given by the outsiders. So, they are exonyms. Byansi community prefers to call themselves as 'Rang'. So, 'Rang' is the ethnonym preferred one to the Byansi speech community. The language they speak is called 'Rang boli', that is, Rang language. The proper settlement of the Rang is in the Darchula district in Mahakali Zone in Far- western Development Region of Nepal.

According to Bohara and Prasain (2008), the ethnic category, which connotes the main inhabitants of Byans in their mother tongue, is 'Rang'. This category, together with other two categories such as Pang (Tibetan) and Wolan (South Asian People), is composed of a triad of ethnic categories in the Byansi dialect. The Rang are the people who reside in three areas: Byans, Chaudas (Bangba) and Darma. Moreover, many linguistic and cultural differences can be observed within the Rang, in both regional (Byans, Chaudas, Darma) villages and clan levels. They are also quite aware of these differences. The people like Rang are also found in some other Himalayan valleys in Uttarakhand (Johar, Niti and Mana) in India, but they are on the verge of Hinduization. In spite of such various ethnonyms imposed by the outsiders, the term 'Rang' is the most preferred and important category for the Byansi people. The term 'Rang' is the name given in their mother tongue.

The language they speak is called *Rang lwo* or Rang *boli*. However, Rang *boli* does not consist of a single coherent linguistic system. It includes not only several varieties or dialects of Byansi but also contains Chaudasi (Bangbani) and Darmani the two distinct languages spoken in Indian Himalayan regions just south and west of Byans. The language is spoken in Byans as *Byankhu boli* or *Jiunkhu boli*, Chaudas as *Bangba boli* and Darma as *Darma boli*. Two sub-varieties of Byansi are called *Yer-Jiunkhu boli* (spoken in Gunji, Nabi, Rangkang and Napalcho) and Pang Jiunkhu boli (spoken in Chhangru, Garbyang and Budi) and the variety of Kuti is *Kuti boli* and Tinkar as *Tinkar boli*. (ibid.)

The Byansi people speak more than one language. Including their mother tongue, they speak Hindi, Nepali, Tibetan, English, etc. Considerable numbers of villagers send their children to schools in Kathmandu valley or in India to a distinguished English medium boarding school for their better education. These children are taught in Nepali, Hindi or English.

### 1.1 Population

The populous and dense settlement of Byansi (Rang), which located in Darchula district in Mahakali Zone in Far-Western Development Region in Nepal. They are also found to have settled in Uttaranchal State of India in the border-line of Nepal. According to Central Bureau of Statistics (2001), the total population of the Byansi (Rang) community is 2,021. The majority of the Byansi (Rang) settlement is found in the three

VDCs in Darchula district. Their population distribution regarding the VDCs is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Population distribution [1]

| VDCs | Household | Female | Male | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tinkar | 61 | 140 | 157 | 302 |
| Chhangru | 99 | 288 | 278 | 566 |
| Rapla VDC | 148 | 433 | 452 | 885 |
| Sitola VDC | 47 | 140 | 133 | 273 |
| Total | 355 | 1001 | 1018 | 2021 |

## 1.2 Settlement pattern

Byans valley, which is situated above 12,000 feet from the sea level in the Darchula district in the Far Western Development Region, is one of the places of human settlement of the highest location. Byansi people who reside in this area are based on the agriculture and animal husbandry. Byansi people, who reside in two villages such as Chhangru and Tinkar in the Byans valley, migrate towards the district headquarters. They remain in the Byans Valley for six months and, the remaining six months in the Khalanga VDC in the district headquarters in each year. Their migration from the Byans valley to the district headquarters for six months takes place in winter. Such kind of living pattern or migration process (6 months in upper land and 6 months down to the district headquarters) is called 'Kuncha' in Byansi (Rang) language.

## 1.2 Dialectal variation [2]

Though there has not been any study carried out till now on dialectal issues on Byansi (Rang) language, the native speakers consider that there are some dialectal difference in Byansi (Rang) language spoken in different villages such as Tinkar village, Chhangru village, Rapla VDC and

Sitola VDC. Generally, the Byansi native speakers consider that though there are some variations in these villages and VDCs, the Byansi (Rang) dialects spoken in Chhangru village, Rapla VDC and Sitola VDC more or less are identical and intelligible. However, the dialectal difference is between these dialects and Tinkar dialect. So, the Byansi dialect spoken in Tinkar village is more different from the rest of the villages. Due to this reason, this paper considers the Chhangru dialect as major one, and it is compared with Tinkar dialect.

## 1.3 Linguistic affiliation

Byansi (Rang) lho is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Darchula district, in Mahakali Zone in Far-Western Development Region. This geographical location faces India in the west and China in the north. The genetic affiliation of Byansi (Rang) is under the Western Himalayish group of Bodic branch of Tibeto-Burman sub-family of Sino-Tibeto-Burman Family. Figure 1 presents the genetic affiliation of Byansi (Rang) language.

Figure 1: Linguistic affiliation

Sino-Tibetan

Chinese   Tibeto-Burman   Karen

Chinese   Bodic   other

Bodish   Bodic

Western Himalayish   Central Himalayish   Northern Himalayish

**Byansi**   Baram
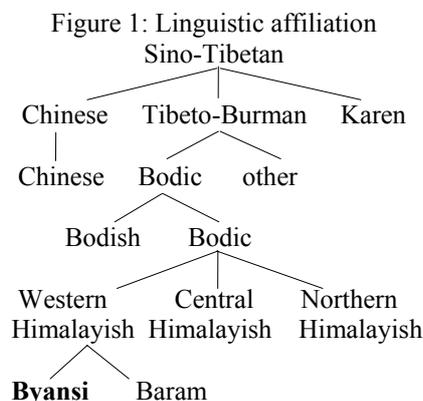
Source: Bohara & Prasain (2008:8)

## 2 Limitation of the study

The paper is confined within the case markers between Chhangru and Tinkar dialects spoken in Chhangru village and Tinkar village of Byans VDC of Darchula district in the Mahakali Zone of Far-Western Development Region of Nepal. The paper is not in-depth. It is an introductory study. It is deemed that this preliminary study would be

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[1] Tinkar village and Chhangru village are located in Byansi VDC.
[2] The dialectal variation in Byanshi (Rang) language mentioned in this article is based on the information provided by the native speakers of Byanshi (Rang) community, who pertinent to Tinkar village, Chhangru village, Rapla VDC and Sitola VDC.

useful and beneficial for those who have keen interest in Byansi (Rang) for further study.

## 3 Sources of the data[3]

The sources of the data in this paper are based on the two aspects. First aspect is that the data presented in this paper is based on the dialects pertinent to the villages of Chhnagru, Rapang, Dumling, and Syangkang illustrated by Bohara and Prasain (2008:16-17). Of them, Chhangru dialect is considered as major one, which is presented as an acronym 'CHHN' in the example throughout the text. Second aspect is that the data are elicited from the Byansi native speaker from Tinkar village, which is compared to the illustrated data. It is denoted with the acronym 'TNKR' throughout the text.

## 4 Significance of the study

This paper remains significant in two ways. First, this paper simply outlines the case markers in between two dialects of Chhangru and Tinkar spoken in the Chhangru village and Tinkar village of Byans VDC of Darchula district. It will help understand how far the case markers in two dialects are similar and variant. Second, it is deemed that this paper would remain useful and beneficial for those who want to carry out further study on case markers in Byansi (Rang).

## 5 Case markers

Some case markers between Chhangru and Tinkar dialects are identical; some are slightly alike; some are slightly variants; and some are completely different. The summary of case markers of CHHN and TNKR dialects are as follows:

Table 2: Summary of the case markers

| Case markers | CHHR | TNKR |
|---|---|---|
| Absolutive | /-ø/ | /-ø/ |
| Ergative | /-səi/ or /-sɛ/ | /-ʥɛ/ |
| Dative | /-ʥa/ | /-guŋ/ |
| Instrumental | /-səi/ or /-sɛ/ | /-cɛ/ or /- ʥɛ/ |
| Genitive | /-gəi/ or /-gɛ/ | /-ø/ |
| Associative | /-te/ | /-ʥoro/ |
| Locative | /-ʥa/ | /-muŋ/ |
| Ablative | /-kʰəci/ | /-kʰəcɛ/ |

The case markers and comparative study between CHHN and TNKR dialects are presented in the following paragraphs.

## A Absolutive case marker [-ø]

Absolutive case marker in CHHN and TNKR dialects is covert. So, symbol used as /-ø/ denoted covert case marker. It is presented in Example 1:a. and b.

(1)

| CHHN | a. | dilip-ø | cimʥa | di-gən |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TNKR | b. | dilip-ø | kemuŋ | di-gən |
| | | Dilip | house | go-NPST |

'Dilip goes to house.'

## B Ergative case marker (/-səi/ and /-ʥɛ/)4

The ergative case marker is not identical in both CHHN and TNKR. The ergative case marker in CHHN is /-səi/ and /-ʥɛ/ in TNKR respectively. They are presented in Example 2:a. and b.

(2)

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[3] The data of second aspect presented in this article were elicited from the native speaker Chamak Singh Tinkari. He belongs to ward 6 of Byans VDC of Darchula district. Recently, he is the secretary of Byanshi Shauka Society, Darchula.

[4] The diphthong as /-əi/ in Byanshi (Rang) could be as /-ɛ/, because I think the frequency of sound /-ɛ/ is very high in Byanshi (Rang) such as /-ʥɛ/, /-sɛ/, /-dɛ/, /-cɛ/, /-gɛ/ rather than /-ʥəi/, /-səi/, /-dəi/, /-cəi/, /-gəi/. Therefore, in example of TNKR, I have applied /-ɛ/ throughout the text. The high frequency of sound /-ɛ/ is only my hunch due to limited data. It requires to be verified with more data.

CHHN a.
u-səi    cʰaku  kəʥ-ʥa
s/he-ERG  rice   PST-eat
'S/he ate rice.'

TNKR b.
ko-ʥɛ    lan    kə-lən
s/he-ERG  work   PST-do
'S/he did work.'

A point to be noted down here is that in CHHN dialect the ergative case marker is /-səi/ (*see* example 2:a.) in the past tense with transitive clause, but the case in TNKR dialect is different from CHHN dialect. In TNKR dialect, the ergative case marker is /-ʥɛ/ (*see* Example 2: b.), which is identical with instrumental case marker. In Example 2:b., I think that the ergative case marker might be as /-cɛ/ rather than /-ʥɛ/ (for sound change, *see* D. Instrumental case marker in Example 6:a. and b.). One more example from TNKR dialect is presented in Example 3:a.

(3)
TNKR a.
gɛ-ʥɛ    ko-guŋ   libin  kə-dɛ
I-ERG    s/he-DAT  book   PST-give
'I gave him a book.'

However, the exceptional case is that with the verb 'eat', the subject of the transitive clause in the past tense of the TNKR dialect is not affixed with any suffix. Therefore, the subject of the transitive clause in the past tense with the verb 'eat' of the TNKR dialect is zero marked, which is presented in Example 4: a.

(4)
TNKR a.
ko-ø    kjan   kəʥ-ʥa
S/he    rice   PST-eat
'S/he ate rice.'

## C Dative case marker [/-ʥa/ and /-guŋ/]

Dative case marker in both CHHN and TNKR is not identical. They are different. The dative case marker in CHHN is /-ʥa/ and /-guŋ/ in TNKR. They are presented in Example 5 a. and b.

(5)
CHHN  a.
ʥi-səi  u-ʥa    libin  kəd-da

TNKR  b.
gɛ-ʥɛ  ko-guŋ   libin  kə-dɛ
I-ERG  s/he-DAT  book   PST-give
'I gave him/her a book.'

## D Instrumental case marker [/-səi/ or /-sɛ/, /-cɛ/ or /- ʥɛ/]

Instrumental case marker in both CHHR and TNKR is somewhat identical. The instrumental case marker in CHHR is /-səi/ or /-sɛ/ and /-cɛ/ or /- ʥɛ/ in TNKR. They are presented in Example 6:a. and b.

(6)
CHHN  a.
ʥi-səi  cʰjub-səi  cʰaku  kəʥ-ʥa

TNKR  b.
gɛ-ø   kʰjuk-cɛ   kjan   kəʥ-ʥa
I-ERG  spoon-INST  rice   PST-eat
'I ate rice with a spoon.'

The ergative and instrumental case marker in CHHN dialect is identical as /-səi/. Though slightly different from CHHN dialect, the ergative and instrumental case marker in TNKR dialect is also identical as /-cɛ/ or /-ʥɛ/. The slight difference between /-cɛ/ or /-ʥɛ/ is phonologically determined. If the suffix /-cɛ/ is affixed with the word which ends with voiced sound, then the suffix becomes voiced as /-ʥɛ/, and if voiceless, then it becomes voiceless as /-cɛ/. It is exemplified in Example 7: a. and b., and Example 8.

(7)
a.
gɛ-ʥɛ ⟶ voiced + voiced
TNKR    I-ERG
b.
kʰjuk-cɛ ⟶ voiceless + voiceless
Spoon-INST

Sound change which is phonological determined is presented in Example 8.

(8)

/-cɛ/ ⟨ [-ʥɛ] in voiced condition

      [-cɛ] in voiceless condition

**E Genitive case marker [/-gəi/ or /-gɛ/]**

Genitive case marker in both CHHN and TNKR is /-gəi/ or /-gɛ/. However, the case in TNKR is a bit tricky. They are presented in Example 9:a. and b.

(9)

CHHN a.

ʥi-gəi cim budɛ jin
I-GEN house good be

TNKR b.

gɛ-ø kim mərdə jani
my house good be
'My house is good.'

The genitive case marker in CHHN dialect is /-gəi/ or /-gɛ/ (*see* Example 9: a.). The native speakers pronounce neither /-gəi/ nor /-ge/ rather than their pronunciations might locate in-between. Therefore, the genitive marker might be /-gɛ/ rather than /-gəi/. However, the case in the first person in TNKR dialect is different that the first person subjective notion, genitive case and emphatic subject are neutralized within a single lexical item rather than any suffix is attached. It is exemplified in Example 9:b. and 10.

(10)      First Person
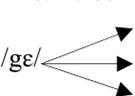
TNKR   /gɛ/   → I
               → My
               → I (emphatic)

Example 10 shows that the lexical item /gɛ/ has not only one meaning rather than three meanings such as 'I', 'My' and 'I (emphatic subject)' are fused in single lexical item. So, no more genitive case marker is attached as does in CHHN.

**F Associative case marker [/-te/ and /-ʥoro/]**

Associative case marker in both CHHN and TNKR are not identical. The associative case marker in CHHN is /-te/ and /-ʥoro/ in TNKR. They are presented in Example 11:a. and b.

(11)

CHHN a.

u ʥi-te bəʥar diso

TNKR b.

ko gitɛ-ʥoro bəʥar dɪgɪnɪ
s/he I-ASS market went
'S/he went market with me.'

**G. Locative case marker [/-ʥa/ and /-muŋ/]**

Locative case marker in both CHHR and TNKR are not identical. They are completely different. The locative case marker in CHHR /-ʥa/ is and /-muŋ/ in TNKR. They are presented in Example 12:a. and b.

(12)

CHHN   a.

ʥi cim-ʥa ni-e
I house-LOC sit-NPST
*I sit in the house*

TNKR   b.

gɛ ki-muŋ jatɛ
I house-LOC be
'I am in the house.'

**H Ablative case marker [/-kʰəci/ and /-kʰəcɛ/]**

In case of ablative case marker, both CHHR and TNKR have almost identical ablative case markers. The ablative case marker in CHHR is /-kʰəci/ and /-kʰəcɛ/ in TNKR. They are exemplified in Example 13:a and b.

(13)

CHHN a.

ʥi ʥʰara-kʰəci cim-ʥa rɛso

TNKR b.

gɛ rəŋ-kʰəcɛ ki-muŋ pirra
I forest-ABL house-LOC came
'I came home from forest.'

**6. Conclusion**

Regarding the case markers and lexical items in the sentences exemplified throughout the text, some case markers and some lexical items in the sentences are identical; and on the other hand, some are completely different. Nominative case marker in both dialects is zero marked; ergative case markers are somewhat identical such as /-səi/ or /-sɛ/ in CHHR and /-ʥɛ/ in TNKR; instrumental case marker as same as ergative case marker which are also somewhat identical in both dialects; and ablative case marker are almost identical such as /-kʰəci/ in CHHR and /-kʰəcɛ/ in TNKR. On the other hand, dative case marker such as /-ʥa/ and /-guŋ, genitive case marker such as /-gɛ/ and /-ø/, associative case marker such as /-te/ and /-ʥoro/

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and locative case marker such as /-ʥa/ and /-muŋ/ are not identical in both dialects respectively. Regarding the evidences, TNKR dialect as considered by the native speakers is not completely identical to CHHR dialect.

**Abbreviations**

ASS    : Associative
CHHN  : Chhangru dialect
DAT    : Dative
ERG    : Ergative
GEN    : Genitive
INST   : Instrumental
LOC    : Locative
NPST   : Non-past
Ø       : zero marked
PST    : Past
TNKR  : Tinkar dialect
VDC    : Village Development Committee

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# Verbal suffixes in Athpahariya

## Govinda Bahadur Tumbahang

*Like other Kiranti languages Athpahariya is a complex pronominalized language with affixes marking subject and object in the verb itself. Because of pronominalization, the verb alone can express full meaning of a sentence without the presence of subject and object in a sentence. This article discusses the verbal suffixes.*

## 1 Introduction

Athpahariya belongs to the Eastern Kiranti group of Tibeto-Burman family of languages spoken in Dhankuta municipality and neighbouring village developing committee named Bhirgaun. Its verbal morphology follows the characteristics of other Kiranti languages such as Chhatthare Limbu (Tumbahang 2011), Limbu (Wiedert and Subba 1985, Van Driem 1987), Yamphu (Rudgar 1999), Wambule (Opgenert 2004) and so on.

There are two kinds of affixes in Athpahariya. They are prefix and suffix. Prefix comes before the verb stem whereas suffix follows it.

## 2 Suffixes

### 2.1 The second person morpheme

Basic morph     :<-na>
Label           : 1→2

The morpheme <-na> indicates second person object in a 1→2 transitive configuration. In 1s→2s form, the agent and its number are unmarked. Similarly, the object number is also unmarked. However, in 1s→2d and 1s→2p forms, the person of agent is marked but its singularity of agency is unmarked. On the other hand, the object and its number are marked.

(1)     a.      ni-na-?a
                See-1→2O -copy
                "I see you."
        b.      ni-na- ?a-ci
                see 1→2 –copy-DLO
                "I see you (two)."
        c.      ni-na-?a-n
                see1→2–copy-PLO

"I see you (many)."

However, the suffix <–na> changes to <–n> in past form of first person singular agent and second person object configuration.

(2)     a.      ni-n-e
                See-1→2O -PT
                "I saw you."
        b.      ha-n-e
                Bite-1→2O-PT
                "I bit you."

Bauman (1975) reconstructed <-na> as the second person morpheme of Tibeto-Burman languages. Tangut, Thulung, Bahing, Sunuwar etc. also have <-ŋa> for second person suffix (Watters 2003:374-78). Athpare, Chamling and Bantawa consider <-na> as 1→2 morpheme (Ebert 1994: 22).Van Driem (1987:88) treats <-ne> as a 1→2 portmanteau because this morpheme occurs only in 1→2 configuration.

### 2.2 The third person object morpheme

Basic morph :<-u>
Label       :3O

A third person object is marked by <-u>. It occurs in 3→3, 2→3 and 1→3 forms. Its singularity is unmarked.

(3)     a.      sed-u-ŋ-e
                Kill-3O-1SGA-PT
                "I killed her/him."
        b.      a-sed-u-e
                2-kill-3O-PT
                'You killed her/him.'
        c.      sed-u-t-u
                kill- 3O-NPT-copy
                I kill him/her."

It is unmarked in negated 1s→3 forms and in 1pe→3 forms in the past.

(4)     a. set-ni-ŋ-na
                kill-NEG-1SGA-
                "I do not kill."

b. set-ni-m-na
kill-NEG-1SGA-
"We do not kill."

c. set-ni-m-na-na
kill-NEG-1SGA-
"We do not kill."

In the ditransitive verb forms, the third person object <-u> marks only the indirect object.

(5) a. pid- u-e
give-3O-PT
'He gave him (something).'

b. haŋs-u-e
send-3O-PT
'He sent him (something).'

The verbs given above are ditransitive verbs because they take three arguments in the sentence level. In 3→3, 2→3 and 1→3 structural series <–u> occurs in the fourth suffixal slot with an identical phonemic form and a common semantic distinctiveness. Therefore, it is a third person object morpheme. It is used as a third person object morpheme in Kiranti languages like Athpare, Bantawa, Chamling (Ebert 1994: 22). The fact that it can be observed in Rawang and Jingpaw reveals its Tibeto-Burman provenance. The third person object suffix <-u> is the reflex of the third person singular pronoun *un* 'he'.

### 2.3 The first person exclusive

Basic morph :<-ŋa >
Label   : 1SGS/O/NSGEXCL

<-ŋa> signals first person, singular subject or object or non-singular exclusive meaning. Its singularity of subjectivity and agentivity is formally unmarked. It has allomorphs in <-ŋ>, <-ma> and <-na>. It occurs as subject, agent and object in verb forms.

(6) a. yuŋ- ŋa-?a
sit-1SG-copy
"I sit."

b. had-u-ŋ-t-u-ŋ
bite-3O-1SGA-NPT-copy
"I bit him/her."

c. ab-i-t-i-ŋa
come-PL-NPT-copy-EXCL
"We come."

d. had-u-m-t-u-m-ma
bite-3O-1PLA-NPT-copy-EXCL
" We (they + I) bite him/her."

e. had-u-m-m-e
bite-3O-1PLA-EXCL
We (they+1)bit him/her."

f. set-na-?a
kill+1SA-copy
"I kill him/her."

g. a-had-i-ŋ-e
2A-bite-PL-1SGO-PT
"You (many) beat me/us."

h. a-ha-ci-ci-ŋ-e
2A-bite-DL-copy-1SGO-PT
"You (two) beat me/us."

As discussed above, <-ŋa> occurs as a subject and as an object. Its singularity of subject or object is unmarked.

When <-ŋa> occurs in the syllable final position after a vowel suffix, it loses its final vowel and retains only the nasal consonant as an allomorph <-ŋ>.

<-ŋa> has different phonemic forms such as <–ma>, <-na> and <-ŋ >. The phonemic shape of the morpheme is <-ŋa> if it is preceded by a velar

consonant and by a vowel. It is <-ma>if it is preceded by bilabial consonant.  It is <-na> if it is preceded by dental consonant. It is <-ŋ> if it is preceded by vocalic suffix.

The morpheme <-ŋa> for a first person singular suffix is widespread in many Kiratnti languages such as Bantawa  <-ŋ >, Sunuwar <-ŋa>, Bahing <-ŋa >, Thuluŋ <-ŋu>, Athpare <-ŋ > and also in languages outside Kiranti languages such as Tangut <-ŋa>. Bauman (1975) reconstructs <-ŋa> to the Proto-Tibeto-Burman first person morpheme.

### 2.4 Duality of subjects and agents and third person nonsingular object

basic morph  :<-ci, -c>
label   :DLA/S /3NSGO

The suffix <-ci> indicates duality of subject in all three persons and nonsingularity of third person object.

### 2.4.1 Duality of the first person subject, object and agent

Duality of the first person subject, object and agemt are marked by <-ci, -c> .

(7) a.  khat-ci-ci
        go-DLS-copy
        "We (you+I) go."
    b.  khat-ci-ci-ŋa
        go-DL-copy-1EXC
        'We (s/he and I ) go."
    c.  a-had-a-ci-ŋ-e
        2A-bite-PT-DL-1O-PT
        'You bit us two.'
    d.  ha-c-u-c-u
        bite-DL-3O-copy-copy
        "We two (you+1) bite
        him/her."
    e.  ha-c-u-c-u-ŋa
        bite- DL-3O-copy-copy -1EXCL
        We two (s/he+1) bite him/her."

When -ci occurs after a vowel , it loses its final vowel and retains only consonant as shown in (7).

### 2.4.2 Duality of second person subject or object

The morpheme <-ci> marks duality of second person subject or object or agent as in 7a and duality of object as in 7b.

(8) a.  a-khat-ci-ci
        2-go-DL-copy
        "You (two) go."
         ha-na-ʔa-ci
        bite-2O-copy-DLO
        "I bite you (two)."
    c.  m-a-ha-ci-ci
        3A-2O-bite-DLO-copy
        "S/he bites you (two)."
    d.  yaŋ-a-ha-ci-ci
        1O-2A-bite-DLA-copy
        "You (two) bite me."
    e.  a-ha-c-u-c-u
        2A-bite-DLA-3O-copy-copy
        "You (two) bite her/him."

### 2.4.3. Duality of third person subject and agent and nonsingularity of object

Duality of the third person subject and agent and non-singularity of third person object are marked by the suffix <-ci>.

(9) a.  khat-ci-ci
        Go-DLS-copy
        "They go."
    b.  had-u-ŋ-ci-ŋ-ci-ŋ
         bite-3O-1SGA-3NSGO-copy-copy-copy
        "I bite them."
    c.  a-had-u-ci-ci
        2A-bite-3O-3NSGO-copy
        "You bite them."
    d.  yaŋ-ha-ci-ci
        1A-bite-DLA-copy
        "They two bite me."

### 2.5 Plurality of subject and object

basic morph : <-i>
label          :pS/O

The suffix <-i> indicates plurality of subject and object in the first and second person verb forms.

(10)    a.  khad-i-t-i
            Go-PLS-NPT-copy
            "We all go."
        b.  khad-i-t-i-ŋa
            Go-PLS-NPT-copy-1EXCL
            "We all go."
        c.  a-khad-i-t-i
            2-Go-PLS-NPT-copy
            "We all go."
        d.  a-had-i-t-i-ŋa
            2-bite-PLO-NPT-copy-1EXCL
            "You bite us."
        e.  m-a-had-i-t-i-t-i
            3A-2O-bite-PLO-NPT-copy-
            copy-copy
            "S/he bites you all."

### 3 Conclusion

The verbal suffixes also include negative, tense and aspect suffixes. However, in this article only person and number marking suffixes have been dealt with leaving a room for future study.

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | First person |
| 2 | Second person |
| 3 | Third person |
| A | Agent |
| DL | Dual |
| EXCL | Exclusive |
| NEG | Negative |
| NPT | Non-past |
| NSG | Nonsingular |
| O | Object |
| PL | Plural |
| PT | Past |
| S | Subject |
| SG | Singular |

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# VP complements in Maithili

Surya Prasad Yadav

*This paper presents a linguistic analysis of the VP complements in the Maithili language from the functional typological perspective. There are found two types of VP complements: finite and non-finite. Both finite and non-finite complements occur in Maithili. This paper is an attempt to explore the categories of VP complements in Maithili in terms of their typological parameters. This paper organized into three sections. Section 1 presents a brief description about complementation. Section 2 analyzes the position of VP complements in Maithili. Finally, Section 3 presents the findings of the paper.*

## 1 Introduction

There are a set of verbs which take noun phrase or clauses as arguments. Noun phrases functioning as arguments of such verbs are referred to as '(verbal) complements.' The phenomenon as a whole is referred to as complementation (Noonan 1985).

A complement can be a clause or noun phrase that is used to predicate a description of the subject or the object of the clause. Simply we can define the term complement as a general term to denote any constituent whose presence is required by another element. In generative syntax a complement is a phrasal or clausal category which is selected (subcategorized) by the head of the phrase. The term 'complement' in a general sense means something that is necessary to complete a grammatical construction (Leech and Svatvik 1957).

## 2 VP complements in Maithili

The term verb complement refers to the description of the complement taking properties of verbs, i.e. which complements they take and how these complements are realized.

Consider the following examples that illustrate the VP complements:

(1)

    a.   thak-əl    khelari sut-i           rəhəl
           tired-PCL players sleep-IMP      PROG
           əi-ch

           AUX-PRES 3NH
           'The tired players are sleeping ϕ'.

    b.  kichu      log      vəijyanik   upənyæs
        some    people   science    fiction
        pəsənd  kər-əit        əi-ch
        like     do-IMP  AUX-PRES 3NH
        'Some people like science fiction.'

    c.  səbhapəti  vidtyærthi-səbh-ke vibhin
        chairman    student-PL-ACC    different
        kitab    bãt-əl-iən
        books   distribute- PST-3H
        'The chairman distributed different books
          to the students'

    d.  u        kəh-lək        je        həri
        he (NH) say-PST 3NH COMP      hari
        bimar  əi-ch
        sick     AUX-PRES 3NH
        'He said that Hari was sick'

The VP complements can be either finite or non-finite.

## 2.1 Finite

The finite complements are like independent clauses, as evidenced by the following characteristics (Payne 1997):

    i.     They carry their own tense and aspect.

    ii.    They express their subjects directly; subject reference is not restricted to that of the matrix clause.

Some examples of finite complements follow:
(2)

    a.   həm jən-əit     ch-i  je
         I    know-IMP AUX-PRES 1 that
        həri  bimar    ch-əl
        hari  sick      AUX-PST 3NH
        'I know that Hari was sick.'

Protypical complement clauses behave like independent clauses:

    i. Subject and tense aspect can be expressed within them.

    ii. For this reason the complementizer *je* often becomes redundant and is often omitted in discourse.

A finite complement clause which functions as subject may be extraposed.

(3)

    a.  u          nirdos    əi-ch
        he (NH)   innocent  AUX-RES3NH
        se         gələt
        that       false
        'That he is innocent is false'.
    b.  *i gələt əich je u nirdos əi-ch*

When extraposed, the complementizer *se* is replaced by *je* .It is to be noted that the complementizer *se* may be followed by *ba*t 'fact' as shown in (3a). If so then its transposition is a case of extraposition from an NP, e.g.

(4)

a. həm  jan-əit  ch-i        (je)
   I         know-IMP   AUX-PRES I  that
   həri       bimar  ch-əl
   hari      sick  AUX-PST 3NH

b. həri-ke   həm jan-əit    ch-i
   hari-ACC I    know-IMP AUX-RESI
   (je)     (u) bimar   ch-əl
   that  (he)  sick    be-PST 3NH

## 2.2 Non-finite

The non-finite verb phrase consists of non-finite elements such as infinitive, nominal and participle complements.

The non-finite complements are more tightly knitted and independent from the matrix clauses that are finite complements (Payne 1997).

Non-finite complements tend to have the following properties:

  i.  The identity of the subject is highly constrained. It must often be identical to the subject of the          matrix verb.

  ii.  Tense, aspect, and more are highly constrained or not specified at all. The complement verb is usually non-finite.

Now we discuss the following non-finite complements with a brief description and suitable examples.

### 2.2.1 Infinitival complement

The term infinitive has been used for rather different sorts of syntactic entities. The word

infinitive itself, meaning not limited (e.g. by person, number, and tense), would suggest itself for use with complement types that do not express inflectional distinctions.

The following constructions exemplify the infinitival complements:

(5)

    a.  həm  nepal   ləut-ə     cah-əit
        'I   nepal    return-INF want-IMP
        ch-i
        AUX-PRES 1
        'I want to return to Nepal.'
    b.  o        pher ənreji  pərəh-ə
        he (H)  again english  read-INF
        lag-ləi
        begin- PST3NH
        'He began to study English.'
    c.  rədha   git       gab-ə bisəir
        radha    song   sing-INF forget
        ge-ləi
        go-PST 3NH
        'Radha forgot to sing a song'.

### 2.2.2 Nominalized complement

A nominalzed complement is a predication with the internal structure of noun phrase. A predicate becomes nominalized, assuming the form of a verbal noun, and takes over the role of the head noun of the noun phrase. The arguments may assume associative (genitival) relations with the predicate. The nominalized predicate bears a genitival relation with its subject and assumes a gerundival form. Such a nominalized complement may also be called a genitive. Gerund type complement, usually (but not necessarily) takes a commentative predicate.

Consider the following examples:

(6)

    a.  ki    əhã -ke      ge-nai  ucit
        what  you (H)-GEN   go-GER proper
        hoe-t?
        AUX-FUT 3NH
        'Will it be proper for you to go?'
    b.  daktər-ək    æ-bak     jankar
        doctor-GEN  come- GER  knowledge
        nəi   bhet-əl
        not   meet-PST (3NH+1)

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'I didn't have the knowledge of his coming.'

c. daktər-ək həbər- həbər jãc-nai
doctor-GEN fast examine-GER
həm-ra nik   nəi lag-əl
1-ACC good not feel-PST-(3NH+1)
'I didn't like the doctor's examining (the patient) in a hurry.'

### 2.2.3 Participial complement

Participials are adjectival or adverbial forms of verbs. The role of participials in complementation is usually restricted even in languages that make extensive use of participials. The reason for this is that, in their role as adjectives, participials are not the heads of constructions, but rather modify some noun which functions as the head, i.e. in complementation participials functions as attributive not predicate, adjective. The only place in complement systems whether participials are regularly found is in complements to immediate perception predicates such as, *dekhəb* 'to see', *sunəb* 'to hear'. These predicates are marked either by the present participial *-əit* or by the past participial-*əl*:

(7)

a. ki    əhă         nəcə-it
what you (H) dance-PRESPCPL
banər  dekh-ne    ch-i?
monkey see-PERF   AUX-PRES 2H
'Have you seen dancing monkeys?'

b. həm ok-ra       kekia-it
I    she-ACC cry-PRESPCPL
sun-əl-iəik
hear-PST-(1+3NH)
'I heard her crying.'

c. tũ           hun-ka           kursi pər
you (NH) he (H)-ACC/DAT chair lOC
bəis-əl        dekh-əl-əhunh
sit-PSTPCPL    see-PST–(2NH+3H)
'You saw him sitting (i.e. having sat down) on a chair.'

### 2.2.4 Oblique complement

Oblique is a grammatical function. In Maithili, obliques fall into two main classes: argument and adjuncts. The distribution of arguments is governed by potentially idiosyncratic specification on verb (or other predicates). Adjuncts on the other hand appear whenever they would be semantically appropriate. In fact, we shall see that it is reasonable to think of the argument/adjunct distinction as overlapping the core/oblique distinction, with all core NPS and some obliques being included in the class of arguments. Adjuncts, on the other hand, always seem to exhibit behavioral similarities to A, S and P.

(8)

a. həm ok-ra         sut-bak-lel
I    3NH-ACC sleep-GER-OBL
kah-li-æ
say-PST- (1+3NH)
'I told him to sleep'.

b. u      ok-ra           pədh-bak-lel
he    you-ACC read-GER-OBL
kəh-əl-æ
say-PST-(1+3NH)
'He told her to read.'

c. sima ram-ke            hãs-bak-lel
sima Ram-ACC         laugh-GER-OBL
kəh-əl-æ
say-PST-(1+3NH)
'Sima told Ram to laugh'.

### 2.2.5 Distribution of complement within sentences

As we have seen, complements function as subjects or objects. They are usually positioned in sentences just like other subjects or objects, but in many languages there are strong preferences, or even outright constraints, on the distribution of complements that result indifferent distributional patterns for complements than for other grammatical structures filling the same grammatical roles. For instance, nominalzed complements in Maithili can occur in subject position in both declarative and interrogative sentences (Noonan 1985:82-103).

(9)

a. əhã-k          æ-bak          jankari
you (H)-GEN come-GER   knowledge
bhet- əl
meet-PST 3NH
'I received the news of your arrival.'

b. ki           əhã-k    æ-bak

what          you (H)-GEN          come-GER
ucit          hæ -t?
proper    AUX-FUT 3NH
'Will it be proper for you to come?'

The *s*-like complement type in Maithili occurs in subject position in declarative sentences, not in interrogative sentences in sentence-initial position:

(10)

    a.    *je   əhã-k          æ-bak
        that   you (H)-GEN   come-GER
        jankari   bhet- əl
        knowledge          meet-PST 3NH

    b.    * ki   je   əhã-k
        What  that you (H)-GEN
        æ-bak   ucit   hæ -t?
        come-GER  proper AUX-FUT 3NH

## 3 Summary

To sum up, this paper briefly analyzes the clausal complements of Maithili verb phrase. These clausal complements can be either finite or nonfinite, constrained by the semantic-syntactic properties of the predicates. This typological-functional model of analysis may be further extended for comparing Maithili verbal complements with those in other areally and genetically related languages in Nepal and other South Asian countries.

## Abbreviations

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ACC | - | Accusative |
| AUX | - | Auxiliary |
| COMP | - | Complementizer |
| DAT | - | Dative |
| FUT | - | Future |
| GEN | - | Genitive |
| GER | - | Gerund |
| H | - | Honorific |
| IMP | - | Imperative |
| INF | - | Infinitive |
| LOC | - | Locative |
| NH | - | Non-honorific |
| PCL | - | Participle |
| PERF | - | Perfect |
| PL | - | Plural |
| PRES | - | Present tense |
| PRESPCPL | - | Present participle |
| PST | - | Past 5ense |
| PSTPCPL | - | Past participle |
| VP | - | verb phrase |
| 1 | - | First person |
| 2 | - | Second person |
| 3 | - | Third person |

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# Role and relevance of linguistics in Nepal

Madhav P. Pokharel

## 1. Linguistic study of Nepalese languages: historical axis

### 1.1 Beginning of lexicography and traditional grammar (19th century)

Linguistic scholarship on the Nepalese languages begins with the publication of wordlists of Nepali, Newari, Magar and Limbu in the beginning of the 19th century initiated by Kirkpatrick (1811) who was followed by Campbell and Hodgson ( (1847), (1847-1848), (1953), (1957a), (1957b), (1957c)) who published wordlists in Lepcha (Campbell, 1840), Koch [Rajbamsi], Bodo [Meche], Dhimal (Hodgson, 1847), Gurung, Kiranti, Lhoke, Limbu, Magar, Murmi [Tamang], Newari, Sherpa, Sunuwar (Hodgson, 1847-1848), Kham (Hodgson, 1953), Vayu [Hayu] (Hodgson, 1957a), Rungchhenbung [Bantawa], Chhintang, Nachhiring, Waling [Bantawa], Yakkha, Chaurasya [Umbule], Kulung, Thulung, Bahing, Lohorung, Lambichhong [Mugali], Balali, Sangpang, Dumi, Khaling, Dungmali (Hodgson, 1957b), Darai, Danuwar, Pahari, Chepang, Baram, Kuswar, Kusunda, 'Pakhya' [पाखे (नेपाली?)], Thaksya' [Thakali?], Tharu (Hodgson, 1957c) (Hodgson, Reprint 1880 (Indian edition 1992)).

Grierson (1881-1887) published a series of articles on the seven languages of North Bihar like Maithili ( (Grierson, 1881b), (Grierson, 1982), (Grierson, 1883)), Bhojpuri (Grierson, 1884), and the Kaithi script (Grierson, 1881a) which was used to write those languages.

The first published dictionary of a Nepalese language is probably Conrady's (1893) bilingual dictionary of Sanskrit into Newari where Sanskrit is a source language and Newari, a target language. Mainwaring's (1898) dictionary of the Lepcha is the first dictionary where a Nepalese language is used as a source language.

Linguistic study in Nepal is iconically similar to the history of the subject linguistics. Ayton's grammar (Ayton, 1820) of the Nepali language is the first western traditional grammar among the Nepalese languages. Until that time, the Paninian (पाणिनि, इपू ५०० [ब्रह्मदत्त जिज्ञासु. सं. १९८५ इ.]) school of grammar may have been used to explain the grammatical intricacies of the Nepalese languages, however, there is no direct evidence to support this speculation. Ayton's grammar is the precursor of the scholarship of traditional grammars of the Nepalese languages written both following the Sanskrit and English traditions. The order of person in the verb paradigms in a Paninian grammar is 3rd (he/she), 2nd and 1st (he-you-I). Ayton's grammar has caused disturbance in that order by introducing a new order (I, you, he). This mismatch has created confusion in naming 1st and 3rd persons in the Nepalese grammatical tradition.

### 1.2 Beginning of historical comparative study (20th century)

Turner's (1887) grammar and vocabulary of Nepali (Toba, 1998) is the first step towards historical linguistic scholarship in a Nepalese language. Turner completed his classic historical scholarship on Nepali lexicography in 1931 (Turner R. L., 1931) which expanded with the publication of his dictionary of Indo-Aryan (Turner R. L., 1966) together with his papers on comparative linguistics (Turner R. L., 1985). In this way Turner (1887) was the first linguist to both link and break the tradition of publishing vocabularies and traditional grammars. Turner's etymological dictionary of Nepali and the historical comparative dictionary of Indo-Aryan are both classic works. Balkrishna Pokharel (पोखरेल ब. , २०१९ (1962)), Dayananda Srivastava (Srivastava, 1962) and Chura Mani Upadhyaya Regmi (उपाध्याय-रेग्मी, २०२५) followed the scholarship of comparative philology (or historical linguistics) introduced in India by Suniti Kumar Chatterji (Chatterjee, 1926).

## 1.3 Beginning of synchronic study and genetic classification

Grierson's (1909-27) Linguistic Survey of India gave ample amount of space to many Nepalese languages. Short introductions, grammatical sketches collection of texts and the classification of Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian languages in the Survey help to understand Nepalese languages and group them into one or the other genetic affiliations. Grierson's work is still serving a classic reference to several of the Nepalese languages.

Grierson was followed by Shafer ( (1955) (1966)) and Benedict (1972) both of whom have included several Sino-Tibetan (or Tibeto-Burman) languages of Nepal in their classification. Glover's classification (Glover, 1969) comes in between. They were followed by Hale ( (1973) (1982)), Egerod (1973-1974), Voegelin and Voegelin (1977), Bradley (1997), van Driem (2001), Thurgwood (2003), Noonan (2007), Matisoff (2008), DeLancey (2009) and several others.

Balkrishna Pokharel (पोखरेल ब. , २०२२) has classified Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman Kiranti languages of Nepal. However, as Hale (1982) has noted, the classification of Sino-Tibetan languages is not an easy task and it somewhat differs from the modality of classifying Indo-European languages.

Since Central Department of Linguistics came into existence in 1996, our priority has been to encourage students to describe a hitherto unwritten language. In this way we have produced more than 60 MA and a few PhD dissertations, but nobody has come to the front to incorporate our products to update classifications of both the Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan languages. Someone has to take the lead in this fertile land. This problem needs to be addressed by both native and foreign linguists and institutions like Central Department of Linguistics and Linguistic Society of Nepal.

### Summer Institute of Linguistics

Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) started working on Nepalese languages in early 1960s. It started teaching MA linguistics in Tribhuvan University; it oriented and motivated Kamal Prakash Malla, Ballabh Mani Dahal, Chura Mani Bandhu, Tej Ratna Kansakar, Ramawatar Yadav and some others to seek PhD degree in linguistics. Kenneth L Pike, Austin Hale and several other famous linguists of the SIL gave them basic orientations and trainings in linguistics. Many linguists from different parts of the world were motivated to conduct research on different Nepalese languages and several reports have come out (Toba, 1998).

### Winter's linguistic survey

Werner Winter came to Nepal with an aim to conduct a survey of Nepalese languages in early 1980s and Hanβon (1991) is the product of that venture.

## 2 Teaching of linguistics in Nepal

### 2.1 Sanskrit linguistics

From the historical perspective, Nepalese scholarship in linguistics starts with the synchronic study of Sanskrit grammar. Sanskrit linguistic research begins with the synchronic analysis of the Vedic texts sometimes around 1000 BC ( (Varma, 1929 (2nd edition 1961)). There are many schools of Sanskrit linguistics out of which the phonetic observations of the Pratishakhyas (1000-500 BC), etymological study of Yaska (Varma & Dev, 1953), capturing the generalizations of the language embedded in both the Vedic and classical Sanskrit texts with about 4000 algebraic generative rules by Panini (पाणिनि, इपू ५०० [ब्रह्मदत्त जिज्ञासु. सं. १९८५ इ.]), and the semantic study culminated in Bhartrhari (700 AD) stand out (Coward, Harold G.; Raja, K. Kunjunni, 1990). Sanskrit universities in South Asia highlight only the last two schools. Linguists like Bloomfield, Firth and Chomsky have appreciated the linguistic scholarship of Sanskrit, but it is pity to have found that in South Asian universities the departments of linguistics do not generally teach Sanskrit linguistics. Should Nepal think about it?

### 2.2 Comparative philology and historical linguistics

Balkrishna Pokharel is the only Nepali scholar who completed master's degree in comparative philology so far. Soon after he got his degree from Calcutta University towards the beginning of

1960s, he started teaching linguistics in the Nepali Department of Tribhuvan University. Before Pokharel the subject was being taught by Ramraj Panta (1957). Chura Mani Bandhu (उपाध्याय-रेग्मी, २०२५) got inspiration from Pokharel to follow Suniti Kumar Chatterjee's (1926) scholarship. It was Balkrishna Pokharel (पोखरेल ब. , २०१९ (1962)) who initiated historical comparative linguistic studies in this country. Today the subject of philology is merged into historical linguistics. Balkrishna Pokharel also introduced fieldwork, studied Nepali dialects, worked on historical phonology and the diffusion of grammatical features from neighboring languages to Nepali.

**LSN and CDL**

Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN) was established in 1979 when Subhadra Subba (1973), Kamal Prakash Malla (1973), Ballabh Mani Dahal (1974), Chura Mani Bandhu (1978), Tej Ratna Kansakar (1978), Shishir Kumar Sthapit (1978) and Ramawatar Yadav (1979) completed PhD in linguistics. Every year, since it came into existence, this Society has been organizing an international conference and publishing an issue of its journal *Nepalese Linguistics.* Through the conferences and the issues of the journal the Society has served a platform for interaction among linguists from Nepal and abroad, who have had interactions on the various aspects and linguistic issues of mostly Nepalese languages.

Since its beginning, every year the Society constantly gave an impetus to establish a linguistic department in Tribhuvan University; however, it took almost 17 years when its demand was fulfilled when the Vice Chancellor was Kamal Krishna Joshi and the Rector was Madhav Prasad Sharma. Initially, the Society was run by linguists and teachers of various departments of language and literature like Nepali, English, Sanskrit, Hindi and Nepal Bhasha, but now it is almost completely run by the products of Central Department of Linguistics. Previously, seminars and conferences were conducted mostly by the contributions from its members, but now several institutions like University Grant Commission (UGC), National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), Nepal Academy, Tribhuvan University, Nepal Academy of Science

and Technology (NAST) and various other institutions and dignitaries are contributing to the success of the conferences and the publication of the journal.

The Department has produced more than 60 students and we are satisfied by the quality of our products. They are presenting papers in various national and international conferences, participating in the interactions on issues in linguistics and publishing papers. They are editing the journals like *Nepalese linguistics* and *Gipan.* They are helping Nepal and its various mother tongue speakers by writing grammars, dictionaries and orthographies on different unwritten languages and a bunch of them is active in the Linguistic Survey of Nepal.

However, most of our products are unemployed or underemplyoed. The University Service Commission (USC) has appointed only a single student (Ramraj Lohani) of ours on a regular basis for the last 14 years. If the USC had appointed 2 of our products every year, there would have been at least 30 permanent teachers for the last 15 years. This situation has had an adverse effect in the enrolment which suddenly dropped almost by 90% for the last 3 batches. Concerned University authorities should hopefully note this nightmare sympathetically about the Department. I remember one of the First Year students' comments: 'How can the Department attract students so long as the admission seeking population sees the majority of the Department's products including our teachers, some of whom are from the first batch, are unemployed?'

In cooperation with NFDIN the Department has also documented and described many languages and got the reports published. Although there have been problems in a few publications where our students' names have not been printed as the real researchers, such a practice should be discouraged and corrected in future, but the cooperation between the institutions should continue. NFDIN has also been financially supporting the Linguistic Survey of Nepal (LinSun) project.

**Evaluation of CBS (2001) linguistic data**

Following are a few mistakes, in Chapter 4 of Population monograph, that need to be addressed in the next Census report:

a.  None of the Dura people can speak the Dura language. It is spoken by a single speaker Muktinath Ghimire who speaks it as a second language. Som Maya Dura, an octogenarian, has been found to be speaking varieties of argots based on Nepali, not the Dura language. Paradoxically, according to our population census report (CBS, 2003) the number of Dura speakers is more than 3000.

b.  At present only three Kusundas speak their mother tongue with varying competence, but the CBS report (Yadava, 2003) shows that there are 87 Kusunda speakers.

c.  The monograph treats Kisan as a Nepalese language (p. 140), but Sadhani as a foreign language (p. 156). In fact the Kisan are Dravidian people who have lost their language. Kisan appears as a Dravidian language (p.147) in the report. Sadhani is the *lingua franca* of peoples in Jharkhand. In Jhapa also Sadhani/Sadani/Satna/Sadri serves as the *lingua franca* of the peoples who are somehow tied to the tea gardens. It is, therefore, justified to call the language Sadri rather than Kisan. How could there be only two speakers of Sadhani (p.57)?

d.  The monograph (p.156) has also listed Koche as a foreign language. Koche is another name of Rajbamshi, who have occupied most of Jhapa and Morang.

e.  Population census reports show that before the political change of 1990, there is a gradual decrease in the population of Maithili, Tharu, Tamang, Newar, Limbu and Magar corresponding to a gradual increase in the population of Nepali speakers, which culminates to nearly 58% in 1981, but after the political change of 1990, there is a gradual decrease in the population of Nepali (which has gone down to 48%) corresponding to the gradual increase in the population of the languages mentioned above

(पोखरेल म. प., २०६७). Change in language attitude and awareness should be given credit to this kind of crisscross. In any case, this example questions the authenticity of our census data.

**Linguistic Survey of Nepal (LinSuN)**

At present National Planning Commission (NPC) has assigned our Department the responsibility to conduct Linguistic Survey of Nepal (LinSun). The LinSun project has chosen the sociolinguistic survey as its primary goal on the first phase. The project has almost completed the survey of only about 20 languages out of not less than a 100 languages of Nepal and the project has come to the 4th phase with its present goal to survey the languages of the Midwestern Region. At present LinSun is experiencing the following problems:

a.  Every reshuffling of the government triggers reshuffling in the NPC. As a result NPC forgot that it had appointed our Department to conduct sociolinguistic survey of the Nepalese languages. Lack of funding has been one of the major setbacks. The original file was lost and thanks to Dinesh Devkota, another file has been created.

b.  LinSun should have chosen seriously endangered languages or languages of remote areas rather than those which are not very far from pitch road in the initial phase. The present strategy of LinSun does not show that it will complete the survey within 7 years, its promised target. If 20 languages are surveyed in 4 years, it may take not less than 20 years (almost half a century) to complete the survey with the present pace. LinSun should revaluate its present pace and target within a rigid time frame.

**Growing relevance of linguistics and paradoxical syndromes**

a.  One of the prime agenda of the Constitutional Assembly was to restructure the country into geographically, ecologically, economically, ethnically, linguistically and politically equitable states. One of the criteria of that restructuring was going to be linguistic, but the political parties do not seem to have felt the

delicacies and intricacies of linguistic role. Linguists should acknowledge their roles in the proposed restructuring.

b. Several Kiranti languages are reported to have been extinct and several others are on the verge of extinction (Hanβon, 1991). Among them Tilung and Linkhim are acknowledged to have spoken only by not more than 5 speakers of the third generation.

c. There are many patterns of language endangerment in Nepal (Pokharel, September 19-28, 2011). Department of Linguistics is established with an objective to assess and improve the linguistic vitality of the mother tongues. However, the enrolment in the Department does not show that the native speakers have acknowledged the relevance of this Department to their mother tongues.

d. The majority of the speakers of Nepalese languages are bilingual to Nepali. The degree of bilingualism is becoming gradually not in favor of the mother tongues. Nepali has become increasingly the medium of instruction not only in the majority of schools, but also in the majority of university campuses. Even English is being taught through Nepali medium in the majority of schools and university campuses. It has become ritualistic in the university to design courses and set question papers in English medium although the major part of student-teacher, teacher-teacher and student-student formal interactions are limited to Nepali.

e. The opposition of the official status of the Nepali medium has been very vibrant in political streets, the Constitutional Assembly and Vice President's oath in spite of the fact that the medium of opposing Nepali has been mainly Nepali and sometimes Hindi comes at odds.

f. Most of the Nepalese choose Sanskrit to name their children and institutions. Sanskrit has served the source of calquing scientific and technical vocabularies. Native words are replaced by Sanskrit to draft a prestigious variety of a Nepalese language. Almost all the religious scriptures of Hinduism and most of those of Mahayana Buddhism are written in Sanskrit. Nobody can be literate and educated in Nepali without using a Sanskrit word. High dependence of Sanskrit words has been witnessed when an unwritten language of South Asia undergoes the metamorphosis of a written language. In spite of such a high dependence of Sanskrit upon the written variety of all the Nepalese languages, Sanskrit has become target of political controversy. With this kind of controversy the percentage of ungrammatical Sanskrit words like पुनर्स्थापना and प्राविधिज्ञ is growing in the standard variety of Nepalese languages, because even the courses compulsory Nepali have neglected teaching Sanskrit word formation rules. Such an unhealthy practice should be remedied.

g. The Gorkhapatra (नयाँ नेपाल) has given two pages' coverage of the mainly unwritten languages. Among the languages covered are Newar and Maithili which have a long and rich tradition of writing. On the other hand, the Rai languages (which are not less than 30) are given only one page. Sunuwar is given a separate page, because the speakers do not call themselves Rai and mutually communicable varieties of the language Rajbamshi and Tajpuriya are given separate pages. The coverage in the Gorkhapatra needs to be justifyably managed.

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# Presidential address

## Dr. Dan Raj Regmi

### 32$^{nd}$ Annual Conference of Linguistic Society of Nepal

Honorable Chief Guest, Shree Til Bikram Nembang (Bairagi Kainla), Chancellor, Nepal Academy;
Guest of Honor, Prof. Dr. Hira Bahadur Maharjan, Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University;
Guest of Honor, Prof. Dr. Jaya Raj Awsathi, Vice-Chancellor of Far-Western University, Nepal;
Keynote speaker, Prof. Dr. Madhav Prasad Pokharel, Former president of LSN;
Prof. Dr. Nava Raj Kanel, Dean, Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Nepal;
Shree Bholanath Pokherel, Member-secretary, University Grants Commission;
Prof. Dr. Austin Hale, SIL Nepal;
Former Presidents of Linguistic Society of Nepal;
Distinguished linguists, scholars and guests;
Presenters from home and abroad;
Executive members of Linguistic Society of Nepal;
Life members of Linguistic Society of Nepal;
Media persons; and
Ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of Linguistic Society of Nepal, first of all, I would like to extend my warm welcome to Shree Til Bikram Nembang (Bairagi Kainla), Chancellor of Nepal Academy, for gracing and inaugurating the 32$^{nd}$ Annual Conference of Linguistic Society of Nepal as the chief guest.

I would like to welcome Prof. Dr. Ganesh Man Gurung, Vice-chairman of University Grants Commission, and Prof. Dr. Hira Bahadur Maharjan, Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University, Prof. Dr. Jaya Raj Awsathi, Vice Chancellor of Far Western University, Nepal; former presidents of Linguistic Society of Nepal and other distinguished guests and linguists from home and abroad on this auspicious occasion of the 32$^{nd}$ Annual Conference of Linguistic Society of Nepal.

Let me begin with a few heart touching and ever-echoing words from the heart and mind of Michael Krauss (2000), a distinguished linguist. To quote him, *"Surely just as the extinction of any animal species diminishes our world, so does the extinction of any language. …any language is a supreme achievement of a uniquely human collective genius, as divine and endless a mystery as a living organism."* Never before was made such a splendid analogy between the death of any animal species and a language. I think this analogy does appeal for the preservation and promotion of the endangered and seriously endangered languages, no matter wherever they are in the politically dissected world. Preserving the language is not only preserving knowledge embodied. It is the preservation of cultural and ethnic identity of the speech communities.

It has been repeatedly reported that many languages of indigenous nationalities of Nepal are dying out. However, the attempts made at the individual as well as institutional levels have not been as effective as they were expected to be. The government, as in the past, is almost latent in framing policy for the preservation and development of the languages of Nepal. The government is not willingly allocating the budget even to Linguistic Survey of Nepal which was started with the aegis of National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal. I still remember almost a month and a great energy had to be spent by our seniors to remind the concerned authorities even about the status of the ownership of the survey that has to be borne by the government itself.

Despite these facts, we, linguists in Nepal, cannot run away from our responsibility of continuing our efforts either at the individual or at the institutional levels to raise our voice either through our research or through formal request to the government and

concerned authorities for the cause of the preservation of the endangered languages of Nepal.

Preservation of the languages has been a burning issue in Nepal. I think today is the right day to make a promise once again to take immediate steps for the preservation of such languages before it is too late. Indeed, preservation is multi-faceted task associated with the total socio-political and economic aspects of the speech communities and the nation. No doubt, there is a central role of the linguists for the preservation of the languages. Is it enough just by documenting the endangered languages linguistically and ethnographically, producing dictionaries and grammars in those languages? The selves of the library have been patronized by reports of the study, grammars and dictionaries of some endangered languages of Nepal. However, the domains of the use of those languages have been not increased. The speakers are shifting to the dominant languages of the locality.

Indeed, writing grammars, dictionaries and documenting languages in any form are very important aspects of the preservation of endangered languages. However, there are other aspects without which preservation in real sense cannot be materialized.

Man cannot live without "bread and butter". Looking at the sociolinguistic situation of the indigenous languages spoken in the hinterlands, I am motivated to argue that they are not endangered in real sense; no matter of the absolute number, till the speech communities do not feel compelled to migrate to non-hinterlands. The hinterlands are marginalized economically, politically, educationally, in the matters of health, transportation and communication. Unless such areas are prioritized by the government for providing at least minimum requirements, the migration rate can never be slowed down. The migrants, deliberately or not, under the influence of dominant languages and cultures, gradually go on losing not only their language but also their original pattern of culture. Thus, I think, if we are really worried about the preservation of the endangered language of Nepal, we require a collaborative approach. This should be collaborative in the sense that all the concerned would involve with the vision of their stipulated responsibility. Again, this approach should be socialistic in nature. What I mean to say that first of all the speech communities residing in those hinterlands must be provided at least minimum requirements defined for living so that they will be motivated to enjoy themselves in their lands. Secondly, such languages should be documented with grammars, dictionaries with "consented" orthography. Thirdly, the textbooks and reading materials must be developed in those languages in consonance with socio-cultural context of the speech communities. Fourthly, such textbooks and materials with the active participation of highly motivated teachers should be used at least in the basic education from the true spirit of mother-tongue based multilingual education. To recapitulate, in simple words, by creating situation for living in their homelands and implementing mother-tongue based multilingual education in such languages, we can preserve those languages effectively to some extent. Unless the domains of the use of the languages are not extended the languages in a real sense cannot be preserved.

I think Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN) was established in 1979 with these issues in the mind. Since its inception, Linguistic Society of Nepal has been holding its annual conference for the last 32 years uninterruptedly. The credit goes to the inspiration of the senior linguists from home and abroad, cooperation and collaboration on behalf of the national and international organizations dedicated for enhancing linguistic researches and incessant dedication from the middle-aged and young linguists and students.

I feel pleasure to note that Linguistic society of Nepal has been a broad-based forum for the linguists from home and abroad to congregate at least once a year to discuss the issues and problems related to the linguistic fields, to share the experiences and findings with their fellow linguists, to encourage the young and novice linguists to devote the life for the exploration of amazing characteristics of human language and raise voice to trigger off the concerned authorities to take necessary and immediate steps for the

linguistic activities for the promotion of the languages in the nation.

In this conference, seventy-nine papers have been received from the linguists from home and abroad. I think this is the first record in the history of LSN. I could not mention the titles of the papers as in the past. The papers broadly cover all most all major fields of linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, historical and typological linguistics, corpus and computational linguistics and applied linguistics. The papers are some way concerned with different aspects /issues of around 48 languages of which more than 29 languages are spoken in Nepal. A great majority of the papers deal with the syntactic aspects of the languages. In this conference, around 43 papers are, singly or jointly, presented by the linguists from home. The rest are presented by the linguists from abroad. There are papers in twenty Tibeto-Burman languages, most of them are endangered. The languages include from the very popular languages, namely, Sanskrit, English, Hindi, French, Chinese, Nepali, Maithili to a never-recorded language, Tandrange.

No doubt, some important and fundamental achievements have been recorded with the incessant efforts made by seniors and juniors in Nepal. Many international conferences have been attended with papers by Nepali linguists. Baram and Puma and Chintang projects have been successfully completed in the host of CDL. However, many fundamental achievements have to be made through struggle by joining hands with hands with governmental and non-governmental agencies.

In front of us, there are a number of urgent issues which require to be rightly addressed by the concerned authorities, governmental and non-governmental agencies in Nepal.

- Setting up an independent language commission immediately to address the linguistic complexity in the nation;
- Completing the linguistic survey of Nepal in due time and frame;
- Identification of the sociolinguistic situation of the endangered and seriously endangered languages of Nepal and implementation of multilingual education in those languages with the true spirit of multilingual education;
- Documentation of seriously endangered languages to preserve the indigenous and traditional knowledge embodied in such languages;
- Collaboration of linguistics with other disciplines with special focus on language and technology; and
- Setting up an institution to transmit the indigenous knowledge to the younger generations and to those who require learning it.

With the generous financial support of Nepal Academy, Central Department of Linguistics, Central Department of English, Central Department of Nepali, Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the 26th volume of **Nepalese Linguistics** has been published. The team of editorial board consisting of Mr. Balaram Praisain, and Mr. Krishna Prasad Chalise headed by Prof. Dr. Govind Raj Bhattarai deserves special thanks for their indefatigable and painstaking work required to produce such a great treasure of linguistic research in a very short period of time.

I am thankful to former presidents of Linguistic Society of Nepal, my seniors, colleagues and Executive Members of LSN and others who have worked hard, incessantly nights and days, have spent their time, sometimes money and energy in making this mega event a success.

In this juncture I would like to thank all the well-wishers, supporters, financially and logistically, the contributors in the journal, the audience, and the volunteers to make the conference a success.

Once again, I would like to remind the words by Michael Krauss and appeal all of you to join hands in preservation and the promotion of the endangered languages in which priceless heritage and indigenous knowledge is embodied.

Lastly, I believe that fruitful discussion and interaction among participants will make this conference productive and a success. I wish all the participants a pleasant time during this conference.

Thank you very much.

# List of the life members of Linguistic Society of Nepal

## 1. Honorary Members

Austin Hale
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**Abbreviations used in this list**

CDC Curriculum Development Centre
CDE Central Department of English

CDL Central Department of Linguistics
CDN  Central Department of Nepali
CIL Campus of International Languages
CNAS Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies
DEE Department of English Education
IOE Institute of Engineering
LinSuN Linguistic Survey of Nepal

**Note:** We have tried our best to update the list of the life members of Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN). We would be grateful to your kind help for further updates.