

Interdisciplinary Approach to Research in Language and Social Sciences: 8th Issue of Gipan

Bhim Lal Gautam¹ , Prem Prasad Poudel², Balram Prasain¹, Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej³

¹Central Department of Linguistics, Tribhuvan University

²Mahendra Ratna Campus, Tribhuvan University

³Uniwersytet Adama Mickiewicza, Poland

Abstract

This editorial review of Gipan Volume 8(1) introduces the major focus of the papers published in this volume that covers the linguistic, educational and multidisciplinary issues of humanities and social sciences and applied linguistics. The primary purpose of interdisciplinarity in this journal is to bring cross-cutting issues into broader discourse. This review starts with a brief background information of the journal, highlights the themes covered by the papers in this issue, and summarizes their findings. Some of the major concerns raised in the papers are: Phonotactic Constraints in Uchoi: Evidence from Consonant Clusters and Syllable Structure Verb agreement in Purbiya Raji, The Kirati languages and the issue of ‘Rai’ in the Censuses of Nepal: A Critical Review, Students’ Motivation, Language Practices, and Classroom Interaction in Nepali EFL Contexts, Students’ Motivation, Language Practices, and Classroom Interaction in Nepali EFL Contexts, Problems Faced by Secondary Level Students in Developing English Speaking Skills in Community Schools: A Narrative Inquiry and Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Mother Tongues in Nepal. The keywords in this paper are drawn based on the papers included in this volume.

Keywords: Uchoi, EFL, Kirati, ethnicity, motivation, Raji

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Email

gautambhim@rocketmail.com

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Introduction

Gipan journal was first published in 1999 and has been continuously published, and now has reached the 8th volume. This journal is published by the Central Department of Linguistics, Tribhuvan University. The name of the journal was created borrowing the word ‘Gipan’ from Kusunda, a language isolate of Nepal. The word ‘Gipan’ means ‘language’ in Kusunda. The meaning of this word indicates that the journal aims to focus on the endangered languages, linguistic diversity and multilingualism in Nepal and beyond. We expect that this journal will provide researchers with a platform for advocacy in the issues of public interest as well as national and international needs to support in establishing a civilized society. While the initial issues of this journal focused only on linguistic concerns, we started publishing papers with multidisciplinary focus from volume 5th expanding its scope to social

sciences. This is how *Gipan* has expanded its scope as per the changing national and international context. The editorial board and the advisory board of *Gipan* and the papers published in previous volumes and the one accepted for publication in this issue show that the journal is no longer limited to Nepal and the issues related to core linguistics.

The journal has adopted a blind peer-review process to enhance the quality of publication, bringing in scholars from Nepal and abroad. We believe that the quality of this journal is the collective effort of all the members of the editorial board, the reviewers and authors who contributed their papers to this journal. The papers featured in this issue encompass a diverse range of scholarly topics, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, sociolinguistics, pedagogy, classroom teaching and textbook analysis, and language policy and politics. The first paper entitled “Phonotactic Constraints in Uchoi: Evidence from Consonant Clusters and Syllable Structure” by Niloy Chakraborty, Rajkumari Monimala Sinha and Tamojoy Brahma highlights the consonant cluster and syllable structure in Uchoi, a Tibeto-Burman language, under Bodo-Garo sub group spoken in Tripura, India. Their result shows that Uchoi has mono-syllabic, di-syllabic among the most common syllable formation, on the other hand tri-syllabic and tetra-syllabic as least common syllable pattern. The paper is trying to bridge the gap between the existing literature and the future research on this endangered language. The second paper by Dubinanda Dhakal entitled “Verb agreement in Purbiya Raji” describes verb agreement system of Purbiya Raji variety which shows that Naukule Raji seems to have more elaborate agreement system typologically. He also notes that the agreement system of Raji spoken in India does not resemble the agreement system as found in other Raji varieties in Nepal. The variations in verb agreement among Raji varieties is interesting feature from synchronic and diachronic perspectives as well. The third paper entitled “The Kirati languages and the issue of

‘Rai’ in the Censuses of Nepal: A Critical Review “explores the trends of the Kirati languages in the national censuses of Nepal conducted in 2001, 2011, and 2021. The emergence of new languages and complexity of the censuses are discussed, questioning the reliability of the censuses. The paper argues that census data need to be more accurate and recommends clearer identification and classification of the languages and better enumeration practices. The fourth paper entitled “Students’ Motivation, Language Practices, and Classroom Interaction in Nepali EFL Contexts” by Anuska Bohara, Sarswoti Chand and Guru Prasad Paudel examines students’ motivation in English Language Teaching (ELT) with a particular attention to how motivation affects learners’ engagement with language forms, functions, and classroom communication practices in the Nepali EFL context at the secondary level. Similarly, fifth paper entitled “Problems Faced by Secondary Level Students in Developing English Speaking Skills in Community Schools: A Narrative Inquiry” by Chandra Prakash Oli describes the experiences of secondary level students regarding their difficulties in developing English speaking skills. The findings show that the students had problems with vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, background knowledge of the text, inferencing the key ideas, understanding the technical texts, and expressing the meaning in context. The results from this study can be applied to provide insights for the teachers and teacher educators to set new strategies/activities of learner engagement in English speaking.

The last paper by Dan Raj Regmi entitled “Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Mother Tongues in Nepal” investigates the intensity of the interrelationship between ethnicity and mother tongues in Nepal with reference to language vitality, ethnic identity, mother tongue education, and power dynamics. Dan Raj explores the never-ending relations connected with language, ethnicity with political dynamics that are presented in various works by sociolinguist and applied linguists of Nepal and abroad (Gautam, 2025).

The review of these six papers included in this volume reveal that there is a growing academic work with a lot of intersectional issues in education, linguistics and social sciences. Such features in academic papers highlight the growing understanding and acknowledgments of linguistic diversity leading to language contact situations widening the language study landscape, and further demanding in-depth studies that relate to the intersectionality of language, culture, traditions and contexts of education (Gautam & Poudel, 2022a,b; Gautam, 2021). This trend has resulted in growing language mixing and translanguaging in language use both in physical and virtual modes of communications (Poudel & Costley, 2023; Choi et al., 2026). Further to this, the papers from India and Nepal highlight that there is a growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational system which Nepal has to learn while advancing their educational policy, plans and practices.

Future Research

Learning from these studies, our experience in interacting with these authors and review of related literature related to these studies inform us that important new issues have arisen and deserve discussion and research attention. For example, language issues are to be understood from a broader political and social perspective shifting from the traditional understanding of language and linguistics. The papers provide strong implications for future policy and practice works expected in the national and international fronts. One of such implications could be for the Government of Nepal, through its federal, provincial and local government system to learn how the language and society interact and how they can create social impacts. There are also several issues raised by authors that relate to educational and social justice, equity and equality that all intersect in language policy processes (Poudel & Choi, 2022). Further, it is also important to develop languages by fitting them in the technology trends that have floated in the recent days. As *Gipan* originated from a 'language' focus,

we still emphasize that promotion of the ethnic and indigenous languages does not only promote language but also expand the knowledge base in relation to the languages and cultures of the ethnic indigenous communities. Though we understand that language issue alone is incomplete without connecting to the social, cultural and educational practices (Kramsch, 2014; Gautam, et al., 2025), we still believe that the language issue can be a point of departure to explore additional complex social and cultural issues surrounding humanity in the national and global spaces. While there is a high mobility of the people across spaces, within and across the national borders, it is important to understand how such people on the move develop their identity in relation to their language, culture and context is important (Pennycook, 2012; Choi et al., 2026). The papers incorporated in this issue directly and indirectly highlight these concerns around language, culture, humanity and society. As the papers raise such important concerns, it is high time to come up with several research projects drawing on grounded data that document values, cultures and educational systems that center on languages and society.

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