A micro-typology of contact effects in Tibeto-Burman

Kristine A. Hildebrandt, Oliver Bond & Dubi Nanda Dhakal

Goal of this talk

To typologically & quantitatively survey one category of dependent variables in three Tibeto-Burman languages:

Contact effects (within and cross-family origins)

In light of two categories of potential factors or predictors:

| Linguistic (structural) factors | Extralinguistic (socio- and spatial) factors |

Which factor(s) better explain the types of effects seen in these languages?

Contact Effects: Borrowing

(1)   Nepali **lexical borrowing** in Nar:

       ʃôw-ce   cæ̂-te.

       apple-DEF   eat-IMPERF

       'They are eating apples.'

(2)   Nepali **morphological borrowing** in Gurung:

       kro   plu   tsõ-**erə**

       wheat seed sow-**SEQ**

       'Having sown the wheat seeds...'

Contact Effects: Code-switching

(3)   **Gyalsumdo/Nepali Code-switching**

arku-ko   **buŋgur**-la   ter-na   **gai**
condensed.water   **pig**-LOC   give-SUBORD   **cow**

atsu   *laŋpu*-la   *phoko*   ter-na
in.particular   *cow*-LOC   *pig*   give-SUBORD

'*Either giving the condensed water to the pig or the cow…*'

(4)   **Gurung/Nepali code-switching**

əni   tsəto   kjale   ba   ama   "ŋjo
and.then   here   from   father   mother   1.PL

paldinə   **paldinə"**   əni   **əlikəti**
care.NEG   care.NEG   and.then   little.bit

'*Then my parents said, "No I will not take care of you, I will not take care of you"…and then a bit (after)…*'

Contact Effects in Manange

(5) **English & Nepali Lexical Borrowing into Manange**
bides   mi=tse   pisaŋ **pik**=ri   kre-pə-ri
foreign person=PL Pisang Peak=LOC   climb-NMLZR-PURP
kati   pi-le   khə   mo
many say-SUBORD   come COP
'Many foreigners come (here) to climb Pisang Peak.'

(6) **Manange/Nepali code-switching**
khi=ko=tse   lə-tse   **pəiro**   ju-pə
3SG=DEF=ERG   do-SUBORD   landslide descend-NMLZR
'If they do (this: make the god unhappy), a landslide will fall.'
(earlier in text: ʈʰi ju-pə 'land descend-NMLZR')

5

Motivations for this study

○ There is an abundance of literature on contact scenarios, histories and outcomes (Thomason & Kaufman 1991, Gilbers et al [eds] 2000, Thomason 2000, Aikhenvald & Dixon [eds] 2006).

○ Many studies make generalized predictions and assess their power based on individual case studies (but cf. Matras 2007, Grenoble & Whaley 1998, Mougeon et al 1985).

○ Many studies also focus on system simplification, leveling, loss in scenarios of endangerment/death (Grenoble & Whaley [eds] 1998, Dorian [ed] 1992).

Motivations: Code-Switching

o Discourse situations in which words (or structures) originating in more than one system are used side by side/in the same stretch (Thomason 2001; Backus 2005)

o Can be inter-sentential (At/across sentence boundaries) or intra-sentential (within a sentence boundary)

o Motivations: discourse-interaction (emphasis, affect, dramatic narration, topic shifting), speaker fluency (gap-filling), language community identification or challenges

Motivations: Code-Switching

o Code-switching is often assumed to take place in non-shifting contact environments

o But since code-switched units are bigger than lexical or grammatical loans, there have been proposals that it could actually be a type of interference in language shift

o If certain strategies are repeated often in discourse, across large numbers of speakers, this is a possible sign of interference in shift

o If the strategy is adapted structurally to the contact language (Nepali), then it might be interference

Motivations for this study

- All of these hypotheses require empirical testing

- And they can only be tested with great amounts of discourse data across a wide range of genres and speaker representatives, and gathered in tandem with speech community accounts of language practices and attitudes

Motivations for this study

- We work in an area of cross-family contact with varying effects across languages of two sub-groups (Tamangic & Tibetic in contact with each other, and with Indic/Nepali).

- Our methods give us access to parallel data types to explore a several factors behind these varying effects.

- We may also examine whether more 'vulnerable' languages in the same intense contact situation can be appreciated by the same factors as viable languages.

Preview of findings in this study

o Despite similar contact contexts and histories with Nepali, contact-effects are unevenly distributed across the three languages examined.

o Gyalsumdo and Nar-Phu show small amounts of lexical borrowing and lexical-level code switching, but are <u>otherwise unaffected</u>.

o Gurung shows <u>more intense borrowing</u> both lexically and grammatically (with and without nativization), along with frequent lexical and clause-level code-switching.

Preview of findings in this study

- Some structural predictions are upheld (e.g. open class >> closed class and semantic classes; using is a pathway to borrowing).

- But not all are predictions are upheld or even relevant (e.g. typological proximity; "matter/pattern" differences).

- Rather, modified extra-linguistic (sociolinguistic and spatial) factors have more explanatory power for the observed cross-linguistic differences.

The languages in this study

This study is part of a five-year project incorporating parallel data collection methods to document four Tibeto-Burman languages of the Manang District of Nepal

Gurung:
> 1000 across 11 VDC's

Gyalsumdo:
< 400 in 3 VDC's

Nar-Phu:
< 600 combined in 2 VDC's

Manange *(data still being analyzed)*:
ca. 5000 across 8 VDC's

Bodic

Tamangic

Gurung, Manange, Nar-Phu

Tibetan

Central
(proposed cf. Hildebrandt & Perry 2011)

Gyalsumdo
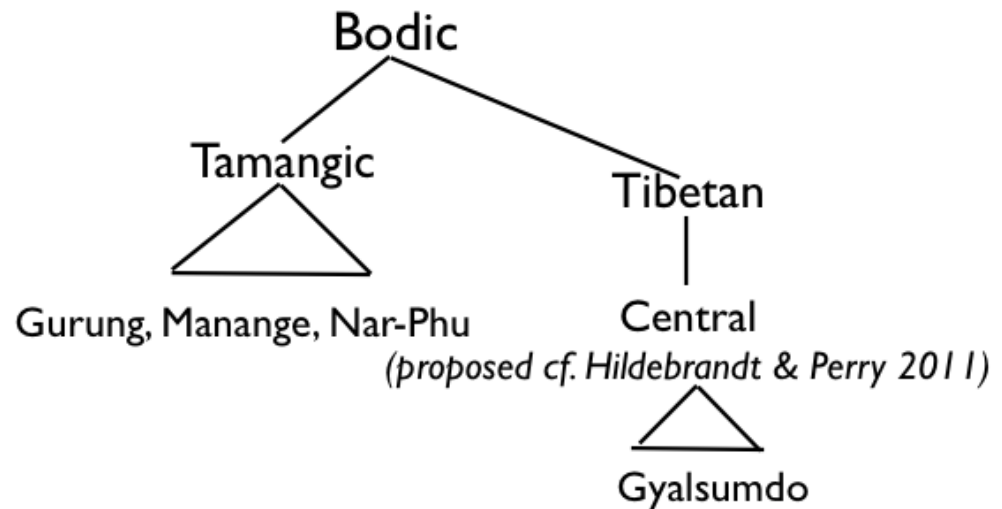
Spatial distribution of the languages
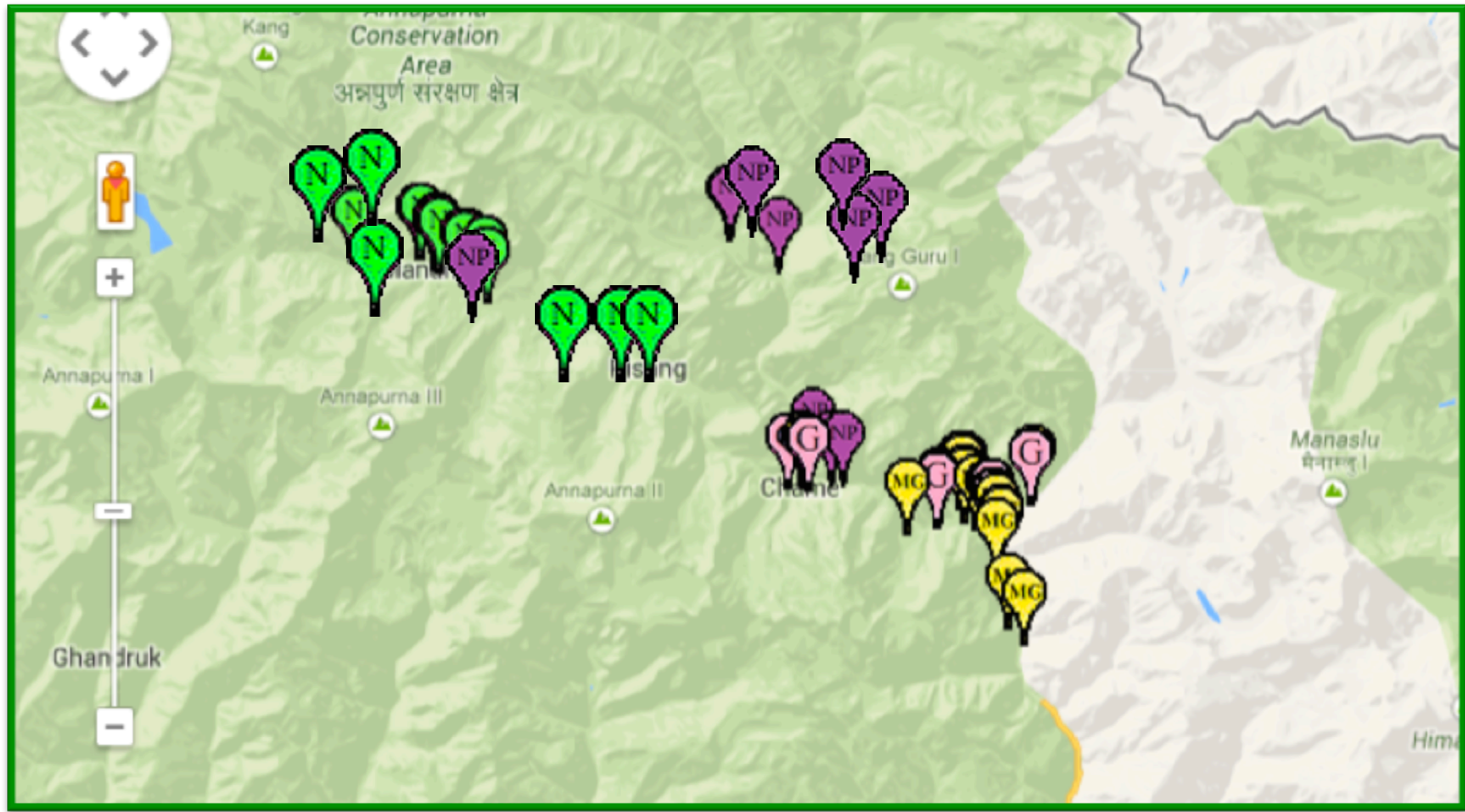
The data in this study

Project data:
- ○ Sociolinguistic interviews (administered in-person)
- ○ Discourse samples (variety of genres)
- ○ Lexical and sentence elicitation (in Manang/Kathmandu)

Any external impact coded according to several structural and extra-linguistic factors
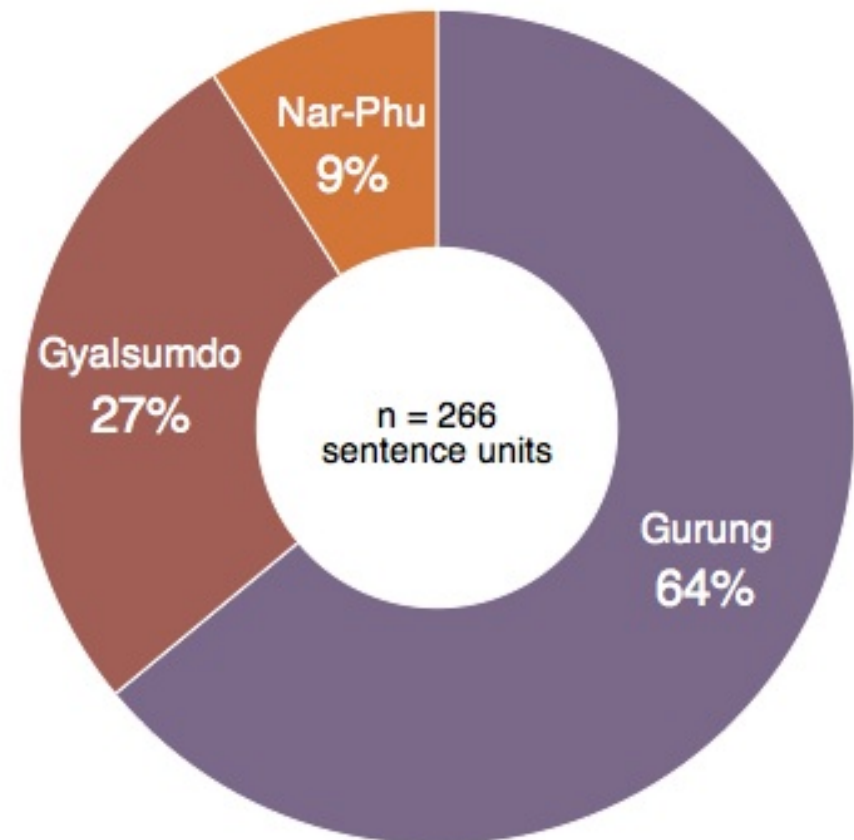
Data used for this study:
- ○ Transcribed, interlinearized discourses from the languages;
- ○ Both genders represented, ages range from 20's to 60's;
- ○ Genres include stimuli (Pear Story, Frog Story), procedurals, demonstrations, autobiographical monologues and multi-participant conversations.

Observations: Cases

Contact effect cases observed in each language

Gyalsumdo 23%

Nar 7%

Gurung 39%
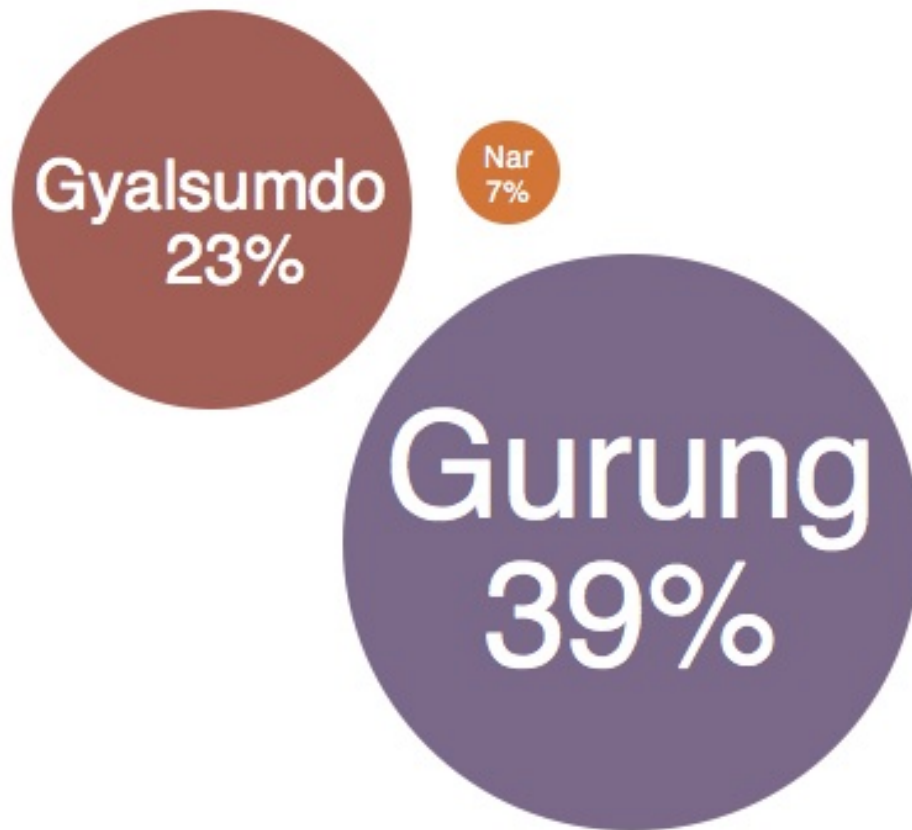
Contact effect cases observed in the corpus

Nar-Phu 9%

Gyalsumdo 27%

n = 266 sentence units

Gurung 64%

Observations: Type
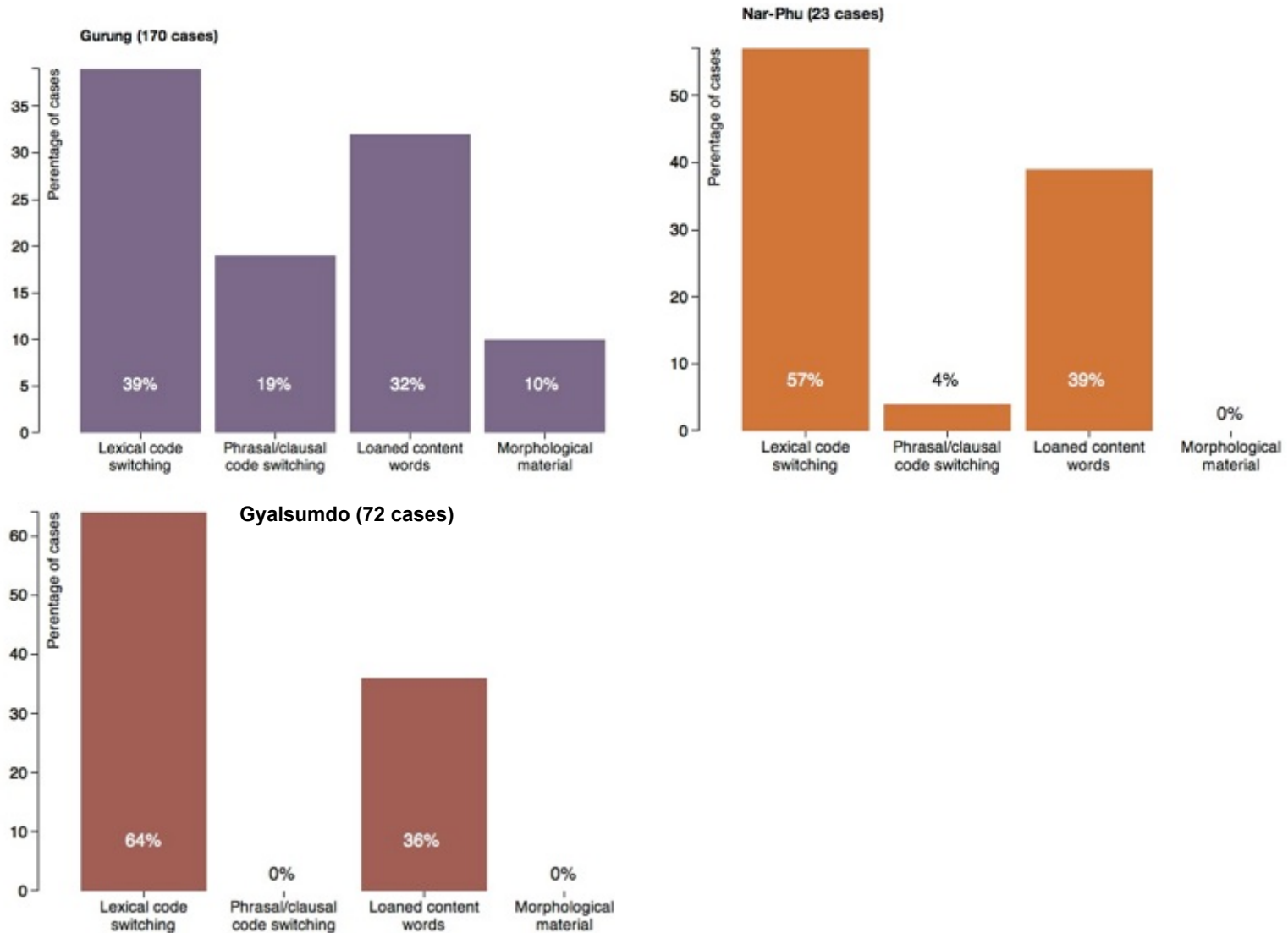
A preliminary hypothesis

High, long-established 'lingualism' correlates with more extensive contact effects (cf. Field 2002; Aikhenvald 2008; Thomason 2001).

BUT

All three languages have had roughly the same degree and timeline of contact with Nepali.

Almost every person with whom we have worked is (minimally) bilingual in their mother-tongue and Nepali.

A modified hypothesis

The proximity of language communities to Nepali-centric business and educational infrastructures ('public') correlates with more extensive contact effects.

In interviews with speakers who also provided texts, 3/6 Gurung, 1/2 Gyalsumdo and the Nar-Phu speaker all report reliance upon Nepali in public contexts, while the rest report mother tongue use.

Since language practices in public contexts do not correlate neatly with the divergent contact consequences across the languages, **which factors do?**

Linguistic structural factors: PoS

Closed and open classed lexical borrowings
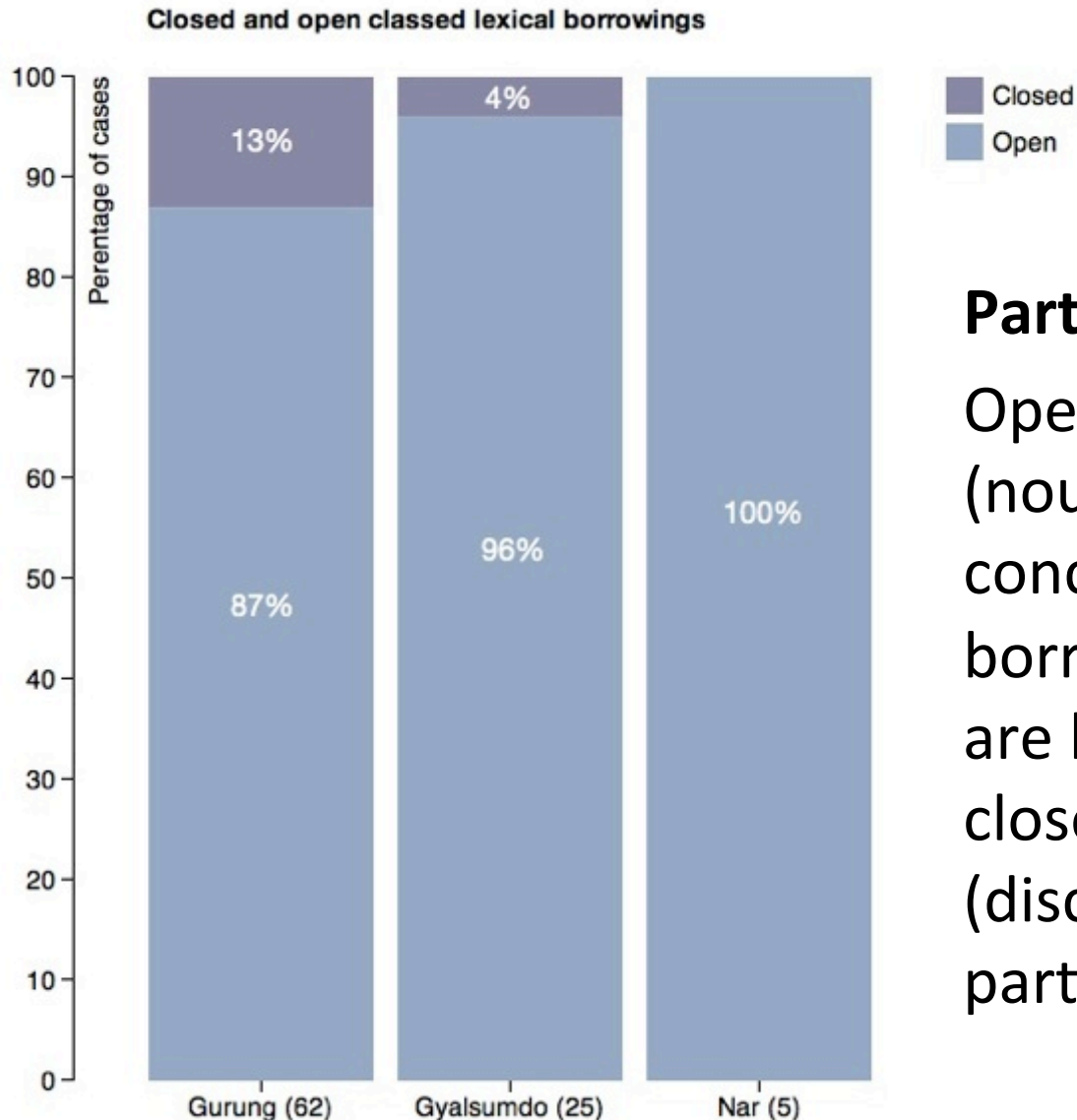
Part of speech:

Open class items (nouns, verbs, property concepts) are borrowable more so, or are borrowed before closed class items (discourse markers, particles, etc.).

Linguistic structural factors: Loan type

Open-class loans for Gyalsumdo & Nar-Phu reflect technological/ cultural gaps more so than for Gurung.

Gurung:
gəna < Nep. ghan 'hammer';
gaɖi < Nep. 'jeep';
tsəppəl < Nep. cappal 'sandal';
besi < Nep. 'valley';
khola < Nep. 'river';
dziro < Eng. 'zero';
iskul < Nep./Eng. 'school',
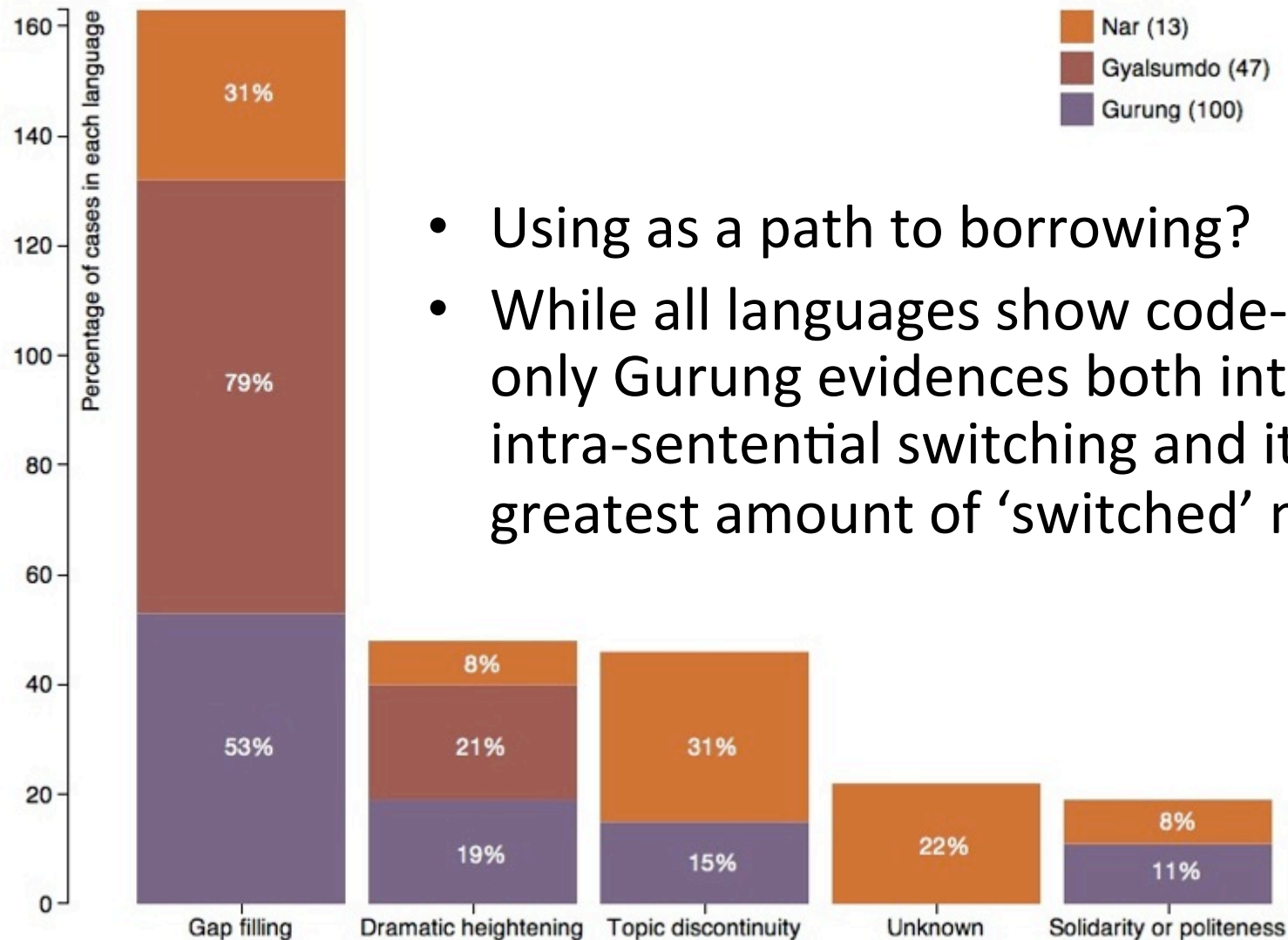məsʈər < Nep./Eng. 'teacher'

Gyalsumdo:
ʈuris < Eng. 'tourist';
tha ~ thaliŋ < Nep. thaali 'plate';
bjaŋ < Eng. 'bank';
riphudzi < Eng. 'refugee';
hotel < Eng.

Nar-Phu:
ʃow < Nep. syau 'apple';
rumal < Nep. rumal 'hanky';
saikul < Eng. 'cycle'

Linguistic structural factors

Distribution of linguistic structural factors by type

- Using as a path to borrowing?
- While all languages show code-switching, only Gurung evidences both inter- and intra-sentential switching and it has the greatest amount of 'switched' material

Linguistic structural factors

- 'Pattern' Borrowing is a gateway to 'matter' borrowing (cf. Matras & Sakel eds. 2007).

- This is difficult to survey in this sample.

- Gyalsumdo shows a slightly greater propensity to alter Nepali loaned open-class items to fit its segment & phonotactic profile, but not significantly so.

bjaŋ < 'bank'; thaliŋ ~ tha < thaali 'plate'
kamani < 'company'; ʈuris < 'tourist'

Linguistic structural factors: Pattern

- Hildebrandt (2012): In Gurung, the acoustics of tone are decidedly Tamangic in their specific correlates (vs. Indic)—this appears to be a pattern effect from Manange.

- This also makes Manang Gurung different from other varieties of Gurung in this dimension.

- But this happens without any other clear contact effects in Gurung from other Tamangic languages in the region.

Extra-linguistic factors: Gender

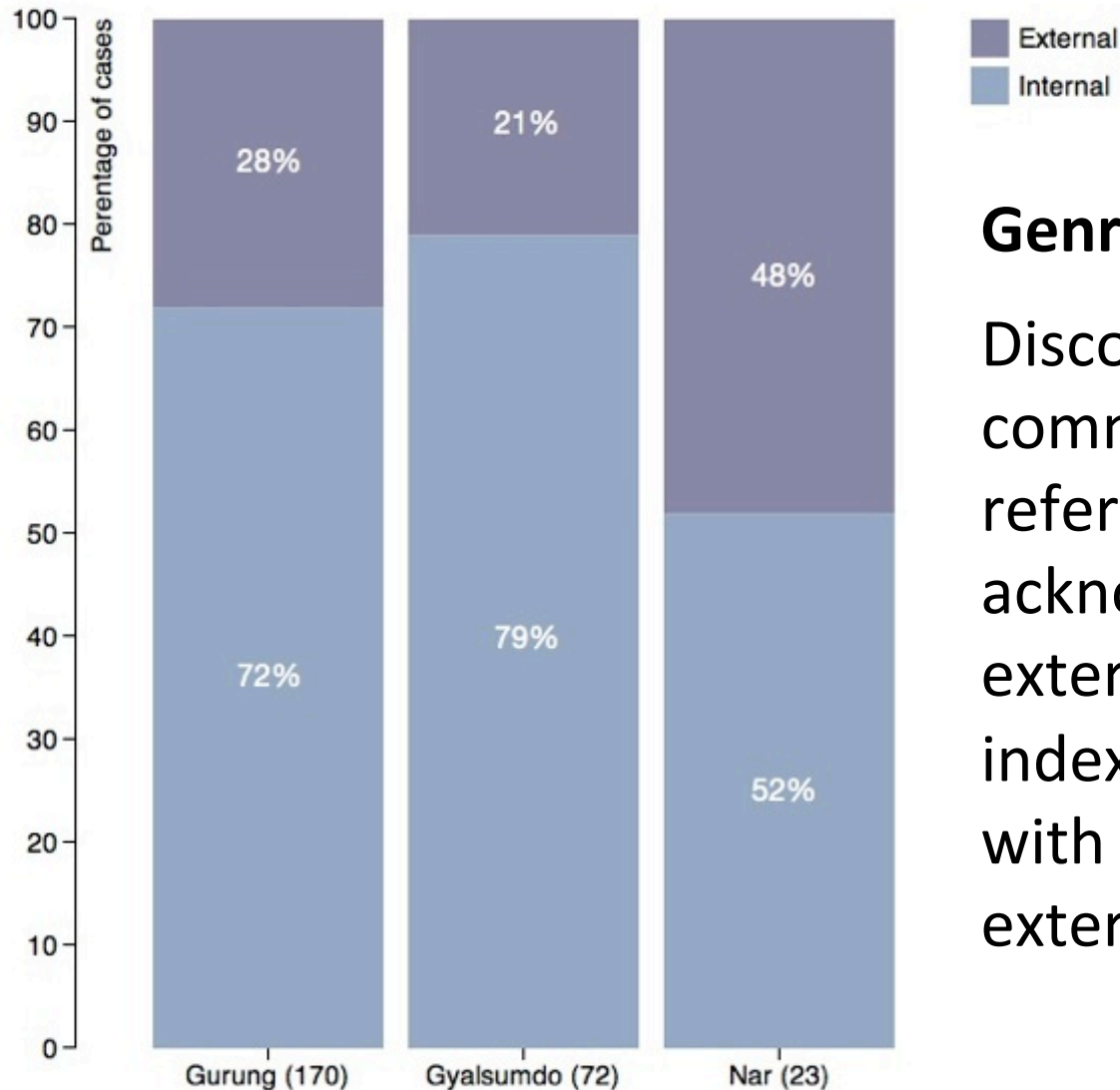Distribution of contact effects across the speech of males and females
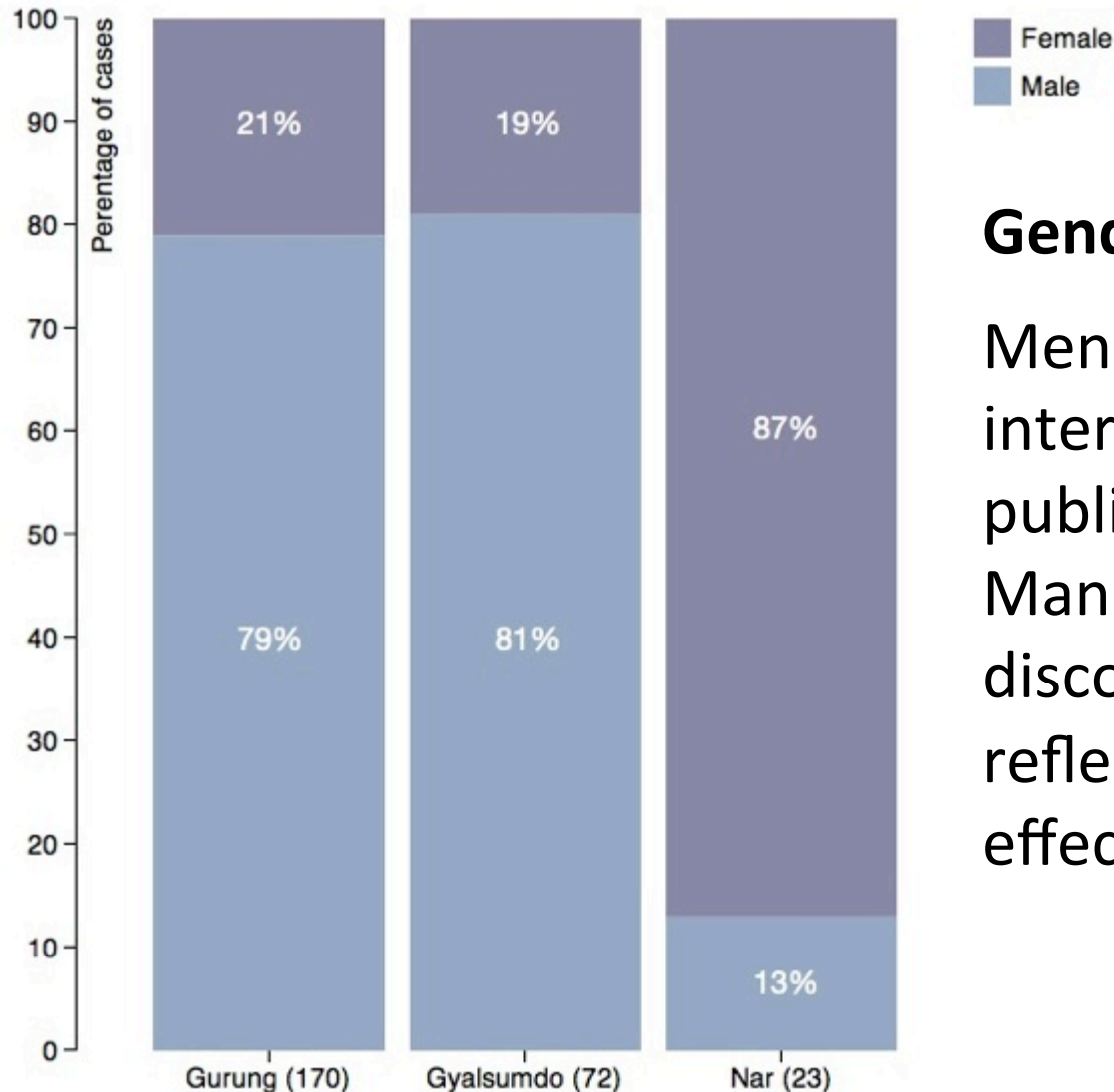
Gender:

Men operate and interact more in the public sphere in Manang, so their discourse may reflect more contact effects.

Extra-linguistic factors: Genre

Distribution of internally referencing and externaly referencing discourse


Genre:

Discourses involving community-external reference, or acknowledgement of an external audience will index this (more so) with elements from external sources

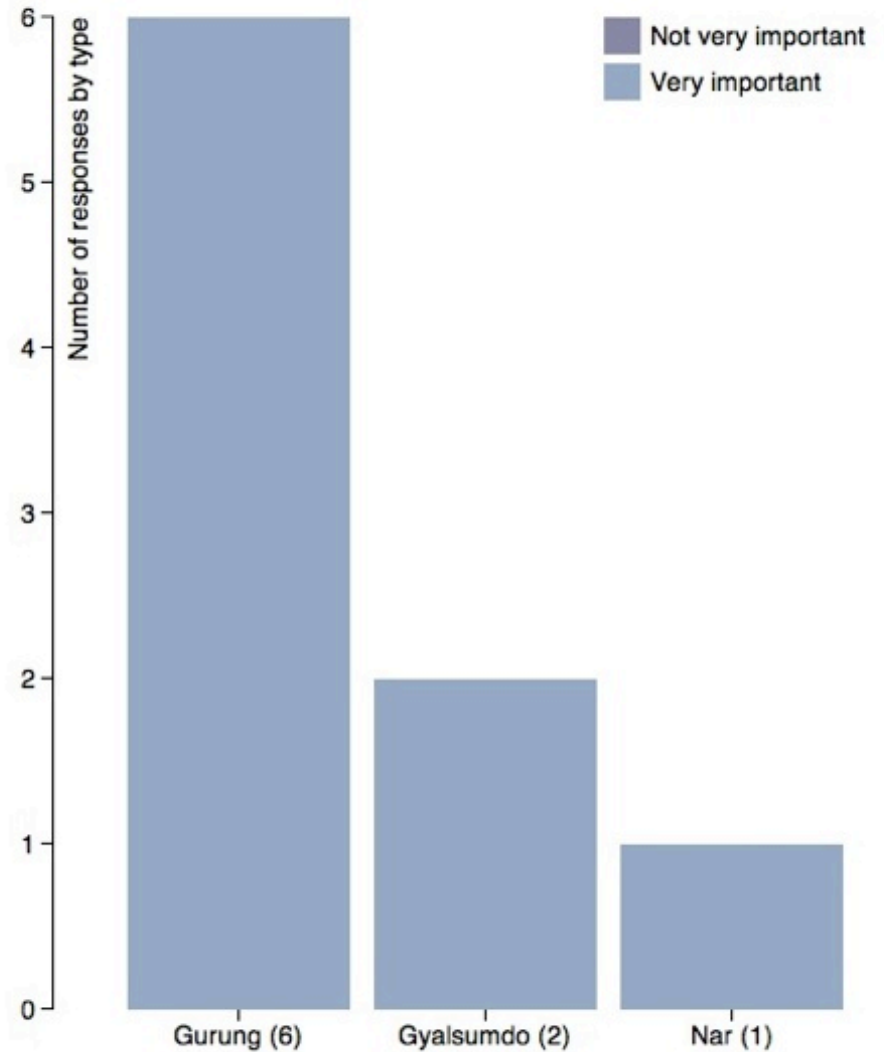# Extra-linguistic factors: Attitudes

- Language attitudes correlate with degree of contact effects ('acceptance' facilitates lexical & grammatical effects).

- No interviewee is hostile towards the rising presence of Nepali.

- We have one survey question regarding respondent feelings about Nepali monolingualism in official environments.

- We have another question regarding the perceived value of M-T for cultural affiliation.

Extra-linguistic factors: Attitudes

Should Nepali be the only language for official contexts?
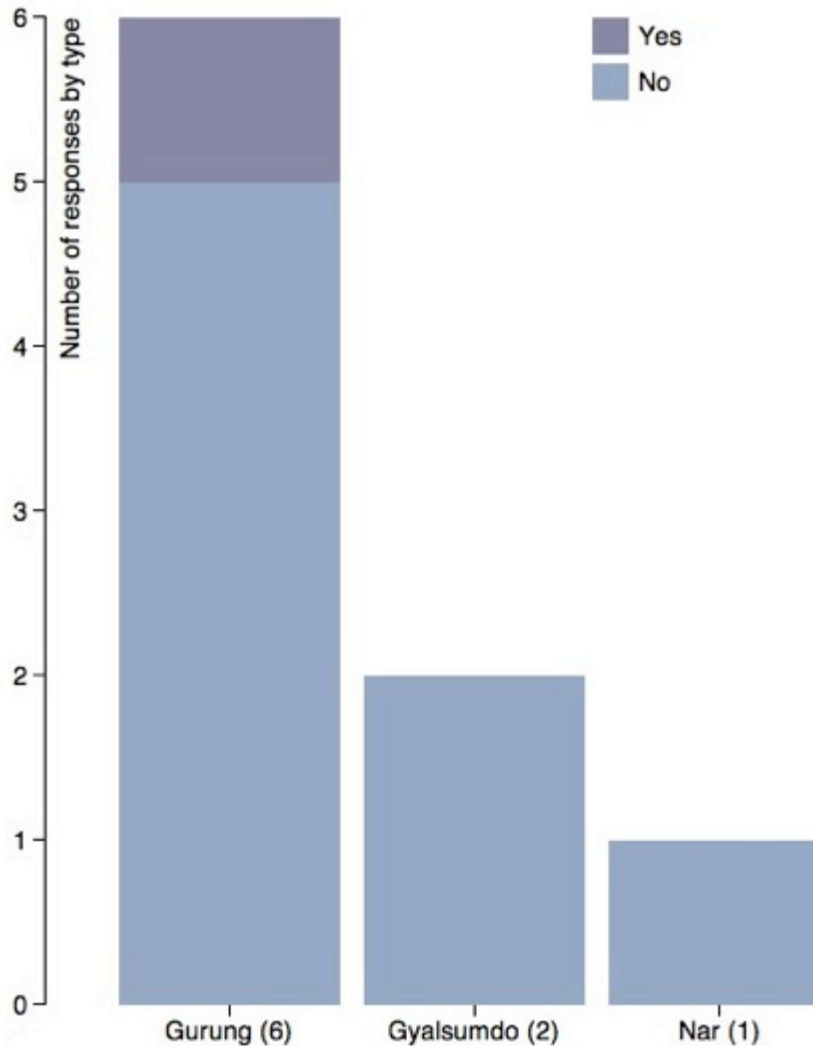
How important for cultural identification is your mother tongue?

Extra-linguistic factors: Spatial factors

○ A spatial variable appears to be an important factor contributing to these effects.

○ Locational stability of language community correlates with increased contact effects (based on questions V.B. 5 & 6 in our questionnaire).

○ This is inspired by work from Mougeon et al (1985), Munshi (2010), Stanford (2012).

Extra-linguistic factors: Emigration

○ Gyalsumdo and Nar-Phu report a heavier impact of: emigration to lower Manang/Kathmandu (and abroad) for employment, boarding schools outside of Manang, acquisition of Tibetan refugee I.D.'s for international relocation, etc.

Nar-Phu
9%

Gyalsumdo
27%

n = 266
sentence units

Gurung
64%
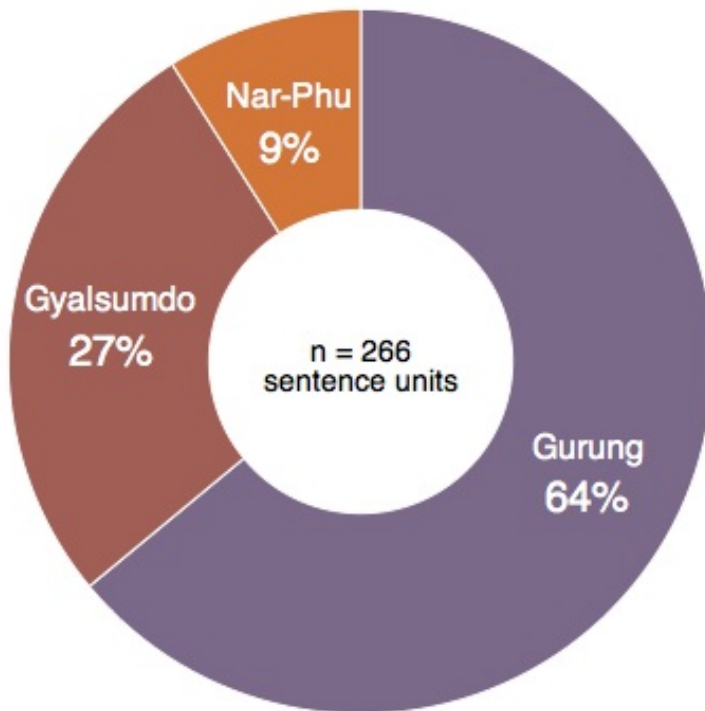
○ This affects younger generations, leaving (primarily) older populations in traditional communities

○ This may account for the overall lack of Indic contact effects & counter examples to particular hypotheses

30

Interview excerpt from Gyalsumdo male

Question V.B.5
"In your opinion, will there still be children speaking Gyalsumdo in 10-15 years from now?"

"At this time, if Gyalsumdo children remain here, they must speak Gyalsumdo, even if they are not perfectly fluent. If they leave, they will speak whatever language they like, English or Nepali…"

Baggarchhap Village, 2012

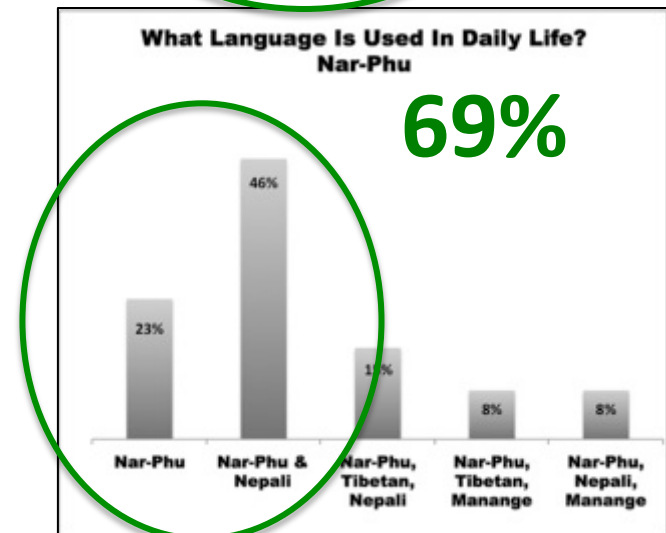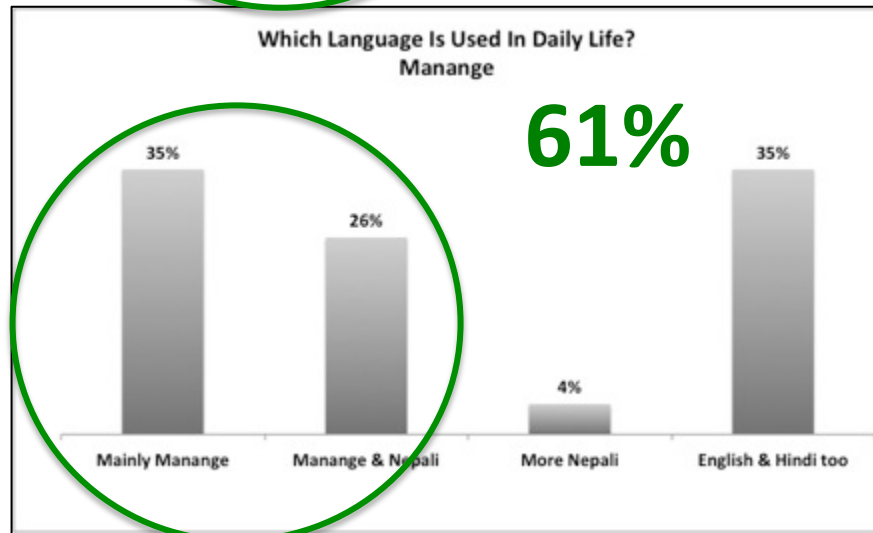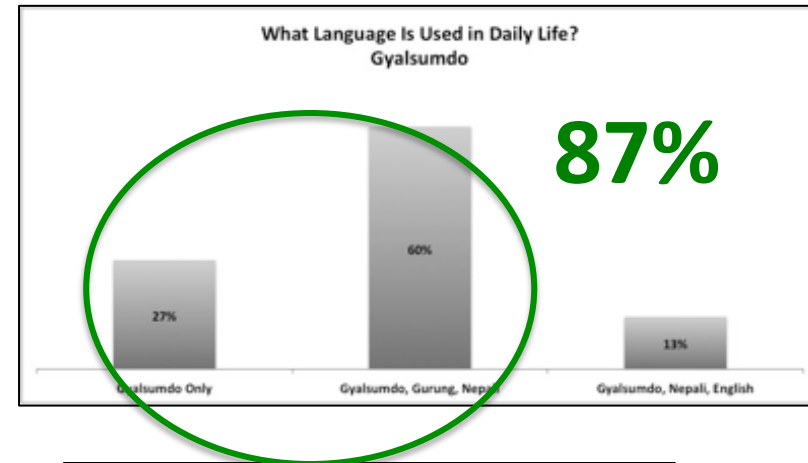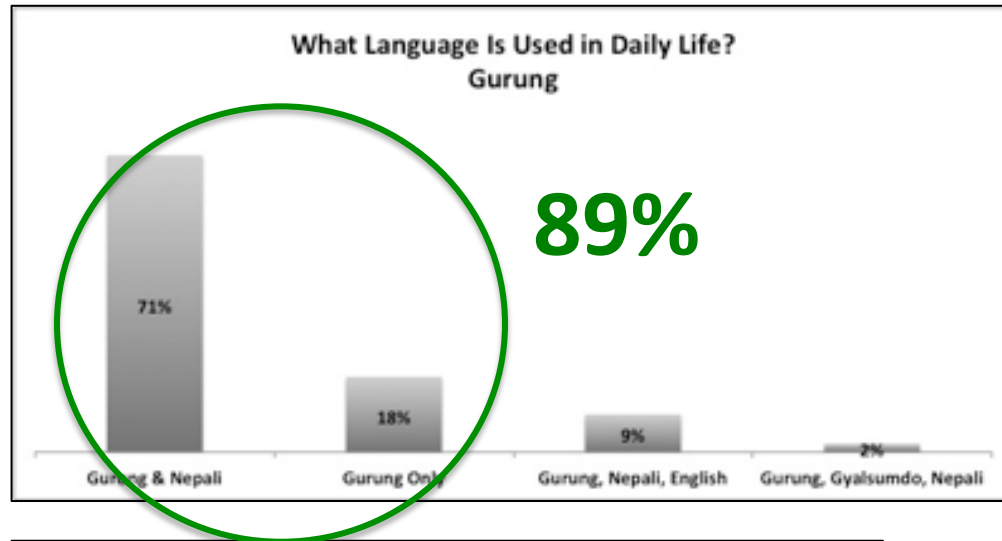# Interview excerpt from Manange female

Question V.B.6
"What can (or should) people do to keep their mother tongue spoken (in future generations)?"

"At this time, children should remain locally so they can be taught/use the language as much as possible. When my life has finished (without our community), the language could be finished (too)."
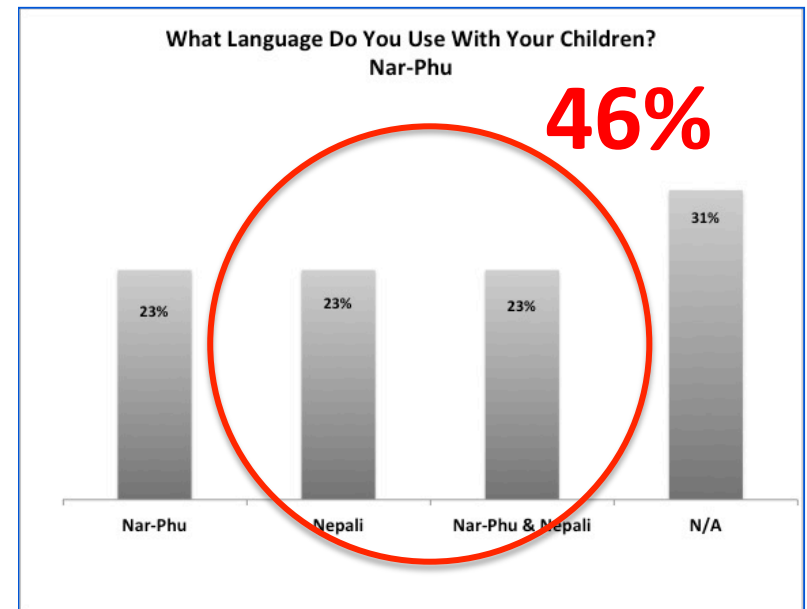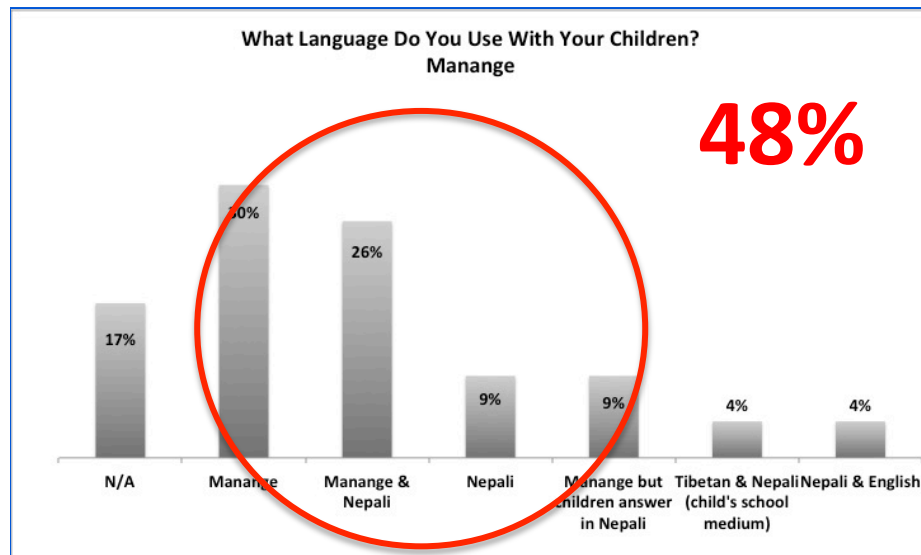

Khangsar Village, 2013

Language Use: A Shifting Landscape?

What Language Is Used in Daily Life? Gurung
- Gurung & Nepali: 71%
- Gurung Only: 18%
- Gurung, Nepali, English: 9%
- Gurung, Gyalsumdo, Nepali: 2%

89%

What Language Is Used in Daily Life? Gyalsumdo
- Gyalsumdo Only: 27%
- Gyalsumdo, Gurung, Nepali: 60%
- Gyalsumdo, Nepali, English: 13%

87%

Which Language Is Used In Daily Life? Manange
- Mainly Manange: 35%
- Manange & Nepali: 26%
- More Nepali: 4%
- English & Hindi too: 35%

61%

What Language Is Used In Daily Life? Nar-Phu
- Nar-Phu: 23%
- Nar-Phu & Nepali: 46%
- Nar-Phu, Tibetan, Nepali: 1?%
- Nar-Phu, Tibetan, Manange: 8%
- Nar-Phu, Nepali, Manange: 8%

69%

Language Use: A Shifting Landscape?

What Language Do You Use With Your Children? Gurung — **51%** — Gurung 30%, Gurung & Nepali 30%, Nepali Only 21%, No Children/Contact 19%

What Language Do You Use With Your Children? Gyalsumdo — **35%** — Nepali 44%, Gyalsumdo 21%, No Contact 21%, Gyalsumdo & Nepali 7%, I speak Gyalsumdo, They respond Nepali 7%

What Language Do You Use With Your Children? Manange — **48%** — N/A 17%, Manange 50%, Manange & Nepali 26%, Nepali 9%, Manange but children answer in Nepali 9%, Tibetan & Nepali (child's school medium) 4%, Nepali & English 4%

What Language Do You Use With Your Children? Nar-Phu — **46%** — Nar-Phu 23%, Nepali 23%, Nar-Phu & Nepali 23%, N/A 31%

Discussion

○ Gurung shows the most intense contact effects and the most conformity to structural predictions.

○ Gurung is also slightly more likely to tolerate Nepali phonological patterns in loaned and switched material.

○ But **extra-linguistic** predictions are also equally important given the observed variation.

○ One **socio-spatial** factor that does account for the Gurung vs. Gyalsumdo/Nar-Phu difference is **locational stability**.

Discussion

o Does endangerment correlate with system simplification, pattern loss or structural contraction (Dorian [ed] 1992, Grenoble & Whaley [eds] 1998, Aikhenvald 2012)?

o Campbell & Muntzell (1992) distinguish between 'sudden death' vs. 'radical death' vs. 'gradual death'.

o 'Radical death': rapid loss of speaker population, typically in an environment of political and cultural oppression; it occurs <u>without</u> obvious compromise to lexico-grammatical system.

  o Pipil & Lenca in El Salvador (Elmendorf 1981)

  o E. Sutherland Gaelic (Dorian 1982)

  o This has also been considered in the Nepal context by Angdembe (2012)

Discussion

○ Gyalsumdo and Nar-Phu are at a stage somewhere between the 'radical' and 'gradual' death continuum.

○ These languages do not face extreme political/cultural pressures seen in other cases, and they may not 'die' within the next single generation, but the dearth of younger speakers combined with shrinking local populations makes for a unique scenario of shift.

○ The lack of interference from Nepali, combined with the restricted structural/semantic domains impacted in these systems is symbolic of their hybrid status.

Thank you!

Project support from **National Science Foundation** and **British Academy**: