Assessing Vitality and Achieving Sustainable Use in the Kshetteli Language

Department of English Education, University Campus

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dan Raj Regmi

Central Department of Linguistics, TU

danrajregmi8@gmail.com

Abstract

Kshetteli, a recently identified Tibeto-Burman language, is spoken by only four elderly people of the three villages, viz., Jhusku, Salli and Khatti, in the Darchula district of Nepal. Within Sustainable Use Model, this paper with some linguistic and sociolinguistic background briefly describes some processes of assessing the present level of language use and vitality of the Kshetteli language and suggests some effective community based activities after assigning an EGIDS level for achieving a desired sustainable language use in the language. By analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, this paper has revealed some typologically interesting phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical features of the language. Besides, it has presented some sociolinguistic features including ethnolinguistic situation, language attitude and multilingualism. Generally, Kshetteli has been found to be a critically endangered language. This language has turned into a heritage language which retains only an identificational function with 9 (Dormant) EGIDS level. Thus, this language, which maintains sustainable identity, has to be uplifted from 9 to EGIDS level 8a (Nearly Extinct) for awakening the language and fulfilling community's desire to achieve sustainable orality by devising different activities for the transmission of internal life-crucial knowledge to the younger generations. Such activities may include developing corpus and language documentation technology, teaching the language in schools, forming a culture group and

convincing the local policy makers to frame a multilingual language policy for uplifting the heritage language like Kshetteli. However, in order to transmit external life-crucial knowledge, at present, English has to be taught and learned by the community members as a large body of external life-crucial knowledge is primarily embodied in English.

Keywords: Heritage language, moribund, shifting, sustainable identity, life-crucial knowledge

Introduction

This paper describes some processes of evaluating the present level of language use and vitality of the Kshetteli language and suggests some effective community based activities after assigning an EGIDS level for achieving a desired sustainable language use in that language within Sustainable Use Model (Lewis and Simons, 2017). Kshettteli has not yet been identified formally as an independent language. However, it has been recently identified and studied as a separate language by Language Commission of Nepal.Thus, in this paper, Kshettteli has been treated as a separate language. Only four people (viz., two women and two men age ranging from 80 to 95) residing in Jhusku, Salli and Khatti villages of Apihimal Rural Municipality of Darchula district of Nepal can speak this language. They include Mr. Man Singh Bohara (95), Mr. Tula Singh Bohara (87), Mrs. Laxima Atyal (85) and Manira Dhami (85). This language has not been recorded in 2021 Census. Until around six decades ago, Kshetteli was fully an isolated monolingual community. It had maintained sustainable orality level of language use. The language was vigorous and was used orally by all generations in all the basic domains of language use. After Tibet was annexed to China, the Tibetan boarders were frequently shielded for the Kshetteli community. This minority community faced unprecedented pressure to abandon their local language, viz., Kshetteli and their identity. Later, this community came into contact with non-Tibetan speech community residing in the south. Gradually, the contact grew intense and constant with Darchuleli (a local language) and Nepali, the official language of Nepal. This language community has clearly shifted to Darchuleli for day-to-day communication. However, people have a strong aspiration to maintain and upgrade their heritage language and their ethnic identity.

Till the date, no intensive sociolinguistic survey has been conducted in this language. However, with the sole effort of one of the speakers, some sociolinguistic and linguistic features (viz. some vocabularies and grammatical features) were scantily

recorded. Very recently, a collection of basic vocabularies and writing of preliminary grammar (with the identification of basic sounds/phonemes) have been completed under the language promotion and preservation program of Language Commission. Till the date, no attempt has been made to analyze the linguistic ecological profile of this community using EGIDS and suggest activities to awaken the Kshetteli language for identity and sustainable language use.

This paper has used both qualitative and quantitative data. Besides Introduction, this paper is divided into eight major headings. They include some linguistic and sociolinguistic features, an overview of the Sustainable Use Model, the bodies of life-crucial knowledge, linguistic ecological profile of the Kshetteli community, an assessment of Kshetteli with FAMED conditions, the desired sustainable level of language use, some activities for achieving sustainable orality and conclusion.

Some Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Features

Linguistic Features

Kshetteli is a critically endangered language. However, it reveals some typologically interesting features in the domains of phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon (Bohara, 2080 BS; Regmi et al., 2081 BS).

Phonological Features

Kshetteli is an atonal language. It contains 29 consonant and six vowel phonemes. Length is not contrastive. There are six types of syllables. It also exhibits retroflex sounds.

Morphological Features

Nouns are not usually marked for gender or number. Classifiers are absent. Kshetteli is an agglutinating language. It is a morphologically ergative language. It displays a consistent ergative-absolutive pattern of marking of case-roles in simple clauses. Nouns are marked for 10 cases. They include ergative, instrumental, dative, genitive, commutative, ablative, locative, allative, inessive and similarative. Kshetteli presents two types of pronouns: personal pronouns (viz. first vs. second vs. third and pro-forms (demonstrative: proximal and distal, interrogative and reflexive). There are two types of tense: past and non-past and two types of aspect: perfective and imperfective.

Syntactic Features

Kshetteli is an SOV language. It displays a rigid word order. However, in this language, the nominal morphology (viz. different case markers) codes the grammatical relations of the constituents of clauses.S (subject) O (object) and V (verb) is a common neutral word-order. Verbless (viz., absence of 'be' verbs) clauses are also frequently used in Kshetteli.

Lexical Features

About 700 basic words were collected in Bohora (2073 BS). These words mainly comprise kinship terms, organs of the human body, food and utensils, names of grass, firewood, names of crops, grains and tools, verbs, domestic and other livestock. However, Bohora (2079 BS) has collected around 1230 words belonging to different aspects of life and world.

Sociolinguistic Features

Geo-linguistic Situation

At present, this language is spoken by the people residing mainly in Ward No. 3 and 4 of Apihimal Rural Municipality in Darchula district of Nepal. It is roughly located in 29.8154° N and 80.8478° E. The elevation of the villages where the speakers of the Kshetteli language are residing ranges from 1700 to 2400 meters (Regmi, 2079BS).

Map 1. *The Kshetteli language inside a circle in the map of far-western part of Nepal*
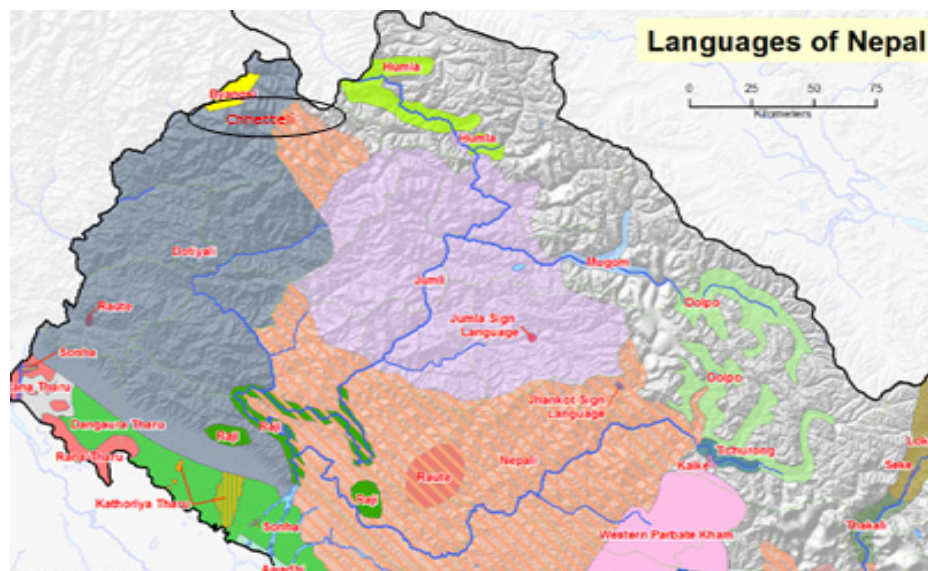
Ethno-linguistic Situation

Language is also considered as a carrier of culture and civilization. It is also considered as a source of power. In the beginning, the native speakers of the Kshetteli language were Latyauli, but later it became the mother tongues of Bohora, then Dhami, Atyal and Manyal. In the latter days, it became the language of all the people of this region. Bohora and Dhami, who live in this region with their own customs, rituals, traditions and customs, have been informed following the Hindu culture and tradition recently. The people are involved in agriculture, business and trade. They grow corn, wheat, millet, rice, beans, cauliflowers, cabbage etc. Photograph 1 presents the geographical situation of the major villages where the language speakers mainly reside.

Photograph 1. *Geographical situation of the major villages where the language speakers mainly reside*

Genetic Classification

Based upon the preliminary comparison with the neighboring languages, Kshetteli has been surmised to be genetically close to Byansi and Dhuleli. Presumably a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Nepal, this language may be regarded as a member of the Western Himalayish subdivision under the Himalayish division. Figure 1 presents the genetic classification of the language among other Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal.

Figure 1. *Position of Kshetteli among other Tibeto-Burman languages*
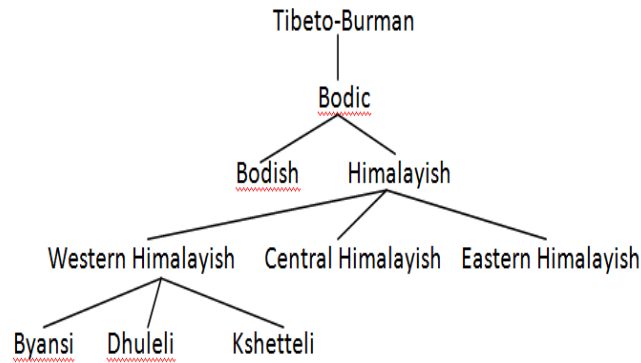
Nomenclature and Alternative Names

Languages such as Dotyali, Bajhangi, Bajureli and Darchuleli are found to be named after a particular geography instead of a particular caste or ethnicity. The Kshetteli language is named after a particular geography, viz., Chhetti. Chhettiis the last village of Apihimal Rural Municipality. The village is close to another village called Ghazir. According to Bohora (2073 BS, p. 2), in the beginning, this village was inhabited by an ethnicity named Letyauli. This ethnicity was considered as lower in terms of social stratum. In course of time, some people belonging to ShahiThakuri (viz., a higher and ruling caste presumably speaking Nepali or dialects of Nepali) came to live in this village. They got married to girls from the Letyauli community. As they were married to the women of lower caste/ ethnicity, they began to be called Bohara. As time elapsed, they too began to learn the language spoken by the Latyal. They were ethnically and linguistically assimilated to Latyal. However, they formed a new linguistic community. The language was named after the same village. Due to the regular contact, they have been fully shifted to Darchuleli and Nepali. This language has been more or less stopped being spoken for about sixty years.

The villages where this language was spoken for a long time as mother tongue are located in the foothills of the Api Himalaya. The place where the Kshetteli community is now situated used to be called Maldesh in the bygone days. Even now some people including local political leaders have argued that the name of the rural municipality should be identified as Maldesh rural municipality and the Kshetteli language should be natively referred to as the Maldesh language. Hence, the alternative name of this language may be assumed to be the Maldesh language.

Language Attitude and Multilingualism

Due to the language assimilation policy of the nation, except four people as mentioned already, all the Kshetteli people are speaking Darchuleli and Nepali instead of their heritage language. However, all the people of the community consider the Kshetteli language as the backbone of their language identity. Moreover, they show a positive attitude towards their language. At present, this attitude is only sentimental. It is not an instrumental attitude. Now, the local government body has been reported being pressurized to make the language taught in the primary schools. Attempts have also been made to prepare curriculum and textbooks. All the people of this community have been speaking the local Darchuleli language since their childhood. Everyone speaks Nepali fluently, the standard Nepali used in government work. Apart from that, they also understand Dotyali and Hindi. At schools, children also learn English as a subject.

Sustainable Use Model

This paper has employed the Sustainable Use Model (SUM) as the framework developed in Lewis and Simons (2017). This framework aims at facilitating language development practitioners to assess the vitality level of current language, to be acquainted with the "best practice" for the development of language, to identify a way forward and put forward a means for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. It is a realistic and descriptive framework for understanding the dynamics of language and the preservation of culture. This model is not directly concerned with the language. It is concerned with the sustainable transmission of life-crucial knowledge to future generations by language which is the most important means of the transmission of knowledge. In other words, sustainable transmission of knowledge is the key to sustainability of language use.

The Bodies of Life-Crucial Knowledge

The knowledge which is essential or useful for a community to smoothly run the life is referred to as life-crucial knowledge. Such knowledge consists of information with which a member of a community has to interact, evaluate and incorporate into his/her way of life. Such knowledge is crucial for communication, maintaining identity and imparting education for children. Such knowledge is crucial for involvement in different levels of government (viz., the local, provincial and central government), involving in different financially viable activities, maintenance of health and religious development. Life crucial knowledge may also be defined as the knowledge that local communities need to pass on in order to achieve different functions. The Kshetteli

speech community also possesses such knowledge that is vital for the ongoing welfare of the community. There are two types of life crucial knowledge, viz., internal and external. They are briefly discussed as follows:

Internal Life Crucial Knowledge

The Kshetteli community has its own common migration history and origin which enables the people to be identified distinctly from others. Such knowledge is embodied in a shared body of knowledge and lore comprising of stories and legends, ritual uses of language and ceremonies. Such knowledge is also found being reflected in nonverbal activities or behaviors. They include cooking, ways of dressing, dancing and singingand different kinds of visual arts like painting, sculpture and films. They have basic knowledge of local flora and fauna with medicinal values for economic profit. Besides, they possess kinship and genealogical information and traditional technologies. Such crucial political, economic, health and spiritual knowledge has to be passed on to the younger generations. Specifically, internal life crucial knowledge in Kshettelimay consist of knowledge and use of traditional medicines, flora and fauna, food and clothing, traditional arts, religions and traditions, farming and hunting, traditional songs and dances, business and trans-Himalayan trade, folklore, history and origin of the community and folktales. The community wants to achieve a sustainable orality in Kshetteli and transmit this internal life crucial knowledge to the future generations.

External Life Crucial Knowledge

The knowledge which is required to interact with the outside world is defined as external life crucial knowledge. Such knowledge includes the knowledge emerged due to the advancement in science and technology especially in the sector of health, transportation and communication. If such knowledge is transmitted only through the dominant language, the minority community like Kshetteli will be losing its major function of communicating life crucial knowledge. Due to globalization, the members of the Kshetteli community should be acquainted with the history of the world, world religions, scientific taxonomies of flora and fauna, science and technology, modern mathematics and modern information technology. Moreover, the community requires having basic knowledge about modern nutrition, hygiene, medicine, agriculture and production of food and daily use goods. At present, the community needs to learn and teach other appropriate languages like Englishto transmit external life crucial

knowledge. A large body of such basic knowledge is primarily documented in English. Gradually, the local language has to strengthened for this purpose.

Linguistic Ecological Profile of the Speech Community

Kshetteli is a multilingual community in which three languages are basically spoken; namely, Kshetteli, Darchuleli and Nepali. As mentioned already, Kshetteliis spoken by only four elderly people of three villages, viz., Jhusku, Salli and Khatti, in Darchula. Darchuleli is spoken by all age groups in all domains at home and community except in education. Nepali plays a vital role of the language of wider communication in the Kshetteli community. It is a medium of instruction in education and means of communication in public meetings as well as singing songs. In fact, Darchuleli is a dominant language in this area.

Levels of EGIDS

Lewis and Simons (2017,pp. 98-111) have proposed Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) for assessing the linguisticecological profile of a community. EGIDS is a major descriptive tool in the Sustainable Use Model (SUM). It facilitates a community to evaluateits present level of language use and the vitality of the language like Kshetteli. It also assigns anexact level on the scale to a language. This is a new and complex model for language development. Thus, some basic features of the model in brief are introduced here before analyzing the different situation of Kshetteli. Thirteen levels of EGIDS have been identified by this model. Table 1 presents the 13 levels of EGIDS for assessing the linguistic ecological profile of the Kshetteli community.

Table 1. *Thirteen levels of EGIDS for assessing the linguistic ecological profile of the Kshetteli community*

Levels	Labels	Diagnostic Features
0	international	Widely used between nations in trade, policy and knowledge exchange
1	national	Used countrywide in education, work, media and government
2	regional	Used within the region of a country in domains of language use like education, work place, mass media and government (local and provincial governments)

3	trade	Used unofficially to go beyond the language differences across a region
4	educational	Vigorous oral use is reinforced by sustainable literacy
5	written	Vigorous and used in written form but unsustainable literacy
6a	vigorous	Used orally by all generations and the situation is sustainable
6b	threatened	Used orally in all generations but lacks a key condition of sustainability
7	shifting	Used only by child bearing age group
8a	moribund	Used only by grandparent age group
8b	nearly extinct	Used only elderly but they have little chance to speak it.
9	dormant	Not fully proficient speakers, but used symbolically to mark identity
10	extinct	Not used at all

While assessing the current use of language, Kshetteli may be assigned EGIDS level 9 (Dormant), Darchuleli 6a (Vigorous) and Nepali 4 (National). Nepali, the official language, is used all over the country in government offices, courts, educational institutions and mass media. Languages assessed as EGIDS levels 4 (viz., Educational) and 6a (viz., vigorous) are taken as intrinsically stable. Such languages do not lose their present labels suddenly unless unfavorable language policy is enforced in the nation. Likewise, dormant (EGIDS 9) and extinct (EGIDS 10) do not change their levels. The languages belonging to the levels between (5, 6b, 7, 8a, 8b) are defined as unstable languages because such languages may come down to a lower level unless appropriate community based activities are not executed to sustain or upgrade them. Lewis and Simons (2017, pp.115-17) have proposed a decision tree for the EGIDS for assessing the linguistic ecological profile of a language comprehensively as given in Figure2.

Figure 2. *A decision tree for the EGIDS for assessing the linguistic ecological profile of a language* (Adapted from Lewis and Simons (2017, pp.115-17))
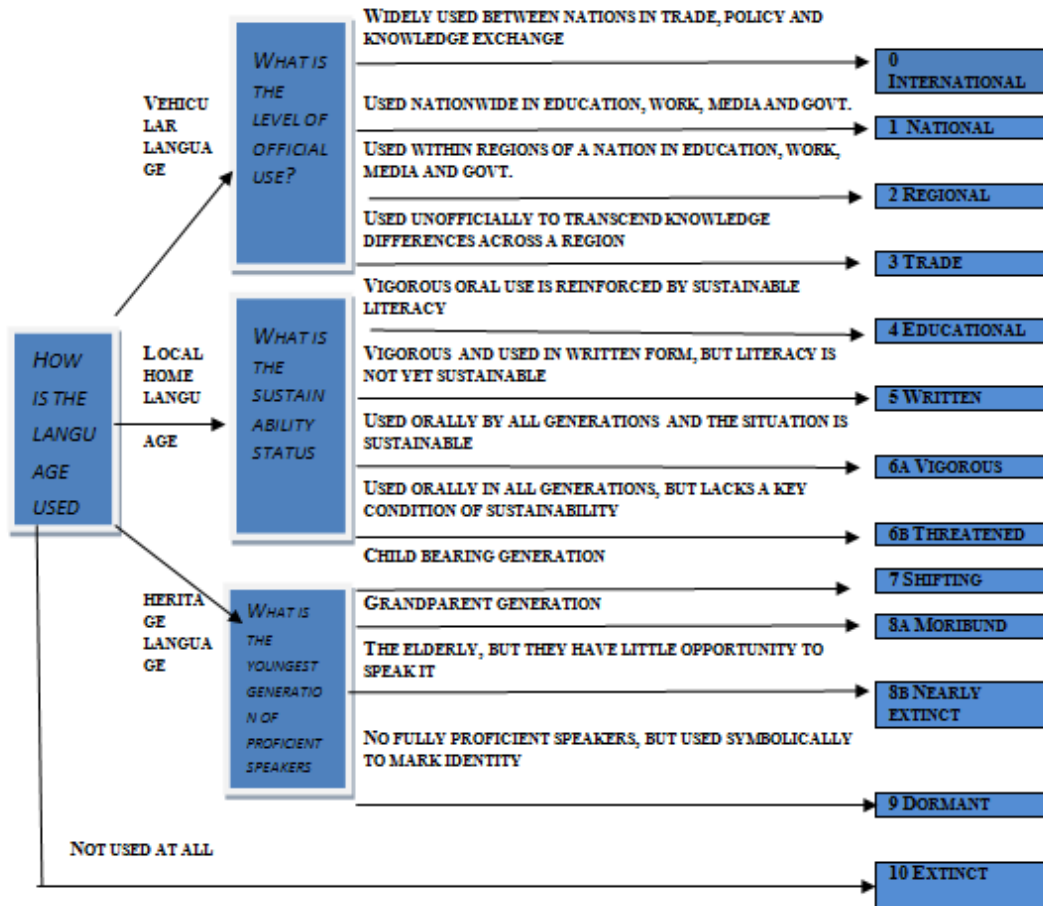

Figure 1 shows that there are three types of language: vehicular, local home language, heritage language in terms of the ways a language is used. The languages which are used at a certain level of official use are referred to as vehicular languages. They include languages with EGIDS levels O to 3 (viz., international, national, regional and trade). From this perspective, Nepali, a national language, is a vehicular language. It is also widely used as a second language. Darchuleli is a local home language with 6a vigorous label. All the people vigorously use this language in the domains of home and local community. The situation is sustainable for this language. Local home language may be categorized into educational, written, vigorous and threatened with EGIDS levels 4, 5, 6a and 6b. In terms of the age of the proficient speakers, there are four categories of heritage language, viz., shifting, moribund, nearly extinct and dormant.

Kshetteli is a heritage language. As mentioned before, it is spoken by only four people of the grandparent generations. They have a very little opportunity to speak among them. Thus, it would be justifiable to assign EGIDS 9 (Dormant) to the Kshetteli language.

Levels of Sustainable Language Use

Four levels of sustainable language use with distinct diagnostic features have been proposed in Lewis and Simons (2017, pp.143-149). Table 2 presents the four sustainable level of language use with distinct diagnostic features.

Table 2. *Four sustainable level of language use with distinct diagnostic features*

S.N.	Sustainable language use	Diagnostic features
1.	Sustainable History	▪ No speaker is left over. ▪ None likes to link his/her ethnic identity with the language. ▪ However, the language is documented.
2.	Sustainable Identity	▪ Language is devoid of any fully proficient speakers. ▪ However, the community links its ethnic identity with the language. ▪ The language is not used for daily communication. ▪ The language is used only emblematically.
3.	Sustainable Orality	▪ A deep and strong identity of the ethnicity is embedded in the language. ▪ All people of all ages speak the language significantly for everyday communication. ▪ The language is spoken in the domains of family and local community.
4.	Sustainable Literacy	▪ The language is vigorously used in speaking and it is widely used in written form in government offices, courts, education and mass media.

While assessing the three languages, viz., Kshetteli, Darchuleli and Nepali against the diagnostic features associated with each sustainable level of language use, Kshetteli, local language, maintains sustainable identity because the Kshetteli community linksits identity with this language despite the fact that all the people do not

use this language for everyday communication. The Darchuleli language confirms to sustainable orality. A strong regional identity of the speech community is rooted in this language. Besides, this language is vigorously used by all the people of all ages in speaking with the family members and neighbors for everyday communication. Nepali is a national language. It is used in education, office and social media. It has sustainable literacy.

Correspondence between Sustainable Levels of Language Use and EGIDS Levels

There are four sustainable levels of language use that match up directly to four levels on the EGIDS. Table 3 presents a correspondence between the four levels of sustainable language use and the EGIDS levels.

Table 3. *A correspondence between the four levels of sustainable language use and the EGIDS levels*

	Sustainable use level	EGIDS levels	Labels	Remarks
1.	Sustainable Literacy	4	Educational	
2.	Sustainable Orality	6a	Vigorous	Darchuleli
3.	Sustainable Identity	9	Dormant	Kshetteli
4.	Sustainable History	10	Extinct	

Table 3 shows that Kshetteli with EGIDS level 9 (Dormant) corresponds to sustainable identity whereas, Darchuleli 6a (Vigorous) corresponds to sustainable orality. The EGIDS levels which do not correspond to any sustainable level of use are transitory. Languages with such levels are likely to drop to a lower level unless appropriate efforts are made to move up the scale.

Assessment of Kshetteli with FAMED Conditions

The FAMED Conditions

There are five components of sustainable language use. They include sustainable history, sustainable identity, sustainable identity, sustainable orality, and sustainable literacy. These components include Function, Acquisition, Motivation, Environment and Differentiation. They area cronymed as FAMED conditions. Such conditions offer a more comprehensive diagnostic evaluation of each language's vitality status than the EGIDS. In other words, these conditions provide helpful guidance for addressing the needs which are required to bring about a change. Unless each of the five conditions associated with a particular level are adequately supported, we cannot practically attain

the sustainable use of any language at any level. Table 4 presents the typology of FAMED conditions including their short description.

Table 4. *The typology of FAMED conditions including their short description*

	Typology of conditions	Short description of conditions
1.	**Function**	Life-crucial knowledge embodied in the local language is transmitted through that language. Such Function is fully acknowledged by the community.
2.	**Acquisition**	The community members have means to acquire required level of proficiency to transmit life crucial knowledge in the language.
3.	**Motivation**	People are adequately encouraged to use such language to transmit life crucial knowledge and they know that there is benefit of using such language.
4.	**Environment**	The language policy of the nation is favorable for encouraging the people to use the language to communicate such knowledge.
5.	**Differentiation**	The community members know the contexts for using local and other languages.

Assessment with FAMED Conditions

Kshetteli may be best categorized as a heritage language with EGIDS level 9 (Dormant) as it has sustainable identity. Except four people, there are not any fully proficient speakers in Kshetteli. However, it is used symbolically to mark identity. While assessing the sustainable identity, each FAMED conditions may be evaluated in terms of four categories: absent, uncommon, common and sustainable. Table 5 present the four categories with marks allocation.

Table 5. *Four categories with marks allocation*

	Categories	Marks
1.	Absent	0
2.	uncommon	1
3.	common	2
4.	Sustainable	3

It is to be noted that even among four speakers mentioned already, this language is not enough for face-to-face daily use. In other words, this language is not enough for full communication. Thus, Kshetteli does not fully meet the condition of Function to be sustainable. The language is transmitted only for identity. In this community, the child-bearing generation is not motivated to use this language for practical benefit. However, they still perceive symbolic benefit. The government policy is not hostile to oral use of this language. However, the local government is not fully active or interested to uplift the current level of language use. In this community, only some members like to use this language for identity. However, other people use Darchuleli and Nepali for identity. Keeping in mind such observations while assessing the sustainable identity, it is clear that Kshetteli does not completely meet all the FAMED conditions. Table 6 presents the evaluation of Kshetteli as the language of sustainable identity.

Table 6. *Evaluation of Kshetteli as the language of sustainable identity*

	Famed	**Present Conditions**	**Score**	**Description**
1.	Functions	▪ Preliminary grammar with glossary exists. ▪ Recording of normal conversations ▪ No training for community members for preservation of the language	2	Common
2.	Acquisition	▪ No child learns the language. ▪ However, they identify the Kshetteli ethnically. ▪ They learn English at schools. ▪ The community wants to teach Kshetteli as a subject at the basic level.	2	Common
3.	Motivation	▪ People feel proud of their heritage language and culture. ▪ A society for the promotion of Maldesh language and culture is formed. ▪ Only sentimental positive attitude towards their language	2	Common

4.	Environment	▪ Current language policy is favorable for maintenance and revitalization. ▪ Local government has allocated some budget for revitalization of the language and culture.	3	Sustainable
5.	Differentiation	▪ People want to teach the language at school for identity and knowledge transmission. ▪ They want to learn English for external life-crucial knowledge	2	Common
			11	

Table 6 shows that Kshetteli does meet all the FAMED conditions for sustainable identity. Except in FAMED condition, viz., Motivation, it has not scored marks allocated for full sustainability.

Desired Sustainable Level of Language Use

As mentioned already Kshetteli has a sustainable identity with EGIDS level 9 (Dormant). Thus, this community wants to uplift the Kshetteli language from EGIDS level 9 (Dormant) to EGIDS level 8b (Nearly extinct). By uplifting this language, the community wants to achieve sustainable orality for transmitting the internal life crucial knowledge to the future generations. Besides, the people of this community aspire to teach the Kshetteli language as a subject in school. There is a demand from the community that this language should be officially recognized. The aspiration of the community is to create a dictionary, write grammar and develop the script and bring the language into written form. They demand that their language should be preserved by the local, provincial and federal government. With a view to highlighting such demand, Bohara (2073 BS) has tried to explore the origin of the Kshetteli language and its condition in a personal effort. He has also presented a preliminary analysis of words and grammar.

Activities for Achieving Sustainable Orality

In order to transmit internal life crucial knowledge like cooking, ways of dress, dance, music, visual arts, local technology and local flora and fauna with medicinal values for economic benefitto the younger generations, sustainable orality has to be achieved in a dormant language like Kshetteli through awakening the language**.** A number of activities may be suggestedfor in the domains of functions, acquisition, motivation, environment and differentiation in the Kshetteli community.

Functions

It has been evident that Kshetteli lacks fully proficient speakers. Thus, in order to revive of linguistic competence with phonological and syntactic proficiency, first and foremost, the corpus development programs have to be launched. Such proficiency has to rediscovered and put back into use. In this case, documentary sources like collection of words, preliminary grammar andelder's memories of related languages may be utilized. Resources for documenting language functions should be identified by the community with the support of the expert. Besides, adequate technology for language documentation has to be developed and special trainings should be given to the local language practitioners. Digital technology and participatory method have to be focused.

Acquisition

After recovering the conventional functions through documentation of the language, language learning programs must be planned for adults and children. By framing curriculum and preparing materials, Kshetteli may be taught in basic level in schools. Language learning should be encouraged by establishing a language learning center for the strong use of the words collected. Teachers should be trained to teach basic level children in the community.

Motivation

The community has a dream of implementing mother tongue education at the primary school level and a desire for imparting to youth the knowledge essential to their lives. The community has to be motivated and encouraged to frame suitable language development activities and execute them properly. The people have been reported having a very strong positive sentimental attitude to preserve this language not only for identity but also for day-to-day communication. A culture group has to be framed under the leadership of active women to motivate other women and adults to learn this language by explaining practical profit of mother tongue.

Environment

The constitution and other prevailing acts and regulations of Nepal regarding language rights are not ostensibly hostile. However, till the day, a formal multilingual language policy has not been framed. Thus, there are a number of hurdles in the implementation. Each community has a right to preserve, promote and develop its mother tongue. However, there is not any adequate advocacy. In a community like

Kshetteli, some proactive efforts have to be made to convince the policy makers of the local government that the heritage language is valuable and worthy of preservation.

Differentiation

The community can decide to use Kshetteli at home and community for the general domains of language use. While communicating with the people of other speech community, they can use either Darchuleli or Nepali. Nepali is used for education and mass communication. Thus, the community has to decide to choose a specific language for specific functions (Decker & Grummitt, 2012).

Conclusion

This paper presented some procedures of evaluating the vitality level of the Kshetteli language and suggested some activities for the attaining a desired sustainable level of language use. Due to intense and long contact with Darchuleli, Kshetteli, which was a vibrant mother tongue until six decade ago, has been pushed to be identified as a heritage language with EGIDS level 9 (Dormant). Now-a-days, this language is scantily spoken by only four elderly people of three villages, viz., Jhusku, Salli and Khatti in Darchula. This language has revealed some typologically interesting grammatical, ethno-linguistic and sociolinguistic features. It has only maintained sustainable identity; however, FAMED conditions are not satisfactorily met. Thus, this language has to be uplifted from 9 to EGIDS level 8a (Nearly Extinct) for awakening the language and fulfilling community's desire to achieve sustainable orality by devising different activities for the transmission of internal life-crucial knowledge like cooking, ways of dress, dance, music, visual arts, local technology and local flora and fauna with medicinal values to the younger generations. To achieve such desired level of language, first and foremost, corpus has to be developed. Besides, technology for language documentation has to be developed. Digital technology and participatory method have to be focused. This language has to be taught at schools as a subject in the basic level. A culture group has to be framed to motivate other women and adults to learn the Kshetteli language. Some positive efforts have to be made to convince the policy makers of the local government to frame a policy for uplifting the heritage language. The community may decide to use Kshetteli at home and community and other languages for other purposes. However, at present, to transmit external life-crucial knowledge an appropriate language like English has to be appropriately taught to the children of the community. To conclude, the community has to uplift the Kshetteli language for the sustainable transmission of the life crucial knowledge.

References

Bohara, L. B. (2079 BS).*Kshetteli bhasako sabda sankalan* [Collection of words in Kshetteli] [Report, Language Commission].

Bohara, N.M. (2080BS). *Kshetteli bhasako prarambhik byakarana (varnamala nirdharanasahit)* [A preliminary grammar of Kshetteli (including the determination of basic sounds) [Report, Language Commission]

Bohora, T. (2073 BS).*Kshettelibhasa* [Kshetteli language].Tulasingh Thekere Bohara.

Decker, K., & Grummitt, J. (2012). *Understanding language choice: A guide to sociolinguistic assessment.*SIL International.

Lewis, M. P., & Simons, G.F. (2017). *Sustaining language use: Perspectives on community-based language development*. Pike Center for Integrative Scholarship, SIL.

Regmi, D.R. (2079 BS). Kshetteli bhasako samaj bhasik tatha bhasik isthiti ra samrakshan karananiti [Sociolinguistic and linguistic situation and strategies for preservation] https://www.academia.edu/77795620

Regmi, D.R., Bohara, L.B., Bohara, K. N., Bohara, L.S., & Dhami, S.S. (2081BS). *Kshetteli bhasako byakaran ra shabda sangrah* [A grammar and glossary of the Kshetteli language]. Language Commission, Kathmandu.