A micro-typology of contact effects in Tibeto-Burman
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic (structural) factors</th>
<th>Extralinguistic (socio- and spatial) factors</th>
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Which factor(s) better explain the types of effects seen in these languages?
Contact Effects: Borrowing

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

\[ jôw\text{-}ce \text{ caê\text{-}te. } \]

**apple**-DEF **eat**-IMPERF

‘They are eating apples.’

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

\[ kro \text{ plu } \text{ tsõ\text{-}era } \]

**wheat** seed **sow**-SEQ

‘Having sown the wheat seeds...’
Contact Effects: Code-switching

(3) Gyalsumdo/Nepali Code-switching

aru-kо 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*  \(\text{mi}=\text{tse} \quad \text{pisaŋ} \quad \text{pik}=\text{ri} \quad \text{kre-pə-ri} \\
\text{foreign} \quad \text{person}=\text{PL} \quad \text{Pisang Peak}=\text{LOC} \quad \text{climb-NMLZR-PURP} \\
\text{kati} \quad \text{pi-le} \quad \text{khə} \quad \text{mo} \\
\text{many} \quad \text{say-SUBORD} \quad \text{come} \quad \text{COP} \\
‘Many foreigners come (here) to climb Pisang Peak.’

(6)  **Manange/Nepali code-switching**

*khi=ko=tse \quad \text{lə-tse} \quad \text{pəiro} \quad \text{ju-pə} \\
\text{3SG=DEF=ERG} \quad \text{do-SUBORD} \quad \text{landslide} \quad \text{descend-NMLZR} \\
‘If they do (this: make the god unhappy), a landslide will fall.’

(earlier in text: ʈʰi ju-pə ‘land descend-NMLZR’


Motivations for this study


Motivations: Code-Switching

- 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)

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

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

- Code-switching is often assumed to take place in non-shifting contact environments.
- 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.
- If certain strategies are repeated often in discourse, across large numbers of speakers, this is a possible sign of interference in shift.
- 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.
Despite similar contact contexts and histories with Nepali, contact-effects are unevenly distributed across the three languages examined.

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

Gurung shows more intense borrowing 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
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)

**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), procedural, demonstrations, autobiographical monologues and multi-participant conversations.

Any external impact coded according to several structural and extra-linguistic factors
Observations: Cases

Contact effect cases observed in each language

- Gyalsumdo: 23%
- Nar: 7%
- Gurung: 39%

Contact effect cases observed in the corpus

- Gyalsumdo: 27%
- Nar-Phu: 9%
- Gurung: 64%

n = 266 sentence units
Observations: Type

Gyalsumdo (72 cases)
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

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:**
gāna < Nep. ghan ‘hammer’;
gadī < Nep. ‘jeep’;
tsēppāl < Nep. cappal ‘sandal’;
besi < Nep. ‘valley’;
khola < Nep. ‘river’;
dziro < Eng. ‘zero’;
iskul < Nep./Eng. ‘school’,
məșṭər < Nep./Eng. ‘teacher’

**Gyalsumdo:**
ṭuris < Eng. ‘tourist’;
tha ~ thaliŋ < Nep. thaali ‘plate’;
bjan < Eng. ‘bank’;
riphudzi < Eng. ‘refugee’;
hotel < Eng.

**Nar-Phu:**
jow < Nep. syau ‘apple’;
rumal < Nep. rumal ‘hanky’;
saikul < Eng. ‘cycle’
Linguistic structural factors

- 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.

bjan < ‘bank’; thalin ~ tha < thaali ‘plate’
kamani < ‘company’; turis < ‘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

Gender:

Men operate and interact more in the public sphere in Manang, so their discourse may reflect more contact effects.
Extra-linguistic factors: Genre

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?**
  - **Yes**:
    - Gurung (6)
    - Gyalsumdo (2)
    - Nar (1)
  - **No**:
    - Gurung (6)
    - Gyalsumdo (2)
    - Nar (1)

- **How important for cultural identification is your mother tongue?**
  - **Not very important**:
    - Gurung (6)
    - Gyalsumdo (2)
    - Nar (1)
  - **Very important**:
    - Gurung (6)
    - Gyalsumdo (2)
    - Nar (1)
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.

- 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
“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...”

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

- **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%

- **Nar-Phu**
  - Nar-Phu: 23%
  - Nar-Phu & Nepali: 46%
  - Nar-Phu, Tibetan, Nepali: 13%
  - 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**
  - Gurung: 30%
  - Gurung & Nepali: 30%
  - Nepali Only: 21%
  - No Children/Contact: 19%

- **Gyalsumdo**
  - Nepali: 44%
  - Gyalsumdo: 21%
  - No Contact: 21%
  - Gurung & Nepali: 7%
  - I speak Gyalsumdo, They respond Nepali: 7%

- **Manang**
  - N/A: 17%
  - Manang: 30%
  - Manang & Nepali: 26%
  - Nepali: 9%
  - Manang but children answer in Nepali: 9%
  - Tibetan & Nepali: 4%
  - Nepali & English: 4%

- **Nar-Phu**
  - 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


- Campbell & Muntzell (1992) distinguish between ‘sudden death’ vs. ‘radical death’ vs. ‘gradual death’.

- ‘Radical death’: rapid loss of speaker population, typically in an environment of political and cultural oppression; it occurs without obvious compromise to lexico-grammatical system.
  - Pipil & Lenca in El Salvador (Elmendorf 1981)
  - E. Sutherland Gaelic (Dorian 1982)
  - This has also been considered in the Nepal context by Angdembe (2012)
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.
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