

Changes in language attitude through contact: A case study of Newar in Kathmandu valley

Bhim Lal Gautam

Tribhuvan University

This paper presents the result of a study based on the change in language attitude experienced by Newar speakers through contact with the sociolinguistic situation in Kathmandu, the multilingual capital city of Nepal. The research focuses on language contact situations in different domains viz. social, cultural, personal, and official as well as media related activities where the informants are asked to use different languages along with the use of their own mother tongue. The study is based on the questionnaire developed in 2014 during a research sojourn at the *Dynamique du Langage Laboratory* (March-May, 2014) during the ASLAN Fellowship (WP.4 Academic Training).

The data is collected during June-September, 2016 with 45 different informants having different age, sex, profession and educational background from four major areas of Newar community in Kathmandu valley viz. Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. This socio-ethnographic research aims at providing some clues as to how the discovery of a minority language triggers changes in representations and attitudes. The data is analyzed in quantitative as well as qualitative methodology based on some in depth open informal interviews as well. The language attitudes towards Nepali, English and Hindi along with their mother tongue Newari seem to be influenced by positive affective socialization experiences in the new multilingual society and by the growing perception that knowing the languages make them member of the new community. Furthermore, the sociolinguistic situation of contact Nepali in Kathmandu valley is perceived as an alternative model for rethinking one's own language ideology.