

Code Mixing in Nepali Language Spoken in Gangtok Town

Saraswati Mishra, M.Phil.

Gangtok: A Short Introduction

Gangtok is the capital of Sikkim, which is the 22nd state of India. It is spread over a ridge at 6,500 ft. above the sea level. Precise meaning of the name 'Gangtok' is still unclear though the popular meaning is 'hill top'.¹ According to 2011 Census the total population of Gangtok is 98,658. There are 11 official languages of Sikkim viz. Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha, Limbu, Newari, Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Tamang, Sunwar, and English.

Nepalis comprise the majority of Gangtok's residents. Lepcha's and Bhutia's also constitute a sizeable portion of the populace. Additionally, a large number of Tibetans have migrated to the town. Immigrant resident communities not native to the region include the Marwaris, who own most of the shops, the Biharis who are employed in mostly blue-collar jobs and the Bengalis.²

Code Mixing

Unlike dialect, vernacular, language, style, standard language, pidgin and creole, which are inclined to arouse emotions, a 'neutral' term code, taken from information theory, is used to refer to any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication (Wardhaugh, 2010: 84). In other words, code refers to a language or a variety of language. In the similar vein, code mixing is an instance of language use where two codes are used without a change of topic in a discourse. There are cases where a fluent bilingual talking to another fluent bilingual changes language without any change at all in the situation. This kind of alternation is called code mixing. To get the right effect the speakers balance the two languages against each other as a kind of linguistic cocktail- a few words of one language, then a few words of the other, then back to the first for a few more words and so on. If the shift from one code to another is absolute it is the code switching (Hudson, 2015: 53).

Analysis

Gangtok is a multilingual place with a unique linguistic importance. Although Nepali language is the lingua franca, many other languages like Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo, etc. occupy the linguistic landscape of the capital of Sikkim. Apart from Hindi and English, Nepali language is used in private and public spheres. On account of the flourishing tourism industry, there are many instances where other languages are mixed in different degrees with the lingua franca. These languages leave direct or indirect impact on the lingua franca of the place. There are instances to prove the above conjecture.

¹ . Parag, Bannerjee, The Telegraph (14th October 07), retrieved on 24/05/2017, 5:14 p.m.

² . <https://googleweblight.com/> retrieved on 24/05/2017, 5:20 p.m.

1. (a) ओ दिदी ओलिकोति मिष्टी दिनु न मोलाई।(spoken by Native Bengali speaker)
O didi olikoti misti dinuna molai.

(b) ओर्जुन आकोथ्यो आजु बौदीलाई भेट्नु।
Orjun ako theo aju boudilai vetnu.
2. (a) इत्थे हस्पिटल काँ छ? (Spoken by native Punjabi speaker)
Ithhe hospital ka cha?

(b) त्यो कुडीलाई एता पठाउ त।
Tyokudilai eta pathau ta.
3. (a) टपाई जाने? विथ मि।(spoken by native English speaker)
Tapai jane? With me.

(b) टिमरो नाम के होउ?
Timro nam k hau?

From these examples, we can see that non-Nepali speaker, who has minimal competence in Nepali language, tries to communicate with the locals in Nepali. Out of such linguistic dynamics, there is direct and indirect mixing of other codes in Nepali language. In example (1) shows the phonological and lexical mixing of Bengali codes in Nepali. (2) Shows mixing of Punjabi code in Nepali. In (3), an English speaker speaks Nepali mixing English phrases in Nepali language.

In addition to these examples, there are also instances where non-Nepali speakers of the state having their distinct language as the mother tongue mixes the codes.

1. (a) खामरी है सर, देरै दिनपोछी पो बेट बोयो ता।(spoken by native Lepcha speaker)
Khamri hai sir, derai din pochhi po bet boyo ta.

(b) त्यो किल्लीमा च्या बोसाना।
Tyo killima chya bosana.
2. (a) आज्ञा तिमी नआङ्ने हो भने मो त्याँ आङ्दैछ लस्।(spoken by native Bhutia speaker)
Aagya timinaangne ho vane motya angdaicha las.

(b) पाला मोमो खान्छा?
Pala momo khanchaa?
3. सेवान्नै है बाङ्गा, बुबु छ घरमा?
Sewanne hai banga, bubu cha gharma?

- (1) Shows the phonological and lexical mixing of Lepcha code and (2) shows the same linguistic aspects of Bhutia language and (3) also shows the same aspects of Rai language.

Hindi, being the Official language and a main language of Indian Television and Film industry, influences Nepali language spoken here. For example-

1. कति इन्तजार गर्नुपरेको हो हजुरलाई त।
2. उसको त बात नगर मसँग। मेरो किताब लगेर नजरमा आको छैन।
3. आजु बहुत थाकेको छु यार, जान्न म बजार।
4. छिल्का या न फेक है, गन्दा लागदैछ हेर्दा।
5. बस आउनु अझै देरी छ। म कपडा खरिदिइ हाल्छु।

Above cited examples clarify about mixing of words and style from Hindi to Nepali language. The correct formations of sentences in Nepali language without mixing would be like this:

1. कति पर्खिनु परेको हो हजुर लाई त।
2. उसको त कुरा नगर मसँग। मेरो किताब लगेर देखा परेको छैन।
3. आजु पूरा थाकेको छु साथी, जान्न म बजार।
4. बोक्रा यहाँ नफ्याँक है, कस्तो मैला लाग्दैछ देख्दा।
5. बस आउनु अझै समय छ। म लुगा किनी हाल्छु।

Most importantly, we can see the mixing of English language codes in Nepali spoken in the capital. Since English has occupied a significant role in education, and as the medium of instruction in the state, there is tremendous use of English in most of the spheres of everyday existence. As a result of which, we do find several instances of code mixing of English and Nepali. In addition to it, Nepali employs English particularly in borrowing and nativisation as a lexicon building process, and there is substitution of the native Nepali words and phrases by English counterpart. Both these instances often lead to code mixing.

1. प्राइस त हेभी छत है? आइ थिङ्क नकिन्नु नै बेस्ट होला।
Price ta heavy cha ta hai? I think nakinnunai best hola
2. इफ तिमीलाई रीनाको नम्बर चाहियो भने भन, आइ विल टेकस्ट यू।
If timilai Rinako number chahiyo vane vana, I will text you.

3. आज सप्यै डक्युमेनट्स एटेस्टेड गर्नु छ।
Aja sappai documents attested garnu cha
4. इट्स गेटिङ लेट, जुम छिटो घर।
It's getting late, jumchittoghar.
5. त्यो मान्छे त सारै ड्रामाबाज छ। अरूलाई चै केई जान्दिन भन्छ, तर लास्टमा हेर्नु उसकै प्रोजेक्ट फस्ट सकेको हुन्छ।
Tyo manche ta sarai dramabaaz cha. Arulai chai kei jandina vancha, tara lastma hernu uskai project first sakeko huncha.
6. द्याट अफिसर नभन कस्तो रूड छ। एज इफ बोल्नु पनि पैसा लाग्छ जस्तो।
That officer navan kasto rude cha. As if bolnupani paisa lagcha jasto.
7. ऊ त कस्तो मल्टिटैलेन्टेड छ नि। हामी जस्तो डम्ब काँ होर।
Uh ta kasto multitalented cha ni. Hamijasto dumb kaha ho ra.
8. शारदा सोसियल एक्टिभिस्ट हो।
Sarda social activist ho.
9. ट्राफिक जाम ग्यान्टोकको मेजर प्रबलम भा'को छ।
Traffic jam Gangtok ko major problem vako cha.
10. उसले त सानो झगडा हुँदा नै कम्प्लेन गयो प्रिन्सिपललाई। आइ जस्ट हेट हर।
Usle ta sano jhagra hudanai complain garyo principal lai. I just hate her.

The most interesting part is that people coming from rural backgrounds in the town uses a word which is the repetition of English words in Nepali bearing the same meaning. Like- Boot jutta, cap topi, Bus gadi, plate ko thaal, center ko beech etc. Here we can also illustrate the original English words which are spoken here in Nepali tone or with phonological touch of Nepali language.

Spoken word in Gangtok	Original English Word
Kirket	cricket
Pyakit	packet
Beg/byaag	bag
Laltin	lantern
Tyanki	tank
Listi	list
Lighting	lightening
Sikmani	sikmani
Benchi	bench
Bowl	bulb

Some words from the list can be incorporated in the sentence like this:

1.सिर्जना त्यो लिस्ती देन।

Sirjana tyo listi de na.

2.हाम्रो ट्याङ्कीमा पानी कति छ?

Hamro tyanki ma paani kati cha?

3.लाइटिङ हुँदैछ फोउन राख्त।

Lighting hudaicha phoune rakh ta.

4.बत्तीको बोल जलेछ।

Battiko bowl jalecha.

5.आजको किरकेट मेच दामी छ।

Aajako kirket match dammi cha.

Here, Youngsters also use verb forms which are mixture of Nepali and English verbs. There are instances to prove the context:

1.म त जोरो आएर दिनभरि सुतिङ। तिमी?

2.म त दिनभरि डुलिङ, गलफ्रेन्डसित।

In example (1), 'Suting' is a mixture of Nepali word 'Sutnu' and English word 'sleeping' as well as in example (2) 'duling' is a mixture of Nepali word 'Dulnu' and English word 'roaming'.

4 Conclusion

In Gangtok, code mixed language is the emerging form of language use. Mixing is seen in lexicon, phonological, loan and borrowed vocabulary, and syntactic structures. In addition to it, this paper explored various morphological processes like plurality, definiteness, tense and aspect marking in Nepali.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:7 July 2018

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Saraswati Mishra
Research Scholar
Department of Nepali
Sikkim University
Saraswatimishra473@gmail.com