

Language Shift and Cultural Tapestry: An Observation of Newar Identity in Kirtipurdoi: <https://doi.org/10.3126/skmj.v3i01.79289>**Bhim Lal Gautam.¹****Bikram Maharjan²****Prem Prasad Poudel³****Abstract**

Cultural specificities and their promotion are one of the major concerns in Nepal's development discourse. While several studies have explored the cultural systems of Nepal's ethnic/indigenous communities, ethnographic understanding of the values hidden in the micro socio-cultural contexts of Newar community in Kirtipur, one of the core areas of Newar ethnic population in Kathmandu, has yet to get attention. The data in this paper were gathered through multiple sources- questionnaire survey and key informant interviews with 38 participants who had extensive experience in service to education, social and political sectors of Kirtipur municipality. The data were analyzed thematically. The findings of the study suggest that Kirtipur has been shifted to mixed culture because of migration and language contact caused by rapid urbanization, people moving to this city for education and increasing inter-ethnic marriage and family relationships. Not only this, various cultural shifts and modifications are happening with intergenerational language shift with the attraction and interest of cultural ethnicity and identity to the newly developed Newar city Kirtipur. These trends have both linguistic and cultural implications.

Keywords: Cultural tapestry, Newari culture, indigeneity, Kirtipur**The Context**

Language and cultural shift are commonly observed trends in linguistically and culturally rich communities globally, and Nepal's context shows the same (Gautam & Poudel, 2022). The global flow of people across territories, and their shared values have contributed towards forming a set of communities that are increasingly mixed in terms of languages and identities. Kirtipur, located in the southern part of Kathmandu, is one such place where the traditional Newar culture and tradition still continues to be the dominant one, while also embracing the diversity caused by migration of people from outside Kathmandu. Historically, 'Kirtipur' is derived from 'kirti' that

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means glory and ‘pur’ means city. People say that it was also named with a queen named ‘Kirti’ who ruled in ancient times. In Newar language it is known as kipu or kapyu which means famed town. This city of glory is inhabited and also dominated by Newars which are the earliest settlers in the Valley with their own language, cultural norms and values. Originally a Newari foundation, it is no doubt that Kirtipur is still a centre of Newari culture. However, recently people of different castes and religion stay in this place. It was established in the 12th century as an outpost of Patan, which later became an independent kingdom for a short time period. This historical town has many cultural, natural, historical and religious things to see such as old shrines and temples and people dressed in traditional costumes while working on ancient looms. The city is rich in cultural and religious heritages, being an oldest settlement in the valley. The majority of these sites are concentrated in the old core areas like Kirtipur, Panga and Chovar area, with some people scattered around Salyanthan, Nagaun, and Pandechhap. The most significant cultural and religious sites are the Bagh Bhairab, Uma Maheswor temple, Nagara Mandapa Kirti Bihar, Adinath temple, Jal Vinayak temple, Macchenarayan temple, Gumbas, and many more Buddhist monasteries, pagodas and temples, Patis (raised platforms for pilgrims) and Chaityas (small stupas). These sites are distributed across Kirtipur and are found in most of the dense settlements of Newars. These sites have great cultural, religious and historical importance and are potentials sites for tourism in the city. By origin, Kirtipur Newar is a distinct ethnic group of Tibeto Burman community which has unique language and culture. However, Kirtipur city has now become the blended city of different castes, races and ethnicities.

As mentioned previously, Kirtipur Municipality has turned into a mixed community with a huge movement of people from outside the valley. This trend of people’s movement resulted in a linguistically diverse and culturally mixed context. It not only created the language shift behaviour but also developed a cultural tapestry of the Newar community. Table 1 below presents the present situation of linguistic diversity in Kirtipur.

Table 1: Demographic sketch of Kirtipur Municipality

S.N.	Language	Number of speakers	Percentage
1	Nepali	44836	55%
2	Newar	23364	28.6%
3	Tamang	4045	5%
4	Maithili	1854	2.3%
5	Dotyali	1460	1.8%
6	Magar Dhut	1150	1.4%
7	Tharu	1046	1.3%
8	Bhojpuri	880	1.08%
9	Rai	524	0.6%

	Total	81578	
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Source: National Statistics Office (2023)

Table 1 presents the status of 9 different languages spoken in Kirtipur. Although Kirtipur is a traditional Newar speaking community, the current data shows that only 28.6% people speak Newar as the native language. Likewise, the major language spoken as the native language is Nepali, the national language of Nepal. These two are the dominant languages followed by Tamang which is just 5%. The presence of other languages is very much limited. It can be observed that most of these languages are spoken by migrant population. Although there are studies that highlight the diversity of Kirtipur municipality, limited research is available to understand the intersection between language and cultural shift and changing identity concerns among Newar in this locality. This particular research concern has been focused in this study, drawing on field-based information gathered visiting some major cultural heritage sites of Newar community in Kirtipur and various socio-cultural aspects associated with them.

The Study

This paper is based on data collected from mixed method. A small-scale survey was conducted to list the cultural heritages of Kirtipur Newar. This survey was conducted using a form like a checklist that listed the types of and names of the cultural items in the heritage sites around Kirtipur. Although the field-based status information was obtained from this survey, detailed ideas about the history, culture and language shift were obtained from key informant interviews detailed out below.

The survey questionnaire was developed and largely adopted from Gautam (2021) that focused on trends in language shift. A set of key informants' interviews (KII) guidelines were developed based on literature review and specific thematic ideas were developed out of literature review that exclusively focused on the cultural tapestry of communities such as Kirtipur Newar. Alongside of the KIIs, some individual interviews and ethnographic observations were also utilized to complement the data obtained primarily from interviews and survey. We approached the former Mayor of Kirtipur municipality who was known as the mayor for the preservation of Newar cultural heritages in Kirtipur during his tenure. The mayor was not only the politician but ex-teacher, political activist, and leader of Kirtipur Newari culture and society. After interviewing the mayor, we interviewed another social worker who was also community activist and the teacher of population and social studies subjects, having a long experience of observation of the changes taking place in Kirtipur over decades. His insights were truly helpful in our research. Our third interview involved a retired head teacher and a very active social, cultural and linguistic reformer from Newar community. The in-depth interviews with these key figures was so enriching for us to

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develop the data further, and obtain insights in relation to the language and cultural changes taking place in Kirtipur.

The questionnaire and interview guidelines were written in English language; however, the medium for data collection was mainly Nepal and sometimes Newar language as one of our authors was a Newar native speaker. All authors recorded the data while interviewing, and also audio recorded. All of the records were transcribed and translated into English for the data analysis purpose. The researchers translated from English to Nepali to facilitate the informants during data collection. The data were collected during 2024 June-July. The questionnaire included 20 questions to explore multilingualism and language shift in Kirtipur Newari community. Out of the total 38 informants, only 25 sampled informants were asked for the languages they use in different activities in their day-to-day life. Moreover, the researchers administered KII and individual interviews from the rest 13 informants for other necessary information on Kirtipur Newari language. The consent was taken from the individuals and pseudonyms were used while describing the narratives and stories.

Table 2: Selection of the informants for the study

SN	Places	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Baghbairav	6	7	13
2	Panga	3	2	5
3	Nagaun	3	2	5
4	Naya bazaar	7	8	15
Total		19	19	38

Source: Field (2024)

Apart from primary data, various secondary resources have also been collected and utilized in order to describe the various trends of cultural tapestry of Kirtipur including language, culture and other aspects like multilingualism and language contact. The data from the questionnaire were manually analyzed and presented in tables. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Literature Review

Within the historical diversity of Nepal, Newar ethnic identity deserves a significant position. The changes in cultural and linguistic practices are natural and ongoing across time and spaces. This has been observed through the processes of everyday socialization (Nakarmi, 2024). As societies have experienced diverse social expectations (Schafffer & Schaffer, 1969) the changes in their practices, attitudes and identities are commonly understood as outcomes of global as well as transnational mobilities. Although there are multiple factors that trigger changes in people's daily life and culture, in this study, the literature review only focused on

the areas of language shift and cultural identity in Kirtipur Municipality. Newar language and culture in Kirtipur have a long history of situatedness, justified through various narratives of origin and classification of the Newar culture and language in and around the Kathmandu valley. One of the prominent scholars, D.R. Regmi (1960) noted that the Newars existed as early as the sixth century B.C. and that they belonged to the confederacy of the Vrijji clans. He argues that the term Newar does not connote any particular racial type at the moment. It is purely a geographical concept that the Newar meant anyone who lived in the valley irrespective of his racial origin and features (Regmi, 1960). In the line of Regmi, David Gellner argued that there were religious and cultural plurality among the Newars of Kathmandu valley during Lichhavi and Malla periods (Gellner, 2005). It is known that in the eighteenth and even during the first quarter of nineteenth century many of the ancestors of Newars who today count as Hindu Shresthas had Buddhist priests and Buddhist allegiances (Gellner, 2005). Similarly, Regmi noted that in the most ancient days the Newar conveyed the sense of an ethnic group, but then afterwards this group was subjected to multiple racial adjustments having adopted different types of emigrants, from Austroids to Dravidians and then to Mongols and to Aryans (Regmi, 1960). Gopal S Nepali also argued that the Newars have specific caste and social stratification with various culture, religion and language (Nepali, 1965).

These classical scholars rightly pointed out the historical origin and definition of Newar and Newar culture, especially in relation to the cultural identity and evolution of Newar culture in Kirtipur. Literature shows that the Newars were culturally different communities and people's migration from outside the valley changed Newar culture, language and identity to some extent. Although the Newars are the dominant groups in the Kathmandu valley, the use of Nepali and Nepali-dominant national cultural practices are increasing, caused by unchecked migration of the people from outside of the Kathmandu valley. Discourses around the protection and promotion of the minority languages and cultures are on the move due to people concerned about local identity. Charles Tylor (1994) argued that recognition of the minority group was important for the proliferation of their language and culture of the group. Anthropologists have noted that language and culture of minorities transformed through the maintenance of ethnic boundaries and assimilation (Barth, 1969; Fisher, 2001). They argued that ethnic boundaries of language and culture were changed in the context of politics and livelihood strategies of the people. Dominant language and culture not only lured but also pressurized to adopt mainstream language and culture. In the case of the classification of caste and ethnicity, Susan Bayly (1995), Barnard Cohn (1999), Nicholas Dirks (2001) argued that the classification and objectification of the minority group were political projects which we can notice in Kirtipur Newari language within Newar umbrella.

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Both Gellner (2005) and Toffin (2007) agreed that the Newars adopted the culture and rituals of the powerful Shah Kings in order to get favor and support after unification movement (1843-1869). In the Kathmandu Valley many Shresthas who traditionally had Vajracharya domestic priests switched to Brahmans and adopted forms of Hinduism closer to those of the now dominant Parbatiya during Rana and Shah Regimes (Gellner, 2005). Gautam (2018; 2020; 2021; 2022) describes the various sociolinguistic aspects of Newar language focusing on the study of language use and attitudes which is based on recent migrations, urbanization and development activities after 1990s political change in Nepal. Gautam (2024) describes various aspects of language contact in Newar which can be similar to the context of Kirtipur Newar.

Findings and Discussion

The dominant and indigenous Kirtipur Newar community is very popular for its rich cultural heritage that reflects a synthesis of indigenous practices including the blend of both Hinduism, and Buddhism. This section presents the main findings of data and their discussion. The findings have been reported in terms of language shift, multilingualism, education, culture, traditions and indigenous practices that are understood in diverse terms.

Multilingualism and language shift in Kirtipur

Kirtipur is a multilingual city traditionally being dominated by Newar native speaking population. Though most of the Newar people speak Newar as their first language there seems a gradual shift of the focus on learning English and Nepali, the dominant languages of the marketplaces. They use different languages for different domains and activities. Table 3 shows the language used in different activities.

Table 3: Language used in different activities.

Domains of Language	Newar	Nepali	Both	English	Hindi
Religious festivals	88.88%	33.32%	56.62%	---	
Cultural programs	88.88%	33.32%	56.62%	6.66%	6.66%
Birth ceremonies	77.77%	49.98%	66.66%	---	
Marriage ceremonies	55.55%	43.32%	63.28%	---	3.33%
Death ceremonies	88.88%	36.64%	69.94%	---	
Cultural festivals	77.77%	43.33%	63.28%	---	

Source: Field (2024)

Table 3 shows the use of multiple languages in various activities related to the religious and cultural domains of Newar people. The table shows that the frequency of the use of Newar language is comparatively dominant than Nepali and other languages. However, during cultural festivals and ceremonies, new generation is speaking other languages like Nepali and English as the dominant ones, and some were found to have used Hindi as well. Although Hindi is not the native language of Nepal, Kathmandu being the capital, several people from Indian territory have moved to this city for business and educational purposes, and these people have been found to have used their native language. Also, for some people, Hindi remained as a contact language, especially those who migrated to Kathmandu from the Terai belt of Nepal. We asked the reasons for this and one of the informants (Bhaicha, 68 M) said “*herda herdai Kirtipur Newar bhanda pani aru Bahiriya (outsiders) ko Sahar huna pugyo yo bis barsa ma.aba ta hamra ketaketiharu pani Nepali mai bolchhan. K garnu?* (Within 20 years the city has become the city of outsiders and our children also speak Nepali than Newar)”. This narrative of *Bhaicha* indicates that many minority ethnic communities from across the country have shifted to Kirtipur and it has created significant influences in the society and the broader culture (Gautam & Poudel, 2022). Juju, a local teacher during an informal conversation informed that older people who were monolingual have started understanding and speaking Nepali because of business and contact with outsider because Tribhuvan University and its central office is located at Kirtipur where students and teachers are from different parts of the country. He further added that educated youth and children preferred Nepali and English languages which are very common in Kirtipur because of direct contact with other people and the easy access to capital city Kathmandu. Several other studies have reported that the change in language choices across time and spaces and changing cultural patterns are some of the outcomes indicating structural influences (Poudel & Choi, 2021; Poudel et al., 2022). These are the common trends across the multilingual contexts that are increasingly shifting towards dominant languages and cultures than those of the minority languages in their communities.

Language in Education and Socio-cultural Impacts

For long, in the history Nepal experienced educational policies that promoted one of the national languages, and English continually occupied one of the important positions in Nepal's education since the beginning of formal schooling. In post-1950 Nepal, the government's push for national integration led to the promotion of Nepali as the official language after the implementation of NNEPC (1956) and the establishment of Panchayat Era (1961-1990) that led to assimilation language policy (Gautam, 2022). The educational system, media, and governmental administration were all Nepali-centric, leading to a gradual

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decline in the use of Newar language in formal settings especially in school education during Panchayat Era. After 1990s political change people migrated to Kathmandu valley from various parts of the country for better education, job opportunity and other facilities (Gautam, 2012) but there is not any significant change in the overall education system despite the government and its agencies have continually working to bring in the languages and cultures of the plural Nepali society into education system. Newar children growing up in urban centers like Kirtipur now primarily receive education in Nepali or English, limiting their exposure to their native language. Kirtipur municipality has recently implemented the use of Newar subject in all public schools for primary classes. A study conducted in Kathmandu schools shows that there are invisible language conflicts arising from unplanned language policies that continue to promote dominant languages as medium of instruction and teaching of local languages as subjects (Gautam & Poudel, 2024). This indicates that further policy actions required to make language planning more community-centric and towards establishing justice in the societies that have multilingual identity (Choi & Poudel, 2024; Poudel, 2024). Although the preference towards dominant languages in a first instance is a linguistic phenomenon, it has to do equally with the cultural and social impacts that invisibly and gradually limit the use of local languages and cultures in the education system. It might have unwanted consequences in the identity of the people of the communities with historical social and cultural patterns of life.

Inter-caste Marriage and Impacts in Language Practices

Increased language contact has been a commonly observed phenomenon due to cross caste marriage between Newar and non-Newar couples. This has also contributed to the language contact and shift. In such households, Nepali often becomes the dominant language of communication, as it is more widely understood by both spouses and their children (Gautam & Poudel, 2022). This leads to a scenario where children grow up bilingual but more proficient in Nepali than in Newar language. One of the professors (45M) at Tribhuvan University who got married to a Newar teacher few years ago now lives in Kirtipur but his wife and other relatives including his children speak Nepali and English. This kind of intermarriage effect on language change is increasing day by day among the new generation. This is just an example. Several other cases like that are mostly common in mixed communities in Nepal. Many Newar people speak by **code-switching** where they alternate between Newar, Nepali and English within the same conversation. For example, a speaker begins a sentence in Newar, mix English but finish it in Nepali especially when discussing technical or modern subjects. Words from Nepali, English and Hindi particularly those related to music, modern technology, education, and administration, have been borrowed into Newar. For example, words like telephone, government, and education are often used in their Nepali forms within Newar conversations. This leads to Nepali, English and Hindi's

influence extends beyond vocabulary to grammar and syntax. Younger children of Newar family sometimes follow Nepali grammatical structures, simplifying traditional Newar constructions to resemble Nepali sentence patterns. This has led to a gradual creolization of the language among younger, bilingual speakers, and a likely chance of further strengthening of intergenerational shift in language use and attitudes, mainly towards their ethnic/indigenous languages (Gautam, 2020; Gautam & Poudel, 2022b; Poudel & Costley, 2023). This requires a thorough work on developing awareness of the importance of home language alongside of Nepali and English. As language plays a crucial role in transmission of history, mythology, and religious beliefs, it is to be promoted and protected. Kirtipur is home to rich tradition of oral literature, including folktales, poems, and songs, which have been passed down through generations. These oral traditions are often linked to festivals, rituals, and daily life, reinforcing the sense of belonging and cultural identity within the community are now shifting and changing slowly because of media, communication, music and migration.

Newar Cultural Traditions and their Preservation

Different festivals and rituals are central to Newar culture. Kirtipur is known for its vibrant celebrations of different cultures and festivals. These festivals are unique amalgamation of Hindu and Buddhist traditions, often characterized by distinct processions, rituals, music, and dances. Here, we briefly report the descriptive findings based on the field-based survey data, interviews and previous literature. The ideas have been organized in sub-themes such as gods and festivals, food and dress, guthi system, birth and death rituals,

Gods and festivals

Indrayani, Bhairab Mandir, Bagh Bhairav, Uma Maheshwor, Bishnudevi and Aadinath are the main Gods worshipped by Newari people in Kirtipur. They have place-specific Gods which are given different names like Chovar Ganesthan, Aadinath Temple, Bishnudevi Temple, Similarly, they also worship local Gods/Goddesses like Bhairab in Bhanjanganal and other natural places with water and special trees. Kirtipur Newari share most of the Newari festivals and follow and celebrate local Hindu festivals as well. Converted felt awkward when practicing traditional rituals. *Gathemangal*, *GaiJatra*, *Yanya Punhi*, *Satgaunle jatra* are celebrated by Newari people, like those of the people from the core areas of Kathmandu. They also celebrate and practice *Jankko*, a Newari ritual of old people. During our interview, one young Newar expressed that he celebrates all festivals of all people living in Kirtipur including Dasain, Tihar and Nepal Sambat.

Sat Gaunle Jatra

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This is the most important and highly celebrated festival of Kirtipur. This Jatra is probably the second longest Jatra of Kathmandu valley. The Jatra starts from Balambu one month ago and it slowly moves towards all the major seven villages of Kirtipur valley. Specially, the Jatra is the centre of Balkhu (Vishnu Devi), Naikap, Satungal and Kirtipur where people enjoy and celebrate it with various activities. This is celebrated immediately after the completion of rice plantation (end of monsoon). People believe that the Jatra is celebrated in order to use the unused food items like rice, corn so that people can eat and enjoy. Narayan sir explains '*Jatra khas gari annako upyog garna ra manchheharulai samajikikarn garna ko lagi manaudai aaye jasto lagxa. Yo ak kisimko saasakbargale arulai bahira nabhadkiun bhanera banaaye jasto lagchha*' (Jatras are organized to utilize the food items and socialization. I guess the rulers (high cast) wanted to make lower cast people enjoy within themselves rather than involving in politics and other activities.). In Kirtipur only Mali, Maharjan, Poda (Jyapu) and Kusle (Kapali) participate in Jatra but not Pradhan, Joshi and Bajracharya. This indicates that there is still huge sense of discrimination among the Newar people and cast which is an impact of long Hindu dominated Nepali culture.

Food and dress

Food and dresses are also the indicators of traditional cultural patterns. Traditional Newari food items are popular in Kirtipur area. People prefer bread and milk tea in the morning and in the day, time beaten rice with pickle are used as snacks. Older people at home prefer Thon (fermented rice beer) and Bajee (beaten rice) in the afternoon. Seasonal vegetables, meat, rice, Gundruk (fermented mustard leaves) are eaten in the evening. Children and students prefer biscuits, noodles, and readymade bread available in the market. Readymade food items are commonly taken by the Youths. We noticed that older people preferred their traditional food items whereas youth and children preferred rice, Momo, noodles and junk foods. This shows that there are changes in the patterns of eating patterns and choices.

Newar people wear their traditional and ritual dresses in Jatras and family gatherings. This is also their ethnic identity. Newar women wear Hakku Patasi (black home-made sari), white home-made Jani (also called Patuka, which is worn around the waist), Putulan (a kind of blouse), and Gacha (shawl). Similarly, Newar male wear Daura, Suruwal and Bhadgaule topi with coat. They also wear half pant, suruwal, Istakot and shoes. Their girls and the women wear varieties of silver and golden ornaments, and beads made of silver coins. Using gold ornament is very common among the Kirtipur Newar women. We did not see any children and youth wearing traditional dress. School children and youth wear readymade clothes available in the market. However, all our informants were worried about loss of their typical dress which have been replaced by modern western dresses. We observed that most of the males were wearing shirt, pant, sandals whereas females were wearing Kurtha Sarwal, sari, cholo, and sandals. The informal conversation with people in Newar community around

Kirtipur expressed their concerns about youths preferring modern and readymade dresses than the cultural ones.

Shifting Patterns of Cultural Celebrations

Although Newar people continue to celebrate the cultural festivals and rituals to some extent, the patterns of celebrations change over time, affected by several factors such as increased migration, youths preferring dominant languages and cultures. These changes can also be associated with the power of globalization (de Sousa, 2006). Festivals and rituals in any community are the lifeblood of the community. Changes in the cultural patterns are something to worry about because that negatively affects the cultural identity of the people. For instance, *Sat Gaunle Jatra*, a prominent festival celebrated in Kantipur valley, has become more commercialized, with larger public gatherings and media coverage than in the past. The traditional sense of community participation has been diluted, as modern infrastructure and urban demands have changed the pace and scale of such events. Similarly, rituals like *Sithi Nakha*, which were once focused on cleaning local ponds and canals, have become symbolic, as many of these water sources have disappeared or been replaced by modern infrastructure.

Identity and Cultural Preservation

The modernization of Newar society in Kirtipur has led to a duality in identity: one that embraces modern values and global integration, and another that strives to preserve traditional culture. This is the impact of democratic movement where this issue is functioning as development and identity (Gautam & Poudel, 2022a). The younger generation of Newars, especially in Kirtipur, faces a tension between maintaining their cultural identity and integrating into a rapidly modernizing and globalizing world. Many young Newars speak Nepali and English more fluently than their native Newar language, signaling a linguistic shift that threatens the preservation of their cultural heritage. The mixing of various codes in a single conversation while talking with educated and 3rd and 4th generation show the future of Newar language in Kirtipur.

Efforts to preserve the Newar language, arts, and rituals have emerged in response to these challenges. Cultural organizations, educational institutions, and local governments are working to promote the teaching of Newar language in schools, preserve heritage sites, and revitalize traditional festivals. Recently, Kirtipur municipality made Newar language compulsory to all the public schools in Kirtipur municipality but the non-Newar children are learning Newar language in those school because Newar children never go to public school. They often go to English medium private schools and other reputed schools in Kathmandu and Lalitpur. In this context, these efforts face obstacles due to the pressures of urbanization, modernization, and western cultural influence. The data from survey, observation and KII

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show that Kirtipur Newar community is rich in terms of its cultural heritages, tradition, rituals, festivals, social structure, solidarity, norms and values. The loss of traditional knowledge, culture and traditions have been observed as unintended consequences of education and urbanization. New generation do not pay much attention for the preservation of traditional knowledge, practices and cultural dances. In this regard, this study implies that the linguistic and cultural traditions should be preserved by integrating them in curricula and syllabi. The local curriculum should present the trajectories of different languages and cultures of different communities so that the students can get relevant information and they may be encouraged to take further initiatives (Gautam & Giri, 2024). If these cultural heritages can be included in the local curricula and policy level, various trajectories of Kirtipur Newar can be extended in the international markets through tourism and economy.

Conclusion and Implications

The linguistic and cultural traditions in Kirtipur are rich, diverse, and deeply embedded in centuries-old history. This city is full of cultural specificities in terms of the history, architecture, cuisine, and patterns of life. While the community practices have largely constructed the identity of Kirtipur, in recent years, due to the heightened globalization and urbanization, the ways of life, culture, dress and traditions have changed, creating public concerns about preservation of the language and culture. Language shift is also frequently observed instance, caused by a huge flow of people for education, business and employment. Several efforts have been made in preserving and protecting the language, the practice of using Nepali and English in public life and education continues, which creates a worry that the historical linguistic identity of Kirtipur might face a challenge. Like that of language, the cultural heritage of the Kirtipur Newar community holds profound significance, not only for the Kirtipur Newar people themselves but also for fostering understanding and appreciation among diverse communities. As this paper presented only the linguistic and cultural aspect of Kirtipur reported based on limited data, future research can be conducted gathering a large amount of data with a wider coverage of Kirtipur Municipality, so that the findings coming from such studies can inform both policies and practices in the municipality.

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