



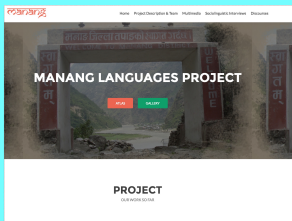
'Community' and 'Collaboration' in Language Documentation A Case Study from Nepal and a U.S. University

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I. Competing Models

"Lone Wolf/Lone Ranger" [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]	"Collaboration/Empowerment" [7, 8, 9, 10, 11]
Primary/sole focus on documentation for academic, publication-type outputs	Collaboration may take many forms
Little or no community negotiation required	Community & linguist goals considered as equally important
Avoidance of potential within-community politics or other controversies	Community involvement in design & implementation
Methods & tools left in the hands of the "most qualified" individual(s); the researchers	Linguist has the opportunity to step outside of own viewpoint, consider how others conceive of documentation goals, methods, impacts & significance
Possibly more productive data generation	BUT: Time-consuming, socially tricky
BUT: Possible community exploitation	Linguist may need to rely on other specialists & experts
Community not always interested or invested in longer-term impacts	Documentation goals may have to be adjusted (even scaled back) to be fully representative
May not be fully representative	



Images 1. Project Home Page, designed by undergraduate and M.A. students (most notably Brajesh Karina & Saita Gurung, below)

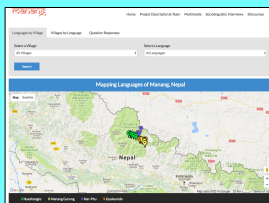


Image 2. Project atlas <https://mananglanguages.isg.siu.edu/atlas/>

A. Archive of Discourses

- Speaker topic choice, mono- and multi-participant
- Housed in the University of Virginia's Tibetan & Himalayan Library



Image 3. Gyalsumdo Archive <https://audio-video.shanti.virginia.edu/collection/gyalsumdo-project/>



Image 4. Sample text (Gyalsumdo), with transcription & bilingual translation

- SHANTI: Sciences, Humanities, and Arts Network of Technological Initiatives
- K-Maps provide items in the collection with technical, workflow, personnel & subject metadata

- Initial preparation in ELAN before SHANTI export
- Some texts further interlinearized in Toolbox
- Archives are developed by undergraduate student Research Assistants, funded by SIUE's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) Program



Photos 1 & 2. URCA RA's Tiffany Downing (above) & Sarah Song (right)

B. Gyalsumdo Community Dictionary

- Practical: useful introduction to the lexicon
- Community: a tool for maintenance and promotion to younger community members
- "Symbolic function": provides the language "equal footing" in terms of languages of wider communication in the region
- Published in 2016 by Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies [14]
- 500 copies distributed to Gyalsumdo community free of charge
- Approximately 1,300 entries, trilingual
- Practical Gyalsumdo orthography constructed via consultation with community leaders over 2+ years

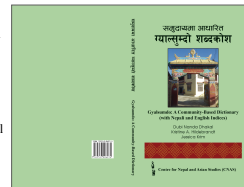


Photo 3. Gyalsumdo community ceremony for dictionary release



Photo 4. URCA RA Morgan Rogers researched images for the dictionary and did copy-editing

C. Sociolinguistic Interviews

- Variation in self-reported language attitudes & practices across languages in Manang can be explained via adjusted spatial factors & via social factors [15]
- Repeat-design sociolinguistic interviews, some conducted with assistance from SIUE students on field assignment in Nepal in 2012 & 2013
- Publications co-authored with two SIUE undergraduate students [16, 17]



Photo 5. Interview in Tengki Village (Manange language)

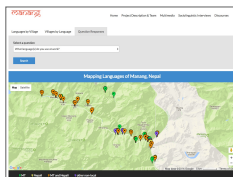


Image 5. Survey responses plotted to our atlas

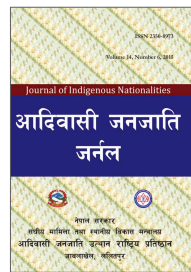


Photo 6. NSF-funded assistant Chris Witruk did qualitative > quantitative response coding

D. Tone Studies

- TB languages of South Asia show an impressive range of tonal profiles
- Languages range from a-tonal to 5+ tones
- Tone systems characterized by both modal & non-modal (breathy, creaky) vowel or consonant phonation
- The Tone Bearing Unit may be the syllable, morpheme, or prosodic word
- Long-term, multilingual contact with Indic languages has complicated these prosodic profiles

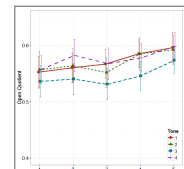


Image 6. Gurung Open Quotient (OO) plots, by tone



Photo 7. Acoustic & EGG data capture, Gurung speaker

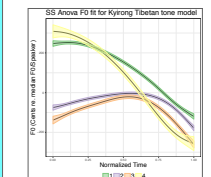


Image 7. Gyalsumdo F0 plots, by tone



Photo 8. URCA RA. Ally Rue in Washington D.C., April 2016, U.S.A. Science Expo

IV. Discussion & Summary

- These outputs would not be possible without student collaboration & coordination
- It's true! I as "the documentary linguist" had to rely on other experience/skills & knowledge (GIS cartography & atlas design, web development, Voice Saucer tutorials, Adobe In-Design), but much of this was done by students who took the initiative to teach themselves & then teach me—students at the undergraduate and M.A.-level
- I also had to use time that I would normally reserve for my (own) solitary data analysis & results-writing activities to train & monitor student progress
- However, students became more knowledgeable about the larger context surrounding the production of these outputs
- They engaged in fact-finding missions underlying their research. They began to find thoughtful answers to a bigger question dogging them through their work: Why should I care about this issue?
- As one student enrolled in ENG 418 "Language Endangerment & Death" in Fall semester 2014 observed: These activities [were] a way to add a real & concrete dimension of an endangered language from other parts of the world" (at least beyond southern Illinois!)

References Provided on Attached Sheet



II. Home Institution Students as "Community" & "Collaborator"

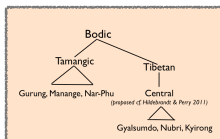
- Continued gaps between language documentation work (the formal, descriptive dimensions) & broader community needs [11, 12]
- Ongoing questions about who "community" may be defined as and why outreach beyond the academy and the immediate community matters [13]
- Our project asks the question: **What are the roles & responsibilities of general educators in endeavors of language documentation, preservation, maintenance, revitalization?**
- **And, how can undergraduate general (linguistics) students build personal investment in these issues & practices that are seemingly located "somewhere else", while simultaneously pursuing their personal academic & professional development?**

This poster illustrates how documentation, preservation & revitalization outputs include undergraduate student planning, design & implementation, located primarily at an undergraduate and masters-intensive university:
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

III. Documenting the Languages of Manang, Nepal

- NSF BCS/DEL 1149639
- Geographically one of the largest districts of Nepal, but sparsely populated
- Home to four distinct languages within Tibeto-Burman

	Population
Manange (NMM, mana1288)	< 5,000
Gurung (GVR, west2414)	< 2,000 in Manang
Nar-Phu (NPA, narp1239)	< 500
Gyalsumdo (gyal1235)	< 250



- Goals: Use repeat-design methods to gather lexical (tone, grammar), discourse, and sociolinguistic attitudes and practices data from representatives of the four language communities distributed across 21 Village Development Committees of Manang