I Sherpa and Their Language

Nepal as a land of geographical, cultural and ethnic diversities is the homeland of several ethnic groups where people speak varieties of languages and dialects. *Constitution of Nepal 2073* has declared that "Nepal is multilingual, multi religious, multicultural and multiracial country and it is also constitutionally confirmed 'each community have rights to speak their language' (Article, 32). CBS Reports 2011 has showed 123 languages and 122 caste and ethnic communities in Nepal " (1). Most of the languages have no writing tradition. Their phonemic inventories and script have yet to be discovered and developed. Only a few languages have scripts. Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Avadhi are written in Devnagari. Nepal Bhasa and Tamang are also written in script though the former has Ranjana, and the latter has Tamu as their scripts. Tibetans and Sherpas use the Sambota script. Limbu, Lepcha, Magar, Maithili, Punjabi, Perso-Arabic, Santhali and Bengali use the Srijanga, Rong, Akkha, Mithilakshar/Tirhuta, Gurumukhi, Urdu and Bengali scripts, respectively.

Considering the linguistic and cultural diversity of Nepal, the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990* has provisioned the linguistic rights to preserve and promote its language, script and culture and to operate schools up to the primary level in its own mother tongue for imparting education to its children. The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) has provided each community the rights to get a basic education in their mother tongue and preserve and promote their language, script, culture, cultural civility and heritage.

In the same lines Barbara Grimes estimates "a total of about hundred and two languages are spoken in Nepal"(5). There are four main different language families in

Nepal. There are four main different language families in Nepal; Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic Munda and Dravidian.

Among the language families, Tibeto-Burman is the largest. The following well known languages belong to this Tibeto-Burman family; Newari, Jirel, Sherpa, Rai, Limbu, Magar, Gurung, Chepang, Sunuwar, Dhimal, Lapche, Byanshi, Meche, Tamang, Pahari, Hayu and Thakali.

The Sherpa is a tribe of Tibetan origin who occupy the high valleys around the base of Mount Everest in northeastern Nepal. In the Tibetan language, *Shar pa* means "people who live in the east," and over time this descriptive term has come to identify the Sherpa community. According to Sherpa tradition, the tribe migrated to Nepal from the Kham region of eastern Tibet over a thousand years ago. Historians, however, suggest that the Sherpas were nomadic herders who were driven out of their original homeland in eastern Tibet by warlike peoples sometime between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries AD. They migrated to the area around Tingri, but conflict with the local inhabitants caused them to move on in search of new pastures. They crossed the Himalayas and settled peacefully in their present homeland in northeastern Nepal.

Sherpa language has also its own importance in the whole ethnic mosaic of Nepal such as indigenous, language, culture, rites and rituals and traditions. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to calculate the actual data regarding the Sherpa people of Solukhumbu and their language. This will also help to preserve and promote the language in its use for social interaction, publication, education, and mass-media and so on.

The Sherpa language is a spoken language only. There have been attempts in recent years to introduce a written form of this language based on the Tibetan script. But

this is not an easy undertaking. The Sherpa language definitely goes back to a Tibetan dialect spoken in the eastern Tibetan Kham province in the 15th century, but it has developed in its own way for the last 500 years. So, it must be regarded as a language of its own separate from Tibetan. In modern times, Sherpa language has been enriched by a number of words taken from Nepali or English. Even within the Sherpa area one finds a lot of regional differences in the current use of the language. In Khumbu, for example, the use of words is a bit different from that of 'Pharak, Shorung, Kulung', and also Helambu, Rolwaling, the Arun valley, Darjeeling etc. In the following list, the words have been written in the way they are used in Lhakpa's and Tendi's home area, the Takshindu region of Shorung.

The survey research seeks the question how language is interrelated with social life of the Sherpa people. Language is based on society. Without society we cannot imagine the existence of language. Social activities are interrelated with language. The research has focuses on Sherpa language speakers and their social activities, linguistic setting, genetic classification, phonological and morphological feature, word list and discourse of the Sherpa. The survey has taken data from the core and peripheral area of Sherpa communities, which made possible to show the interrelation between the Sherpa and their language.

Though Sherpa language is an Indigenous language, as well as being of Tibeto-Burman family of language. It is less used due the language diversity. It is also due to that many of the speakers of new generation are gradually switching over to Nepali National Language. Our earlier generation is not aware of the burning problem, the language degeneration as they have used to follow the same old traditional conventional

language. It is very much a pathetic condition to a beautiful language: Sherpa Language. The old generations are happy when their children are learning other languages like Nepali, Hindi, English, Spanish, French, and German etc. except their mother tongue due to the modern scientific education system. If the existing situation continues then it will disappear soon beyond recovery within may be two generations. When a language dies then culture too dies along with it. Therefore, language is on the verge of losing one's own identity. One day, Sherpa language will have to face the same problem as Toba, (1992) says "Kusunda Language" has totally disappeared and "Puma" is also in the condition of extinction, if some efforts are not made to eradicate its erosion.

Socio-linguistic is a branch of linguistics that looks at the language as well as the social condition that affect the use of that language. The factors such as social, cultural, geographical, historical etc. affect how differently the language is spoken in one place compared to the way of another. The main aim of this research is to describe Sherpa language from a socio-linguistic perspective which is given as follows:

a)   To describe the current status/data of Sherpa vis-a-vis their language.

b)   To find out the reasons for the decline of the Sherpa language.

c)   To compile information and analysis of the Sherpa language and the socio-cultural profile of speakers.

d)   To recommend its preservation and promotion of use in social, educational and through mass media.

Though the continental declining of Sherpa language has been realized, there are not many works done on it. A few contributions have been made by some writers,

scholars and linguists, oral literature and culture but they have not been able to contribute much to the promotion of the language.

David Bradley describes the specific study on the Sherpa and its groups, languages, speaking areas, number of speakers etc. Among them, the Sherpa language speakers and their language also are discussed on detail. It also states the relationship among the Sherpa clans, languages and dialects. Brower, Barbara presents the life style of the Sherpas of Khumbu Region. Linguistic Issues in Nepal (Toba) focuses on the value of languages, cause of decline of the minority language and the need for their promotion. Ngawang Higdrel Sherpa shows the introductory works done on Sherpa and its languages. It also presents some vocabulary, grammar and also includes some of the texts in the language. Lakpa Norbu Sherpa helps to preserve and promote the Traditional Sherpa Culture and the language in its use for social interaction, education, mass media, publications and other areas.

As it has already been mentioned above that some languages have been on the way of total extinction like 'Kusunda', 'Puma' etc. the condition of Sherpa language is also in the process of declining. So, it is essential to study it with the assistance of the speaker of the Sherpa language. The development of a language itself is a difficult task and for the lack of language so many things remain unclear and vague. Therefore, the basic emphasis of this research is to present detail information and description of Sherpa language of Solukhumbu from a socio-linguistic perspective.

This research is related to a particular community of the society. So, the source of the linguistic data collection is fieldwork on this community. The data were collected through questionnaires. The selected subjects were from both men and women and both

literate as well as illiterate. The questionnaires were followed by interviews of both literate and illiterate Sherpa people. The interviews will be recorded and semi-structured accordingly. Equal balance was given to men and women as well as literate and literate text books, periodicals, magazines on socio-linguistics were consulted extensively in the process of research and writing of the desertion Sherpa text on narrative folk tale are used to show the distribution of the speakers.

The word Sherpa is derived from *shar* 'east' and *pa* 'people' which means the people from the East. *Sherpa* as a surname appears to be the result of the Nepalese government census takers. Not recognizing that some people only have some name, they wrote the word on census forms in the space for last name. In some cases the clan name was written and in others the ethnicity, i.e. Sherpa. These have then been adopted or forced to be used as last names, last names not being a part of Sherpa culture.

Most Sherpa people live in Nepal's eastern regions; however, some live farther west in the Rolwaling valley and in the Helambu region north of Kathmandu. Tengboche is the oldest Sherpa village in Nepal, they also live in Tibet, and Bhutan, as well as the Indian states of Sikkim and the northern portion of West Bengal, specifically the town of Darjeeling. The Sherpa language belongs to the south branch of the Tibeto Burman language, and it is mixed Eastern Tibet (Khamba) and Lhasa dialogue. However, this language is separate from Lhasa Tibetan and unintelligible to Lhasa speakers.

The number of Sherpas migrating to the West has significantly increased in recent years, especially to the United States. New York City has the largest Sherpa community in the United States, with a population of approximately 2,500. The 2011 Nepal census recorded 154,622 Sherpas within its borders.

Many people believe that Sherpa language has no script. That is not true. Since the Sherpa language belongs to one of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages. Sherpa people have been using Tibetan script for centuries. An ancient Tibetan myth has it that the original script fell from heaven and landed in Tibet. History reveals that this script was modified and devised by Thonmi Sambhota during the reign of the Tibet first religious King Songtsen Gampo. Sambhota used an Indian script as a base to develop the Tibetean Script in order to allow easy translation of Buddhist scripture from India to Tibetan. For this reason it is called the Sambhota Script. For many centuries, the Sherpa use of Sambhota Script remained limited to study of Buddhist scriptures by religious practitioners. The script was not formally used to write and read the spoken language instead, Sherpa people chose to use formal Tibetan language to prepare important documents.

Although Sherpa language has its root in literary Tibetan, it has evolved over centuries both in pronunciation and vocabulary. For example, the words that Tibetans use the high pitch to pronounce whereas Sherpa use low tones. For example, a Tibetan would use the high pitch (ChhAng) while Sherpa pronounce the same word in a low pitch (Chhang) for fermented to alcoholic beverages. Similarly, when referring to a house a Tibetan would use a high pitch (khAngpa) whiles a Sherpa would use low pitch (Khangpa). In this regards, Barbara Brower describes, "Sherpa language has a great geographical spread. Though Sherpa is dominate in Shorong, Rolwaling, Bhojpur and Taplejung. In this context different linguists and speakers have different views. The Sherpas of Nepal" (56) shows that the settlement of Sherpa people have spread in eastern part of Nepal from Dolakha to Taplejung.

Though mostly Sherpa language speakers live in Sagarmatha zone, the scattered minorities of them have been found thought at the entire follow Kirat region i.e. the district of Illam, Sankhwasabha, Bhojpur, Taplegunj district. A few speakers appear to live in the south west of Dhanknta district in the southern parts too and perhaps within a small strip of land in the east of Okhaldhunga district.

Different people have their own presentation on the geographical areas of Sherpa language speaking; they have more or less similar. In fact, in this present context, Sherpa language speakers are found almost in all district of eastern region along with the peripheral areas. There is hinge migration of Sherpa language speakers to different places of Nepal and in India as well. Sherpa language speakers are also found in Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts. They use their mother tongue in speech and some other traditional celebrities and cultural activities wherever they migrate. In this way Sherpa language is spoken in many areas of Nepal. But the process of migration has brought a less in the existence of the language use. This is because of the increased social mobility. As a result, they are switching over to other languages like Nepali. Barbara Brower describes the settlement of language speakers as:

National Census 1971 has shown 45000 use mother tongues in Solukhumbu. Hanson has estimated the minimum number of Sherpa language speakers to be 25000. But it does not appear to be so high though it is very much positive. Hanson has not calculated the number of speakers of Sherpa language separately from other districts where it is spoken.

Even-though there are National Census Reports, they are not reliable. The reports lack authenticity. They have some defects:

a) The collected data are erroneous in the sense that the data collectors are not trained. As a result, homogenous data are not compiled.

b) The Sherpa language speakers have identified themselves as Nepali language speakers because of their ignorance of their ethnicity, language, culture, tribal feeling etc.

c) The process of data collection is not scientific. The data collection is not scientific. The data collectors do not reach every house of each village, but stay at one home in an area and do their work asking others. (46)

In this way, there is no virtually accurate data on the number of the native language speakers. We can never achieve the correct number of the speakers unless the census reports are authentic. Therefore, the concerned authority should correct the mistakes and make the census reports more reliable and successful. Then it will also serve to encourage the people to use their own native language more extensively.

Family is the basic unit of a society. The history of the mankind is the history of a family. So, it is very much essential to study a family deeply to understand the tradition, customs, and social organization of a community. In the Sherpa community, we find two kinds of family:

a) Nuclear family which contains parents and unmarried children.

b) Joint family which contains grandparents, parents, aunts, uncle-aunt, brother, sister, cousin etc. but Sherpa people often prefer unfamiliar system to joint family. Their joint family remains what the sons get married. After a few years of marriage, due to some obstacle, like lack of

understanding, difference in individual income sources, poverty, lack of education etc they begin to live separately with their wives. The parents often live with the youngest son. In this way, the unfamiliar system is dominant in Sherpa community. Though theoretically they are not allowed to have an inter-caste marriage, there are a few case of their due to the social mobility.

Education is abstract and it is one of the most important factors of development in human civilization. It causes mobility and brings changes.

In the different Sherpa areas, like in other caste areas, the old people are found illiterate. An old man from the area says that they did not have any chances of being literate due to poverty, some conservative ideas, and lack of such educational institutions and also the suppression of Rana rulers. Though they were in the complete dark age of illiteracy, they did not forget to learn and save their native language as their first language. In this way, the Sherpa language was in the existence of oral literature. Nowadays, they literate numbers are increasing. Almost in all places of Sherpa area, there are primary, secondary and high school built. Many Sherpa people are becoming literate, educated day by day, since, there is free education up to high school level, and the Sherpa parents are managing to send their children to school. It shows that they are becoming more conscious about education.

On the one hand, people are being educated more and more, but on the other hand, they are not using their own mother tongue even in practical life. The same thing is happening even in the Sherpa community. The influence of the modern education has brought a great loss in the use of Sherpa language like in the other many-minority

language. Nowadays, people are being a little aware of their own language loss and showing their interest in educating their children primarily in their own mother tongue if the service is facilitated. Though the democratic constitution of Nepal 1990 has declared the primary education in mother tongue, nothing has been done till now. And it will not be possible unless the government becomes forward.

Different people have different occupations and economic sources. They often have farming; animal husbandry business etc. in the same way, agriculture is the main occupation of the Sherpa people. Due to some difficulties, they are compelled to follow the old traditional ways of farming. Hence, they do not have a good production. The main reasons for this are lack if the irrigation facility. Untrained workers, unskilled manpower, difficult geographical situation etc. therefore, their economic development is very slow. Only a few Sherpas are in educational sectors, medical science, engineering and tourism.

Before tourism became an important economic activity most families of Solukhumbu herded livestock, grew crops and bartered to secure essential items not locally produced. Located close to Nepal and Tibet boarder, Sherpa settlements are ideally positioned for conducting cross-border trade. The dry and cold Tibetan plateau to the North, and the warm and moist lowlands of Nepal and India to the South, produced different products and created different market opportunities. For many centuries, the most important trading item has been the sock salt from ancient lake beds in Tibet. The salt trade was one of the toughest occupations: traders had to ferry words of salt across freezing high attitude passes and then carry it down to the hot and humid lowlands of the condition of the trails and passes was unsuited for pack animals. Nevertheless, the salt trade continued because the Himalayan highlands offered limited scope for productive agriculture and animal husbandry and demands for the salt were high. Passang Sherpa describes the situation as:

> The Trans-Himalayan salt trade declined in early 1960 because of
> competition from Indian salt trade continued with the Chinese
> takeover in Tibet networks. The cross-border trade across the Nangpa
> La has resumed, but salt is no longer traded. These days the trade
> goods include manufactured goods and food items from china, along
> with a limited supply of the traditional produce of Tibet. These
> products are mostly sold for cash and few Nepalese products are
> traded back to Tibet. (34)

In Solukhumbu, the decline of the salt trading economy coincided with the growth of international tourism and maintaining, providing new opportunities at which the Sherpa excelled. Sherpa are less known for their craftsmanship, although earlier generations made most of their own clothes and household utensils and built their own houses. And even today Sherpa carpenters-shingzo and masons-zowa are sought after across the mountain region for the high quality of their craftsmanship. An improving economy is also creating new demand and opportunities for painters, khapa, ensuring that their traditional skills live on. The traditional weavers, thaama and tailors, chhempa, however, are disappearing with the globalization of international trade and tourism and the infiltration of factory, made goods from all over the world, these local sills are no longer in sufficient demand as Sherpa choose imported products that are exotic and fashionable. Therefore, the Sherpas are one of the backward ethic tribes and indigenous people of Nepal.

The great political revolution of 1989 brought different changes in the political as well as religious atmosphere of Nepal. The Sherpa also as together have been into different political parties. As a result, there is loss in their tribal feeling among themselves. Pasang Sherpa analyzes the situation as:

After uniting the Pradesh into one kingdom, king Prithivi Narayan

Shah announced the Sherpa people as the local administrator in their

society. They had great power in the society until the 'Land Reform

2021'. The chief of the Sherpa society was called 'Pradhan', but after

the political reformation and the development of power of 'Pradhan'

decreased, otherwise even the higher castes Brahim, Chhetri etc. had

to go to receive 'Tika', blessings from the 'Pradhan' in Dashain.

However, the Sherpa people are still active in different fields in their

society. (37)

Sherpa religion is characterized by a complex set of beliefs, values and associated practices

and symbolism with roots in Tibetan Buddhism. Many of these beliefs and practices are

shared with other Himalayan regions, especially Hinduism and Bon.

Sherpa traditionally belong to the Nyingma School founded by Guru Rinpoche, lay

people in particular respect of all Buddhists schools. This is because the goal of all Buddhism

is to achieve happiness and an honorable and virtuous existence during their lifetime, in order

to improve future liver though rebirth in higher realms. Deep understanding of such

principles as the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path and sincere practice of the Buddhist

moral code of conduct are important ways to this end. The practice of Buddhism thus

promoter non-violence (ahimsa) and compassion, and not only increases our opportunity to

improve our own future liver but also makes this world a more peaceful and harmonious

place. Furer Haimendorf analyzes:

The eight lucky symbol of Buddhism are interpreted in different ways

to uphold religious beliefs and values. Similarly, the Sherpa people

use a cyclic seven days of the week named after different stars

including the sum and the moon which is common to many other

cultures. However, the 12 years cycle (lorta) which combines with

five elements (Kham) making it a 60 year cycle is unique to

Buddhism. The seven days of the week, the lunar months and twelve

animal years are extensively used for astrological calculations,

divination and other traditional practices. (14)

These concepts and practices influence people's behavior and action and affect their spiritual

and material well-being in both positive and negative ways.

Since, the statement of King Prithvi Narayan Shah "Nepal is a garden of four castes

and thirty six sub castes", there is a religious harmony. Sherpa also celebrate Indian festivals

like Dashain, Tihar, Maghe Sankranti etc. although they are not Hindus by religion

(Buddhist). In this democratic nation, there is social integration and religious harmony. In

such a condition, Nepali in becoming a dominant language among all, but other minority

native languages are facing a less in their identity including the Sherpa people.

By analyzing socio-linguistic aspect of Sherpa language of Solukhumbu district, this

study has been divided into three chapters. All the chapters concentrate on how language is

being social aspects in the study area. The first chapter presents the general introduction of

this research including the background to the present study, views of the critics on the author,

and his writing and an introductory outline of the present research. It gives us a bird's-eye

view of the entire thesis. A theoretical guideline of the analysis has been mentioned in

second chapter. In the same way, identity through language has been mentioned in the third

chapter.

II Socio-Linguistic Profile and Sociolinguistic Survey of the Sherpa Language

2.1 Sociolinguistic Analysis (Sherpa Language)

Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Mary Louise Pratt define Sociolinguistics and argues, "It is concerned with language in social and cultural context, especially how people with different social identities such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, class) speak and how their speech changes in different situations" (231). Some of the issues addressed are how features of dialects cluster together to form personal styles of speech. It focuses on discourse analysis on language use in texts and contexts from a wide array of sites in everyday life, ranging, for example, from informal conversations. The issues addressed are how texts build cohesion and coherence. Elizabeth Closs Traugott, and Mary Louise Pratt further argue:

> Sociolinguistic survey is the descriptive study of the effect of any
> and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations,
> and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of
> language use on society. Sociolinguistics differs from sociology
> and language in that the focus of sociology of language is the
> effect of language on the society, while sociolinguistics focuses on
> the society's effect on language. Sociolinguistics overlaps to a
> considerable degree with pragmatics. (345)

The social aspects of language were in the modern sense first studied by Indian and Japanese linguists in the 1930s, and also by Louis Gauchat in Switzerland in the early 1900s, but none received much attention in the West until much later. The study of the

social motivation of language change, on the other hand, has its foundation in the wave model of the late 19th century. Peter Trudgill says:

> William Labov is often regarded as the founder of the study of sociolinguistics. He is especially noted for introducing the quantitative study of language variation and change, making the sociology of language into a scientific discipline. Also, sociolinguistics can study a gradual transition of individual values of a word in the context its semantics which occur in some ethnic, cultural or social groups. For example, Russian linguist A.V. Altyntsev studied the semantics of the word love. He was able to make up a gradation of meanings of this word (scale of gradients) and established that the concept of love is a gradual transition of individual values, where a reference point raises the profile vector. (44)

Sociolinguistics aims to study the effects of language use within and upon societies and the reciprocal effects of social organization and social contexts on language use. In contemporary theoretical perspectives, sociolinguists view language and society as being *mutually constitutive*: each influences the other in ways that are inseparable and complex. Language is imbued with and carries social, cultural, and personal meaning. Through the use of linguistic markers, speakers symbolically define self and society. Simply put, language is not merely content; rather, it is something that we *do*, and it affects how we act and interact as social beings in the world. Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Mary Louise Pratt define:

sociolinguistics within the discipline of linguistics; he narrates

sociolinguistics as a diverse field of study that emerged out of

earlier traditions in historical linguistics, dialect geography, and the

study of bilingualism and multilingualism. Ferdinand de Saussure

developed a theory of semiotics and structuralism that influenced

the course of modern linguistic theory and modern sociolinguistic

thought. He asserts the arbitrary nature of the sign that is attached to

the signified as well as the significance of considering how time and

geographical diversity affect linguistic change. (346)

A primary aim of sociolinguistics is to consider language variation and change in relation

with social factors and effects. A foundational text is Weinreich, Labov, & Herzog

indicate, ". . . Which puts forward the concept of structured heterogeneity that motivates

variationist sociolinguists? The authors challenge prior linguistic theories that had rested

on assumptions of homogeneity. Instead, they propose that a reasonable account of

change will depend upon the possibility of describing orderly differentiation within

language" (151). The relationship between social and stylistic factors and language

variation has been a long-standing focus of sociolinguistic research. In one strand of

research, scholars represent race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and age as social

variables in statistical models that investigate correlations with linguistic variables.

Another strand seeks to investigate, often by incorporating qualitative methods, how

gender, race/ethnicity, social class, and similar factors are locally co-constructed in

interaction. Many such studies also overlap in their topics, modes of analysis and

interpretation, and findings.

Sociolinguists have taken different approaches to the study of style. Models grounded in social psychology tend to emphasize social goals and relationships as motivating factors in speech accommodation. Language in relation to race, ethnicity, and culture is a complex topic, as Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Mary Louise Pratt states, "Sociolinguistic aspects of the language focus on ethnicity and racial identity" (345). Applied sociolinguistics is a broad concept that has typically been used to describe ways in which sociolinguists have interacted with various publics on issues of language-related concern. Some of these areas include education, the law, health, and the media, where language is often a key mechanism that works, in interaction with other social factors, to help or hinder culturally and linguistically diverse speakers' access to the rights and privileges afforded by these social institutions. The engagement that many sociolinguists have fostered has led to some theorizing about models and best practices, particularly with respect to ethical considerations, for future scholars to follow when seeking to interact with those outside of academia. The proportions of grammatical sentences vary with class backgrounds and styles. Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Mary Louise Pratt state:

> The highest percentages of well-formed sentences are found in casual speech, and working class speakers use more well-formed sentences than middle class speakers .the widespread myth that most speech is ungrammatical is no doubt based up on tapes made at learned conferences, where we obtain the maximum numbers of irreducibly ungrammatical sequences. (652)

Above lines show the socio linguistic aspect that is related to speaker's culture and myth. In the same lines they elaborates, "the verbal deprivation theory holds that this will lead

to a whole chain of success in school , and that the child will be drawn away from the vernacular culture into the middle - class world. Undoubtedly, this will happen with a few isolated individuals, just as it happens for a few children in every school system today" (660). Verbal expression is one of the most important aspects of the socio linguistic that related the school system of ethnic community. In the context of Sherpa language such types of expression is also relevant, Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Mary Louise Pratt project as, "that educational psychology should be strongly influenced by a theory so false to the facts of language is unfortunate ; but that children should be the victims of this ignorance is intolerable. It may seem that the fallacies of the verbal deprivation theory are so obvious that they are hardly worth exposing" (668). It shows that socio-linguistic aspects of Sherpa language are very much related the idea of Trudgill.

A sociolinguistic profile the study of relationship between language and its speaker, Trudgill provides a good summary some aspect of its coverage:

> Whenever we speak, we cannot avoid giving our listeners clues
> about our origins and the sort of person we are. Our accent and our
> speech generally show where we come from and what sort of
> background we have. We may even give some indication of
> certain of our ideas and attitudes and all of this information can be
> used by the people we are speaking with to help them formulate an
> opinion about us. (3)

Sociolinguistic profile of particular language justifies the relation between language and communities. The Sherpa language is also tried to justify the relation particular language communities. It is spoken around eastern mountain region of Nepal as

a mother tongue. Dor Bahadur Bista forms, "The speaker lived in the Eastern Himalayan region of Nepal" (22).

Sherpa Language in Solukhumbu

Since, Nepali is our National and Official language of Nepal. It is dominant all over our country, but in our Solukhumbu, the very core of Sherpa language is strong enough to influence other minority languages. Those found within the locality of Solukhumbu is mentioned here. The neighboring minority languages are Rai, Tamang, Magar etc. all these speak Sherpa language more than their mother tongue. The speakers of different language groups share the same linguistic repertoire.

Nepali being the dominant language in Nepal, it has an influential role in the present linguistic environment of Sherpa. Since, Nepali language is only the medium of instruction in education and the contact with the outsiders as a langua – Franca, many minority languages are gradually being exposed to Nepali language. This is their compulsion. In fact, Sherpas have already begun to borrow many Nepali words into their language to a great extent. Some of the borrowed words from Nepali to Sherpa are presented in appendix A.

2.1.2 Sociolinguistic Variation and Grammar of the Sherpa Language

Labov argues ". . . speaker focus on regional distinctions, sometime intermixed with social distinction" (313). The language differences due to different geographic origin of individual speakers are probably the most obvious instances of sociolinguistic variation. Although languages tend to assimilate at a faster pace in these days of mass

media, long distance communication, National language policy and regular contact tried to reduce the variation.

Human languages usually provide a speaker with more than one-way of expressing the same information to choose an appropriate form of expression is part of linguistic competence. This choice will depend on relation between speaker and addressee, the circumstances of the conversation as well as the intended, effect which also to a considerable degree on the social background of each speaker.

The Sherpa language is affected by local language; however, it differs more or less from the local language and their dialects. There are contracts between the speaker of many ethnic communities, for instance, Tamang, Newar, Gurung, Magar etc.

2.1.3 Sherpa Phonology

Constant phonemes and their distribution, "The selection and organization of sounds in a particular language constituted the phonology of that language" Balasubramian (27). The number of alphabets of Sherpa language has been adopted from Roman and Devanagari script. That helps to promote and preserve Sherpa language and cultural identity.

Though Sherpa Gelu, Sherpa – English – Nepali Dictionary has acknowledged that there are 31 consonants in Sherpa language. All the words consonants can occur in initial and middle position in words. But all the voiceless aspirated high tones K^h, t^t, p^h, tsh, h, r^h, l^h cannot occur in the word final positions. Similarly, all the affricatives /ts, tsh, ts, tsh, dz, dzi,/. The fricatives / ts, hli/ the palatal nasal/ / and the glides /w/ and /j/ do not occur in syllabic coda positions which can be shown below.

Manner of Articulation	Bilabial	Dental	Alveolar	Post Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Retroflex
Stop	P P^h b	t t^{h}d				k k^h g		t t^h d
Affricative			tsts^{h}dz	tst^{s}h dz				
Nasal	M		n					
Thrill			sh r					
Fricative			s s				H	
Approximate	W				j			
Lateral			l^h l					

(Source: Sherpa – English – Nepali Dictionary 2010)

2.1.4 Morphology of Sherpa Language

2.1.4.1 Noun

The noun phrase in Sherpa language consists of an obligatory noun/pronoun. It many also have one each of an optional determiner, case marker, numeral, classifier, number marker etc. the ordering of elements in the NP is relatively fixed. The only element of an NP which may precede the head noun is a determiner. As we know numerals, case marker, emphatic maker, follow the head noun.

Example: 1

/di/	/pa.la /	/gor.ta/	/t ik/	/ti/
'determiner'	'head'	'numerical'	'cardinal number'	'Emphatic marker'
'This one cow'				

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

There are different types of nouns in Sherpa lexical nouns. That may be mono morphemic or compound. Mono morphemic nouns are typical but compounds are

common in Sherpa language. The mono morphemic nouns and the compound nouns that have lexical meaning are given below.

Example: 2

/tsa/	/pu/	/tsapu/
'Bird'	'Hair/fur'	'Feather '

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.1.1Number

Morphologically Sherpa is an inflectional language. Inflectional and derivations are common in Sherpa, word formation. The common countable nouns are pluralized by suffixation [tiwa] is Sherpa.

Example: 3

/mi/ /mi.tiwa/

'Man' 'man-plural'

'man' 'men'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

On the basis of above phonological, grammatical, morphological examples and analysis of the language, it can be conclude that Sherpa is one of the languages of Tibeto-Burman language family that has its own separate identity and features of its own, rather than a dialect of any other languages. It has also good potentials to develop in future if effective measures are taken to preserve and develop the language by Sherpa people with external support.

2.1.4.2 Word Categories /Classes

Sherpa words can be classified into different phrasal and word classes based on semantic, structural and functional properties of the words, or the string of the words. Sherpa words can be broadly classified into open and close classes. Conjunction determiner, pronoun, preposition, classifier, particles, come under close classes. Whereas noun, verb, adjective, adverb comes under open class.

2.1.4.3 Conjunction

Sherpa language has close class generally two types of conjunction named simple and complex which is given below.

Example: 4

Conjunction	Transcription	Meaning
	/ta /	'and'
	/ja .na/	'or'
	/si.ra /	'but'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.4 Negative Marker

In Sherpa language, negative forms of verbs, some adjectives and adverbs are marked by the morpheme /ma/ which is usually prefixed or in few cases it is suffixed to the head word to be negativized. The form of the negative markers in Sherpa depend upon the person of the subject, tense and aspect, volitionally and modality etc. for instance if the main verbs has low tone (u) vowel the negative morpheme will also have a low tone high back vowel (u) .

Example: 5

/ma/	/ma.sa/	will not eat.
/mo/	/mo.do/	will not go.
/me/	/me.ter/	will not give.
/mu/	/mu.tʰu /	will not drink.
/mi/	/mi.ki/	will not do.

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.4 Post Position

Sherpa language is a post position. There are many post positions, though they make a close class and most of them class suffix to noun.

Example: 6

Post position	Transcription	Meaning
	kʰa.la	'on'
	phi.la	'outside'
	la	'to' or 'at'
	na .la	'inside'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.6 Pronoun

There are different types of pronoun in Sherpa language such as demonstrative, personal, interrogative and relative but the personal pronouns are very few as follows:

Example: 7

Forms of Personal Pronoun

Person	Aspect	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
		Ergative		Dative		Genitive	
First	Imperfective	ngai i	ngirang we	ngala me	nga us	nge my	ngire our
First	Perfective	ngei i	Ngire We	ngala me	nga us	nge my	ngire our
Second	Imperfectiv	kyorang you	khyirang you	khyorangla you	khyirangla you	khyore your	khyire your
Second	Perfective	khyore you	Khyire You	khyorangla you	khyirangla you	khyore your	khyire your
Third	Imperfective	khong he/she	Khongtiwa they	Khongla him/her	khongtiwala them	khongki his/her	khongtiwi their
Third	Perfective	khongki he/she	Khongtiwi They	Khongla him/her	khongtiwala them	khongki his/her	khongtiwi their

		ti it	Tiwa They	Tila it	tiwala them	tiki its	tiwi its
Third Inanimate	Imperfective						
	Perfective	tiki it	Tiwi They	Tila It	tiwala them	tiki its	tiwi their
Third Inanimate Proximal	Imperfective	di it	Diwa They	Dila it	diwala them	diki its	diwi their
	Perfective	diki it	Diwi They	Dila it	diwala them	diki its	diwi their

(Source: Sherpa - English - Nepali Dictionary 2010)

2.1.4.7 Adverb

Most of the adverbs of manner are derived from the qualitative adjective by adding suffix/ Kjane/. Below is some examples that include only the absolute or the root adverb and also degree of words. Like, /ma / and /terisita / are used to show the comparative and superlative forms of adverbs respectively.

Example: 8

Adjective	Adverb		
	Root verb	Comparative	Superlative
/lemu/	/lemu-kjane/	/ma -lemu-kjane/	/terisita - lemukjane/
Good	Nicely	Nicely	Nicely

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.8 Adjective

Main verbs function as participle in English or many other languages. So is in Sherpa language too. Some qualitative adjective have three different forms such as, absolute, comparative, and superlative in Sherpa language too. There is no proper morph to represent these particular morphemes. But, the quantifier words such as /ma / and /ma o/ or /terisita / that is used to show the relative concept of comparative and superlative as an alternative. This lexicon contains only the absolute form of adjective in the following

Example: 9

Absolute	**Comparative 1**	**Comparative 2**	**Superlative**
/t an.bu/	/t an.ga/	/t an.se/	/t an o/
Clever	clever	clever	clever
Clever	clever	clever	cleverest

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.9 Verb

As we have read, there are mainly two types of verbs i.e. auxiliary and main verb. The auxiliary verb also functions as copula that is not inflected for persons and number. They are limited and fixed. But, the main verb is open and not longer list of such verbs.

As in Sherpa language there are two types of verbs. They are simple and compound. Simple verbs are formed from a simple root of vc, cv or cvc.

Example: 10

Vc	Cv	Cvc
/u'–p/	/dzo-p/	/pu' -gup/
'Put in custody'	'Make'	'cut', 'chop'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.9.1 Compound Verb

Compound verbs are formed by combining noun or adjective with a verb.

Example: 11

Combining With Noun

Noun	Verb	Verb
/rok-rum/	/kji-rup/	/rok-ram, kji-rup/

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

Example: 12

Combining With Adjective

Adjective	Verb	Verb
/t a .bu/	/kji.rup/	/t a .bu, kji.rup/
'clever'	'to be'	'to be careful '

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

The above example lexically gives different meanings.

2.1.4.9.2 Causatives

In Sherpa language causatives are marked by suffix /t i/ or /dzi/ that depend on the intention of the verb. The suffix is added to the root to form the main verb and it also can be followed by other inflectional suffixes.

Example: 13

Root form	Causative marker	Infinitive marker	Infinitive form	Meaning
/so/	/t i/	/tup/	/so.tsitup/	made to dig
/so/	/dzi/	/tup/	/so.dzitup/	Make to dig

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

As the causatives are inflected from of the root verb, they are not supposed to as lexemes. So, they are not included in the lexicon.

2.1.4.9.3 Tense and Aspect

Sherpa language has two tenses basically they are past and not past (Present / future). But, there is distinct morphological tense marker in Sherpa language. The concept of tense is mainly shown by temporal, adverbs. Such as, today, tomorrow, yesterday etc. These evidential markers are very important to show the tense and aspect in Sherpa language. So in order to show in the past tense evidential marker [i] and [su] or [ok] are used to show the time adverbials.

Example: 14

Present /Future		Past		
1st Person	2nd person	1st person	2nd person	3rdperson
/dzewi/	/dzewi/	/dzo-ji/	/dzo-sun/	/ dzo-nok/
'make-Npast'	'make-Npast'	'make-past'	'make-past'	'make-past/
'make'	'make'	'made'	'made'	'made'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

Perfective and Imperfective are the two aspects in Sherpa verb conjugation and they are more distinct morphologically. The continuous marker /in/ and perfective marker /sin/ is used to with the auxiliary verbs [we]/[nok] to show continuous and perfective aspects respectively.

Example: 15

Imperfective	Perfective
/sain.we\	/so. Sin. nok/
eat, imperfective	Eat perfective
'is eating'	'have eaten'
/kye.in.we/	/kye.sin.nok/
do imperfective	do perfective
'is doing '	'have done'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

Sherpa language has perfective and imperfective aspects and all the main verbs of perfective are formed by adding suffix (u) or (up) to the root of the verb.

Example: 16

Present	Root	Adjective
[ti.kup]	[ti]	[ti.kup]
'to write'	'write'	'written'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.1.4.9.4 Honorific

Sherpa language is an interesting language from sociolinguistic perspectives, as in other Asian languages such as Nepali, Japanese, Korean and Chinese. Sherpa's have developed an italic honorific register that make it possible to express social relations through the linguistic usage. Sherpa verbs receive honorific forms based on the status of its subjects and objects.

Example: 17

Non Honorific	Honorific

 Non Honorific   Honorific

 /dop/   /pheup/

 'to go'   'to go'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

Also many of Sherpa nouns do have both honorific and non-honorific forms.

Example: 18

Non Honorific	Honorific
/lakpa/	/t hak/
'hand'	'hand'

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

2.2 A Sociolinguistic Survey

This survey is concentrated in Sherpa community of Solukhumbu district. The survey is related to the particular communities or society. The main source of data collection was field work on the related communities. This sociolinguistic survey was prepared by utilizing different techniques, word lists, data collection of language and administering sociolinguistic questionnaires.

This section presents the nature and source of data collection, sociolinguistic questionnaire, data presentation, data analysis result and the evaluation of language maintenance and shift.

2.2.1 Nature and Source of Data Collection

Rada Rodajicic observes," Data bases on people's situation is scientifically imprecise and will never give you more than rather cloudy view of what is really going on" (184). The data collected for the present survey where both oral and written in nature. The data were collected from the Sherpa community Solukhumbu district. In the process of data collection I have given emphasis on age group, sex, educational status economic level etc.

The act of data collection for this survey work was performed both in oral and written nature. The data were collected from the Sherpa communities of the Eastern part of Nepal. They were especially collected from Solukhumbu region. The survey included children, teenager and adult where nether tongue is Sherpa. The data were collected from people of different ages, professions, educational levels and sexes. The collected data consisted of language use and language attitude, educational level bilingualism, word list and socio-economic factors of community.

2.2.2 Method of Data Collection

Methodology used to support the research work such as word list, presentation of data and interview questionnaires, all were employed in order to see whether the Sherpa language is fully independent or dialect of any other language.

2.2.3 Word Lists

Survey the research work word list of two hundred words (see appendix A) was collected from the survey areas. Especially the word lists were collected from those adult who are the long term residents of the areas but children were also consulted for

the word collection. Some related oral or whiten literature and recorded shopping language were also taken as the helping researcher to some content. The words elicited were a collection of the most general words but not specific. In case of variants and synonyms each word was discussed and a discussion was made as to which form to include in the word list.

The elicited word lists were of the different parts of speech: noun, pronoun adjective, adverb, verb and preposition. About the verbs two forms were elicited. One of them was the third person masculine. E.g. (he drank) and the second form was second person singular informal imperative (e.g. you go). In case of pronouns are first perform the second person and the third person were elicited; fort the fourth person plural inclusive pronoun, a simple sentence was used.

The word list elicited for the first time from a set of nature speakers were checked again with a second set of speakers. The word lists were compared to find out what extent the language spoken in the two areas was different phonemically. In this regards, Pier Paolo and Giglioli explains, "Sociolinguistic choices may conform the hearer about the speaker's social and regional origin as well as about the nature of the social situation at hard, about stifle in the topic of the conservation so forth". (16)

2.2.4 Socio–Linguistic Questionnaire

Another important method applied in the survey was a socio-linguistic questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared so usefully. That they could cover different aspects of language use and attitude, pattern of contact, travel language opinions, bilingualism and so on. The questionnaires were administered both in oral and well as written form. The questionnaires were asked in Nepali and also in Sherpa language. After

all observation was performed to compare questionnaire responses will the people's actual used of their language and their response to natural situations in daily questionnaire format.

2.2.5 Data Presentation

Data presentation includes data, which were collected from the survey work. The data were founded on the language use, language attitude and word lists for the language productive and other distinctive features.

2.2.5.1 Reported Language Use Data

Data were collected from two VDC, Solu and Khumbu. The language uses were mainly administered to identity the language situation of their selected areas. Some of the most important and relevant questionnaires dealt more specifically with the topics were : what language the respondents use with their family members and in different situations in their community like with friends and relatives, religious instruction, at the local market place, at work for singing and discussing and with outsiders as well. Synopses of the respondents to these situations are presented below the table.

Table 1: Summary of the Written Questionnaires on Language use

Situations	language spoken		
	Sherpa	Nepali	Others
Grand parents?			×
Parents?			×
Wife-husband?			×
Brother-Sister?			×
Children?			×
At local market?			×
Grandson–granddaughter?			×
At work?			×
Friends and relatives?			×
Religious instruction ad ceremonies singing?			×
Jokes and stories?			×
Government, official, unknown people?	×		×
Getting a job?			×
Political moral discussion?			×

(Source: Field survey, 2016)

2.2.5.2. Language Attitude Data

The chief focus of the section is to discuss on the attitude of the Sherpa speakers towards their own language and other language in their community. So for as language attitude is concerned, it is very difficult to measure ever though its measurement is based on the theoretical stand points. The mentalist and the behaviorist positions "Fishman and Agheyisi" (138). "According to the mentalist concept, attitudes are a mental and neutral state of readiness. They can be inferred form a subject's introspection. While the behaviorists regard attitude as a dependent variable and it can be determined statistically by observe many actual behavior in social situations." Dittmar, (81)

Following table present the analysis of the most important written questionnaires and the speaker's response.

Table 2: Should the Sherpa Children be Taught Sherpa language?

Age group	No. of respondents	Yes	No
10-20	20	15	5
20-30	20	14	6
30-40	20	16	4
40-50	20	13	7
50-above	20	17	3
Total	100	75	25

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

The table 2 shows that the respondent of the age group 50- has the highest number of supporting "Sherpa language should be taught to Sherpa children." And the age group '40-50' has comparatively, the lowest number of positive respondents to the question, "should Sherpa children be taught Sherpa language?" However, the number of 13 positive respondents out of 20 is substantial that goes in favor of the mother tongue education. It is therefore conclude that most Sherpa of different ages prefer Sherpa language to be taught to their children.

Table 3: What language should you use at home?

Age group	No. of respondents	Sherpa	Nepali
10-20	20	16	4
20-30	20	18	2
30-40	20	18	2
40-50	20	17	3
50-above	20	20	-
Total	100	89	11

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

In table 3 Regarding the question, "What language should you used at home?" the respondents of the age-group '50-'has the highest number to support Sherpa language to be used at home. According to the table, out of 100 respondents 89 choose Sherpa language to be spoken at home. Most people are very positive toward their native tongue.

Table 4: Should all people learn Nepali also?

Age group	No. of respondents	Yes	No
10-20	20	17	3
20-30	20	18	2
30-40	20	16	4
40-50	20	18	2
50-above	20	15	5
Total	100	84	16

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

According to table 4, the question "Should all people learn Nepali also?" has been responded highly positively. The respondents of the age group "20-30" and "40-50" have

the highest number of preferring Nepali language as well. And the respondents belonging to the age-group '50-' are less interested in Nepali in comparison with other age-group respondents. But out of 20, the number of 15 positive respondents toward Nepali in addition to other native language most of them fee; the need of Nepali language as the national language of Nepal.

Table 5: What language do you like most?

Age group	No. of respondents	Sherpa	Nepali
10-20	20	18	2
20-30	20	18	2
30-40	20	17	3
40-50	20	16	4
50-above	20	20	-
Total	100	89	11

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

For the question, "what language do you like most?" all respondents belonging to the age-group '50-' said that they liked Sherpa language most other age-group respondents also should their preference to Sherpa language. This may be due to the Sherpa language being their mother tongue. So, the above table shows that Sherpa people are still loyal toward their native language. Eighty nine out of hundred respondents choose Sherpa language as their favorite one.

Table 6: Is it good for you or your children to marry a person who can speak Nepali, but not Sherpa language?

Age group	No. of respondents	Good	Bad
10-20	20	5	15
20-30	20	5	15
30-40	20	4	16
40-50	20	5	15
50-above	20	-	20
Total	100	19	81

(Source: Field Survey, 2016)

The question about the marriage with other language speakers was rejected highly. All the 20 respondent belonging to the age-group '50-' were completely against the inter-caste marriage. Some respondent of the lower age group were highly interested in it. The above table shows that out of hundred, 81 respondents are against the inter-caste marriage and 19 people are in favor of it. None over fifty years old like inter-caste marriage.

However, the inter-caste marriage has been accepted in the form of detritions of traditional marriage.

There are some other questions asked aiming to know the attitude of the Sherpa speaker toward their own and other languages. Though the numbers of respondents are variable on their views, most of them show positive response toward their own language and also toward the national language Nepali. The positive attitude toward their native language would support the development of the language. Sherpa is good and the people

are found fit. Obey use it in public and private affairs and are enthusiastic about its development.

2.2.6 Data Analysis and Result

Sherpa people use their language for various purposes such as, talking with members of family, jokes, stories, religious instructions at home and even political discussion.

Despite the positive and hopeful language attitude data, it is seen that "most often the individual speakers are bilingual precisely because community needs and pressure" Blair (52). The degree of speakers' exposure to the second language is particular co-related with such factors is an education. "The number of years of formal education is the single greatest determinant Nepali proficiency." Webster (81). Other factors are occupation, military service, age, sex, and frequency of contact with mother tongue speakers of the second language and so forth. Blair illustrates the relationship between the factors as follows:
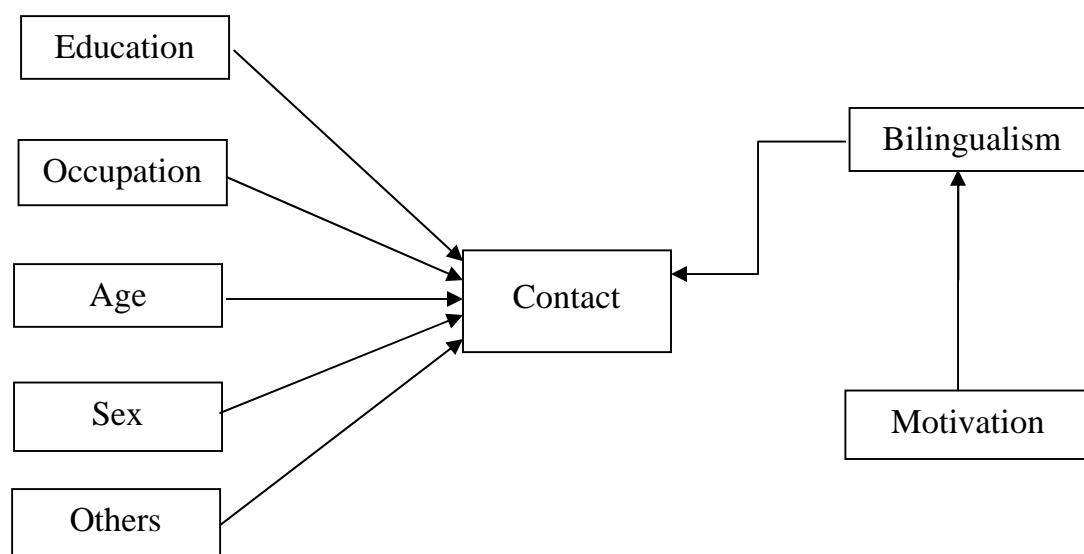
(Blair 53)

The responses to the sociolinguistic questionnaires show that both the younger and older generation have language and culture as their identity. People who are loyal to the language and cultural identity are sad in the degradation of them. They want their language to be taught at schools for children. The ultimate wish of the speakers is that language must be preserved and promoted at any cost for the succeeding generations. All the respondents were quite positive toward the questions:

Will you go to study where Sherpa language also is taught? And if there are two schools for children, one is in the Sherpa medium and the other is in Nepali in which school you will send your children?

All of the respondents were found equally loyal to the Nepali language due to the fact, that it is the national and officially language while it is the most influential all over the country, Nepal and many people understand it. Though most of the respondents agreed with the view that Nepali language should be learnt by all, they do not prefer marrying a person out of their own language community or mentioned earlier in Chapter economic sociolinguistic questionnaire response.

"Do you have any written literature if they are available?" "Everyone who was asked the question remarked enthusiastically, "Yes of course, we do. We are pleased toward them if there are any in our language". Many people said it is good they have some writings because it will maintain the culture and language. But for this they face two problems, On the one hand, many adults are illiterate within the community and their literature is unwritten for ages. On the other hand, only a few books, booklets and dictionaries are available and rest is oral literature.

Another important purpose of this study has been to know about the language use and attitude, bilingualism, patterns of travels and contact, language, opinions and others. The questionnaires, word list, data, recorded text results highlight that Sherpa is a separate and unique language, but not a dialect of any other languages. It has 75% cognation with another Tibetan language. This remark has also been strengthened each by the responses to the questionnaires by the speakers.

The responses to the linguistic questionnaires have revealed that the speakers of different ethnic communities have contact with other. They are Newar, Gurung, Rai, Magar etc. mostly they have contact was their people but they do not have inter-marriage relationship. They visit each other's communities, for some social and economic purposes. They have mutual relationship among each other's sorrow and happiness. Blair explains, "It has recommended family, friendship and neighborhood, school, work, government and religion. On the other hand, Herman emphasizes perception of situation. He mentions that if a person is oriented toward personal needs, his/her language choices differ from what is might be if needs were socially oriented" (108-9).

In fact, language use mainly depends on domain, topics and situations. This is always the characteristic of bilingual and multilingual societies. On the Sherpa community too, literate, educated and few other choose, other languages as their necessities but they use their own mother tongue in private domain for instance, family, which various castes at the local market etc. Though no any formal bilingual testing was made among the Sherpa speakers, some general information on the subject was revealed through the use of questionnaires, interviews, face to face interaction and observation. They were found to have good knowledge in more than one by for social communication. Toba elaborates, "Although education in our country has made much progress, those with a first language other than

Nepali suffered a serious disadvantage. While it is true that Nepali is understood all over the country it is also true that such understanding is often superficial." (14)

For the present survey no formal bilingual testing was done among the Sherpa speakers. However, some general information on this subject was attained through the use of questionnaires, interviews and observation. Social communication networks force them to acquire more than one language. NGOs programme compel Sherpa to use Nepali/English language. Most of the adult Sherpas can easily understand Nepali language however, they are extra curious about their language.

Although English is taught at school level in these areas of various ethnic language speakers, there are only a small number of people who can speak broken English to communicate certain information.

2.2.7 Language Maintenance and Language Shift

The language shifts is more rapid than the language maintenance. There may come a time when the Sherpa have answered. "We cannot speak Sherpa, we forget. The tendency of switching over to Nepali is based on following instances of Fisherman refers,

a. The vernacularization of Nepali though governmental educational and cultural activities.

b. The adoption of English, Sanskrit and Nepali as languages of elite for wider communication throughout the country.

c. The growing displacement of imported language of wider communication and the parallel vernacularization of governmental technical, educational and cultural efforts in the country. (299)

As a result, not only the verbal repertoires of communities and networks that experience the greatest socio-cultural change, the most likely to be alerted. Fisherman observes, "but the repertoires who gain most in economic, political or other socio-cultural status are most likely to be adopted or copied by others who see opportunities. For desirable changes in their own status by so doing" (301).

Because of these inevitable factors a possible language loss cannot be ruled out. Special provisions by way of promotional schemes are shown to be provide in order to encourage literary activity, translations and publications on the post of the government because the situations that has prevailed in the country since. Ran regime is one of a single language policy where the non-Nepali speakers have been at disadvantage in education, employment, political affair etc.

The above factors are strong and inevitable. Any language has its own important place into the linguistic mosaic of a country. Therefore, effective efforts are to make to promote and preserve a language. A language can develop and be richer when it is supported by creative community and the continuous use or the language. For this work we should not only want for the government, but also we should be interested, active ourselves in the development of our languages. Otherwise, we can certainly be accused of murdering our innocent mother tongues. In fact, no society desires its languages and culture to be dead. And the government also should formulate and effective language policy to be provided in order to encourage literary activity, translations and publications. Kansakar highlights, "The situation that has prevailed in the country since the Rana-Regime is one of a single language policy where the non-Nepali speakers have been at a disadvantage in education, employment and other social benefits" (33). It shows that non- Nepali speakers like Sherpa faced problems in education system in Nepal.

III Identity through Language

This short survey research also finds out the present situation of the Sherpa language. Sherpa language seems vital in terms of use, language attitude and necessity. Sherpa's like it, use it in all domains where it is understood and not many speakers are yet adequately bilingual in Nepali. This study also forecasts the point that unless we take necessary steps to conserve this endangered language, it will face an irreparable loss of linguistic identity in the near future. All the respondents remarked that the language is on the verge of losing its identity and it must be preserved since it is a mark of ethnic identity.

This study especially aims to find the realities regarding the Sherpa language. All the responses of the speaker reveal the clear status of the Sherpa people and their language. So, Sherpa language has its own strong identity in the linguistic configuration of Nepal. Though Sherpa have themselves been working hard in developing literature and other types of media, their efforts have not been adequate. Therefore, the language is on the open platform waiting for the continuous efforts to be developed from all sides like, government speakers, community level, linguistic etc.

The collection of words from the language communities was one of the achievements of this survey. This remarkable job was performed to focus on the regional variation in pronunciation, showing the uniqueness and richness of the language. From the study on the language there is no big difference between two key areas where the language is spoken, named Khumbu and Solu. The Sherpa's have their own distinctive features. In this way, the Sherpa language is uniquely separate having its own clear characteristics. As a language (See chapter 2) and some people are enthusiastically trying

to develop its own script as well. Though Devanagari script is being used in Sherpa literature and also it seems good enough to develop the language in different aspect, including the historical study of the language. However, Devanagari has been the obvious and a choice for many languages to teach a wider audience increase accessibility to literature and facilitate education so as to give a Sherpa's a stronger voice in the national life of the country.

The Sherpa's have their own unique ethnicity, culture, rites and rituals, household composition, resembling the whole community. The recorded text and folk songs also prove their facts. The positive responses to the socio-linguistic questionnaire draw the conclusion that the Sherpa is a separate language of Sherpa communities used in different domains of life in the family at the local markets, with relatives in religious instruction and within the various castes of Sherpa.

The people surveyed during this research work show overwhelming positive attitudes toward their language. They use Sherpa language both in public and private affairs. They are enthusiastic about development of the language as fact they prefer primary education in the mother tongue for their children.

Although some regional variations have been noticed in the Sherpa language due mainly to social and geographical factors, the differences is not significant. The speakers from different areas can easily understand each other without any problem. They think that they speak the same language regardless marriage, but they often travel to each other community according to their social needs there is contact with the speakers of different ethnic communities, mainly other Sherpa sub groups Newar, Magar, Limbu, Tamang, Gurung, Rai and Indo–Aryan family, like Nepali.

Solukhumbu; Khumbu is found less influenced by Nepali language then Solu which is closely in contact with the speakers of Nepali. Nevertheless, both the keys areas have greater similarity in lexical items. The variation between them is caused only by geographical distance. There are other factors affecting the differences, like lack of language, education, communication gap, social interaction with different types of community and so on. Though, the number if Sherpa language speakers is decreasing the language is shit being spoken influencing the other neighboring languages in the Mid-Eastern Hills and Himalayan region and it stimulates the linguists and non-linguists to do further research on it in the near future.

Though, the language is influenced by the dominate language especially Nepali, particularly in the style speech in different regions where the language is spoken, it has its own native lexicons, cognate forms pronunciation pattern, unique syntax and native words which are fundamentals of any independent language. From all these significant features, the Sherpa language is still healthy and vital. It also deserves a secured place of hope for the language to be developed and promoted. But it really requires the concerted efforts from all sides, the speakers, linguists and non-linguists as well.

Language and culture are the ornaments of a society or a country; they introduce our society to outsiders. But the life of a language like Sherpa depends on ethnic commitment social integration from within the community and research by linguists and language planners. On the basis of authentic data factual and minute observation, this study presents the languages back ground information and introductory analysis on the distinctive features of the language. The small scale socio-linguistic profile will help us to

draw informed conclusions about the language and dialectical variations of the Sherpa language at the local level in different regions.

Nepal is identified as a unique land of multicultural identities and ethnicity. The Nepalese uniqueness rests on their multiple mother tongues, rites and ritual, life patterns cultural and beliefs. Taking those facts into consideration, it is essential to preserve and promote the multicultural heritage, which we inherited from our forefathers from ancient time.

To preserve and develop the Sherpa language, government should provide primary education in the mother tongue for The Sherpa community. Literacy should be promised in the language by developing basic reading and teaching materials. Grammars, dictionaries and literature should be produced in Sherpa language. The news in the Sherpa language should be broadcasted on the radios, F.M. stations, and television. The use of the Sherpa language should be extended socially, culturally in mass media. Cultural exhibition should be held to other communities for the information of Sherpa.

Necessary steps should be taken for codification, purification, regularization, simplification, elaboration, implementation and evolution of the language. More comprehensive linguistic and sociolinguistic research should be undertaken on the Sherpa language. It is necessary to make new national language policy for the development of endangered language.

The above-mentioned measures can develop and standardize the Sherpa language in order to promote its use in social interaction, education, mass media and publications. If the democratic government has a consistent policy in language planning in Nepal for the development of endanger languages.

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Appendix - A

Sherpa Lexical/ Functional

Word lists

Sherpa in Roman	English Meaning
1. chhyu	water
2. shing	wood
3. me	fire
4. sa	earth
5. chya	iron
6. chyiwa	rat
7. lang	ox
8. tak	tiger
9. yo	rabbit
10. duk	dragon
11. dul	snake
12. ta	horse
13. luk	sheep
14. te	monkey
15. chya	bird
16. khyi	dog
17. phak	pig
18. langtuk	baby ox
19. tom	beer
20. meshi	buffalo
21. piu	calf
22. palang	cow
23. khashar	deer
24. chyipchyang	jackal
25. langbu	elephant
26. kur	bread
27. perachi	beans
28. gyar	millet
29. rhalma	peas
30. da	rice
31. kakshar	roughly grinded corn
32. ta	wheat
33. chyau	cock
34. gamdar	dove

35.	tha	eagle
36.	richyau	peasant
37.	puring	pigeon
38.	yoljyan	shawl
39.	kangshup	sucks
40.	tetung	tetung
41.	kaja	shoes
42.	kara	belt
43.	shamung	hat
44.	mali	ear ring
45.	gam	box
46.	komung	broom
47.	kai	cup
48.	tayak	fry pan
49.	shel	glass
50.	limin	key
51.	kowa	leather
52.	chakta	matches
53.	khap	needle
54.	haying	vessel
55.	lakam	stick
56.	ngati	pillow
57.	balip	butterfly
58.	yiprang	fly
59.	nama	bride
60.	makpa	bridegroom
61.	papa	father
62.	khyowa	husband
63.	puchyung	son
64.	pum	daughter
65.	ngotong	face
66.	aji	older sister
67.	theptok	finger
68.	namjyok	ear
69.	rha	hair
70.	tala	forehead
71.	chhyak	hand
72.	go	head
73.	kangpa	leg
74.	jyingba	neck

75. ngying	heart
76. naun	nose
77. chyelak	tongue
78. kyaldang	waist
79. gyama	intestine
80. kangpi theptok	toe
81. pungpa	shoulder
82. sa	teeth
83. makmi	army
84. chithong	appreciation
85. lyaka	duty
86. lumu	berry
87. marchi	chilly
88. gokpa	garlic
89. gaser	ginger
90. riki	potato
91. shamung	mushroom
92. ngarchya	sugar tea
93. chyik	one
94. ngyi	two
95. sum	three
96. jyi	four
97. nga	five
98. tuk	six
99. din	seven
100. gye	eight
101. gu	nine
102. chyuthamba	ten
103. chyuchyik	eleven
104. chyungyi	twelve
105. chyuksum	thirteen
106. chyupjyi	fourteen
107. chyenga	fifteen
108. chyutuk	sixteen
109. chyupdin	seventeen
110. chyapgya	eighteen
111. chyutku	nineteen
112. ngyichyu	twenty

Appendix B

Survey Questionnaires

(Ethno Linguistic Profile of the speaker)

1.   Name ☐

2.   Age ☐

3.   Profession ☐

4.   Education Level ☐

5.   What is your mother tongue? ☐

6.   What is your second language? ☐

7.   Where are you born? ☐

8.   Where your tribe/clan did come from? ☐

9.   When did they Come? ☐

10.   Why did they come? ☐

11.   Did other people also come here? ☐

a)   Who are they? ☐

b)   When did they come and why? ☐

12.   What language do you speak it home? ☐

13.   What do you call your language? ☐

14.   What do your neighbour call your language? ☐

15.   What language do you speak with a friends and relatives far village? ☐

16.   What language do you use for:

a)   Jokes ☐

b)   Stories ☐

c)   Political discussion ☐

d)   Speaking to women ☐

e)   Singing ☐

f)   Counting ☐

g)   Religious instruction at home ☐

h)   Taking to your slave ☐

17.   What language do you speak at the local market? ☐

18.   What language do you speak for getting job? ☐

19.   Do you switch or mix other language with your language? Why has it changed? ☐

20.   Do you think that your language has changed? ☐

21.   Do you speak the same of your grandfather/grandfather's speak? ☐

22.   Is there any social, political, factor responsible to change your language? ☐

23.   Can other tribes understand? ☐

24.   Which language is the best to write? Why? ☐

25.   Have you traveled to the place where your language is spoken differently? ☐

26.   In which school will you send your children if there are two schools, one is the Sherpa medium other is Nepali? ☐

27.   What should be the situation of language when Sherpa youth marry with other language speakers? ☐

28.   Should government think about Sherpa language? ☐

29.   Have you seen the book, magazines, article published in Sherpa? ☐

30.   In what language should your children taught at school? ☐

31.   Is it good/necessary to be a Sherpa speaking teacher for Sherpa students? ☐

32.   What will be the situation of Sherpa language in 10 years? ☐

33.   Which language do they use for following purpose:

        - Social activities ☐

        - Religious and cultural activities ☐

34.   Are there any religious book in Sherpa language? ☐

35.   Does language have its own script? ☐

36.   Is script essential for language development? ☐

37.   Are there any organizations for the language development? ☐

38.   Should radio/local F.M. station broadcast the news in your language? ☐

39.   Do political leaders use the language for public speech? ☐

40.   If a school established for Sherpa language teaching would you offer your help? ☐

41.   Do you have anything to say about Sherpa language? ☐