



# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SENTENCE SYSTEM BETWEEN SHERPA AND TAMANG LANGUAGE

**Dawa Sherpa Ph.D.**

*Lecturer, Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Ratna Campus, Tahachal, Department of Education Nepali*

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## -----ABSTRACT-----

*Sherpa language is spoken by Sherpas and Tamang language is spoken by Tamangs. Both of these languages fall under Tibeto-Burman language family. The present comparative study between these two languages is qualitative in nature. Data collection for the study was made with purposive interview and conclusion has been drawn. Both language bear resemblance in the sentence structure as subject + object + verb pattern. Both the languages have similarity in sentences meaning as declarative, interrogative, optative, imperative, subjunctive, indicative and exclamatory sentences from the formal point of view. Both the languages have similar simple, compound and complex sentences. These languages differ from Nepali language in grammatical structure. Both the languages do not have sentence congruity in the structure. They seem a grammatical on the basis of number and gender.*

**KEY WORDS:** *A grammatical, sambhota, Target language, phonological linguistic competence/ linguistic power.* -----

## INTRODUCTION

Both Sherpa language and Tamang language fall on Tibeto-Burman language family. They are written in Sambhota script. Sherpa language is spoken by Sherpas and Tamang language is spoken by Tamangs. According to the census 2011 report there are 1,14,830 Sherpa language speaker in Northern Himalayan regions of Nepal. Tamangs mostly live in the periphery of Kathmandu valley and scatter all over the country. Tamang speaking population is 5.11 percent of the total population on the basis of census report 2011. (2011:284). Tamang language is spoken by the largest number of population from the Tibeto-Burman language family in Nepal.

The Study aims at comparing the sentences of Sherpa language and Tamang language to the Nepali language. Both Sherpa language and Tamang language differ in sentence structure from Nepali language. In acquiring the target language the learner most produce the target language accurately in a continuous way. For this target language learning is possible through productive practice (Chaudron, 2007: 91). Therefore, both Sherpa language and Tamang language speakers learning Nepali language as target language should focus on constant practice and productive learning.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The statement of the problem of this study is to find out the difference between sentence structure of Sherpa language and Tamang language and to compare the difference with Nepali language.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to compare the sentence system of Sherpa language and Tamang language with Nepali language and to tabulate it.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The comparative study between Sherpa language and Tamang language sentence system is qualitative in nature. The study is based on purposive study for selecting Sherpa language speakers and Tamang language



speaker (Creswells, 2015: 207). The data collection has been made with the help of MP<sup>3</sup> sound recording device adopting regional study, survey, observation and interview. Four Sherpa language speaker from Sekhimba and four Tamang language speakers from Katake village of Menchhyayam rural Municipality ward no. 3 of Terhathum district have been the informant in this study (Das, 2013: 140). For this study use of applied linguistics for oral interview has been utilized to obtain data on target language acquisition (Nunan, 2010: 149).

There is no similarity between the phonological structure and system of two language (Crystal, 2003: 341). Comparison between two languages on phonological structure and system is easier but comparison of grammatical system is more difficult because grammatical structure in two languages is different and complex (Hockett, 2006: 261).

**Primary Source**

Data collection for the study was made by oral interview and questionnaire from 4 Sherpa language speakers of Sekhimba and 4 Tamang language speakers of Katake village of Menchhyayem rural municipality, ward no. 3 of Terhathum district (2016: 316). The informants have been selected with purposive sampling. Data collection has been made by interview, questionnaire and discussion.

**Secondary Source**

Published and unpublished dissertation, articles and dictionaries on Sherpa language and Tamang language have been used to collect linguistic data as secondary sources. Secondary sources have been used for the verification of primary sources. Conclusion of the study has been drawn by analysis and interpretation of the collected data in a comparative study.

**Pre-test**

The data has been used in this study with the pretest from the Sherpa language speaker and Tamang language speaker of Menchhyayem rural municipality, ward no. 3. Linguistic competence and language for competence on the speaker is directed by proficiency (Lyons, 1981: 165).

**Sentence System**

Usually, the words used in sentences are called phrase. The word without its derivation is called 'lexeme' (Pokhrel, 2054: 126). Sentence is such a linguistic construction that has one subject and a finite verb (Adhimari, 2068: 268). It is larger than a phrase. A Sentence expresses a concept. The grammatical unit larger than a clause is a sentence (Sharma, 2071: 291). The study of the sentences in Sherpa language and Tamang language has been made on the basis of this definition. Both the languages have the same type of sentence structure as subject + object + verb. Syntax studies the structure of sentences. The smallest unit in the structure of sentence is word. Phrases and clauses can also be used on constituents of sentence structure (Sherpa, 2077: 145). This study has been made to classify the sentence structure and meaning of Sherpa language and Tamang language on the basis of the above definition.

**Types of Sentences on the basis of Meaning**

The meaning given by the sentence is called sentence meaning. Sentence meaning is understand if only the user uses the sentence (Avasthi and Sharma, 2055: 201). In Tagmamic grammar sentence is the grammatical sequence. On these basis sentence is a complete structure which is independent (Bandhu, 2064: 90). On the basis of meaning sentences can be classified into six categories and structurally three types of sentences as simple, compound and complex on the basis of structures (Adhikari, 2071: 229-230). The sentences of Sherpa language and Tamang language have been compared on the basis of meaning.

**Assertive Sentence**

Assertive sentences assert the simple meaning of the sentence. the Simple intention of the speaker is expressed in assertive sentence (Awasthi and Sharma, 2055: 201). Every sentence has a finite verb. For example, the boy dances. He ate an orange. Both of these constructions are sentences (Adhikari, 2071, 203).

On the basis of this definition the assertive sentences of Sherpa language and Tamang language have been show in the table.

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[ŋeki sama soi]	[ŋai ka:n tsa:zi]	[maile vat k <sup>h</sup> aɛ̃]	I ate rice.
[pasang khaŋba ga:l]	[pasang dim nizi]	[pasnag ghar gajɔ:]	Pasang went home.
[mesi kegesung]	[mui hja:mu:la]	[vaisi karajɔ:]	The buffalo moored.
[t <sup>h</sup> apemki tʃja khun̄ga:l]	[tja:ŋsiŋle na:sa bɔ:zi]	[tsille ku:k <sup>h</sup> ura lagjɔ]	The eagle took the chick.

The above assertive sentences have verbs [SoI], [ga:l], [kegesuŋg] and [Khu:ɟa:l] in Sherpa language, [tsa:zi], [nizi], [hja:mu:la] and [bɔ:zi] in Tamang language [k<sup>h</sup>aɛ̃], [gajɔ], [karajɔ] and [lagjɔ] in Nepali language respectively to refer to English verbs ate, went, moored and took.

**Interrogative Sentences**

Only the interrogative pronoun differ in interrogative sentence from assertive sentence in Sherpa language and Tamang language. Question type declarative sentence is called interrogative sentence (Sharma,



2071: 413). Unlike assertive sentences interrogative sentences end with rising intonation. The rise is denoted by question mark (?).

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[su: sisung ?]	[k <sup>h</sup> a:la sizi ?]	[kɔ: marjɔ:]	Who died?
[Kang kiru: ?]	[tik laba: ?]	[ke garne ?]	What to do?
[t <sup>ʃ</sup> ɔ: lja:mu: ?]	[d <sup>h</sup> a:te zja:ba: ?]	[kati ra:mrɔ ?]	How beautiful?
[kani diju: ?]	[khairi niba: ?]	[kahā: ja:ne ?]	Where to go?
[kang tibu:za ?]	[tik biba ?]	[ke lek <sup>h</sup> eko: ?]	What did you write?
[puzjung t <sup>ʃ</sup> ɔki hwa:e ?]	[za: g <sup>h</sup> atleba: mu:la ?]	[t <sup>ʃ</sup> ɔrɔ katrɔ: t <sup>ʃ</sup> ha ?]	How old is your son?
[papa: phepsung ?]	[a:ba: phebrabazi ?]	[bu:ba: aunu:vajɔ: ?]	Did father come?
[sama: t <sup>ʃ</sup> ɔ:sung ?]	[sɔ:l t <sup>ʃ</sup> hɔizi ?]	[k <sup>h</sup> ana pakjɔ ?]	Was the food cooked?

In the above sentences [su:], [kang], [t<sup>ʃ</sup>ɔ], [kani], [t<sup>ʃ</sup>ɔki], [papɑ] and [samɑ] in Sherpa language, [k<sup>h</sup>a:lɑ], [tik], [d<sup>h</sup>a:te], [k<sup>h</sup>airi], [g<sup>h</sup>a:tleba:], [ɑ:bɑ] and [sɔ:l] in Tamang language and [kɔ:], [ke],[ kati], [kahā:], [katrɔ], [bu:bɑ:] and [k<sup>h</sup>a:nɑ] in Nepali language refer to interrogative sentences.

### Optative Sentence

The verb in the optative sentence expresses with, purpose intention, request or the tentative attitude of the speaker (Sharma, 2071: 471). The optative sentences of Sherpa language and Tamang language are listed below:

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[heju: hɔsi luŋki k <sup>h</sup> undɔsi]	[tɔrse hints <sup>h</sup> am lab: luŋse bɔ:rka:i]	[mastirɔ b <sup>h</sup> aɛ hawa hurile lai:za:jɔs]	If it is upward, wind blows.
[mamu hɔsi Kɔsiki k <sup>h</sup> undɔsi]	[ma:rse hints <sup>h</sup> am gandhise bɔ:rka:i]	[tala tiro b <sup>h</sup> aɛ kosile lai:za:jɔs]	If it is down, Koshi flows.
[papa pɔ:laki mɔ:lam k <sup>h</sup> agebu: t <sup>ʃ</sup> hɔraŋ senne t <sup>ʃ</sup> heriŋbu galsi]	[a:k <sup>h</sup> e a:ple mɔ:lamse zja:mɔ mjɔ:rte]	[buba bazekɔ a: sirbaɖle h̄u θape zhāi aju θapu:n]	Long live by the bless of forefathers.
[ɖubɔ mɔulaɛ t <sup>ʃ</sup> ɔraŋ t <sup>ʃ</sup> he riŋbu:galsi]	[nɔrɔka:paŋ lheba:rəŋ t <sup>ʃ</sup> he lhekai]	[ɖubɔ mɔulaɛ zhāi mɔula:un]	Long live as wiregrass.

In the above example [k<sup>h</sup>u:ndɔsi], [riŋbu:gəlsi], and [t<sup>ʃ</sup>heriŋbu: gəlsi] in Sherpa language, [bɔ:rka:i], [zja:mɔ:mjɔ:rte] and [t<sup>ʃ</sup>he lhekai] Tamang language, and [laiza:jɔs], [aJu:θape zhāi θapu:n] and [ɖubɔ mɔula:ɛ zhāi mɔula:un] in Nepali indicate optative sentences.

### Imperative Sentence

Imperative sentence expresses order instruction, request, etc. by the verb (Adhikari, 2068: 218). Sherpa language and Tamang language both have the similar imperative sentences on Nepali language. Imperative sentences are in the present tense. There is only the second person subject in imperative sentence (Sharma, 2071: 490). The subject is generally omitted in imperative sentences. For example,

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[lɔ:pkhaŋ gju:k]	[lɔ:pkhaŋ niu]	[skul za:u]	Go to school.
[sama/sɔl sɔ:]	[sɔl t <sup>ʃ</sup> hɔ:jɔ:]	[k <sup>h</sup> a:na k <sup>h</sup> au]	Eat food.
[hɔr:matəŋ/maten]	[həlla a:la:jɔ]	[həlla nagara]	Don't make a noise.
[mar gju:k]	[mar niu]	[tala za:u]	Go down.
[həer lɔ:]	[tɔr reu]	[ma:θi ut <sup>h</sup> a]	Sand up.
[ɖəja ɖet]	[t <sup>ʃ</sup> uhi ɖənsjakɔ:]	[jəha: basa]	Sit here.
[mesila so luk/bin]	[mui ta t <sup>ʃ</sup> he pinɔ:]	[v <sup>h</sup> aisilai g <sup>h</sup> as ɖeu]	Give grass to the buffalo.
[sa:la sjan tɔ]	[gajarəri sɔ:l d <sup>h</sup> ajɔ:]	[k <sup>h</sup> adkula:ma b <sup>h</sup> a:t pakau]	Cook food in the cooking pot.

In the above examples [gju:k], [sɔ:], [ma:ten], [gju:k], [lɔ:], [ɖet], [lu:k] and [tɔ:] in Sherpa language, [niu], [t<sup>ʃ</sup>hɔ:jɔ:], [ɑ:lɑ:jɔ], [niu], [reu], [ɖənsjakɔ:], [pinɔ:] and [d<sup>h</sup>ajɔ:] in Tamang language and [za:u], [k<sup>h</sup>a:u], [nagara], [u:t<sup>h</sup>a], [basa], [ɖeu] and [pakɑ:u] in Nepali language refer to the imperative meaning.

### Subjunctive Sentence

If the verb of the sentence indicates possibility, deduction, supposition etc. the sentence is subjunctive (Sharma, 2071: 492). In Sherpa language and Tamang language the subjunctive sentences refer to future deduction or probability. All persons are used in these types of sentences. Examples are given below:



Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[hariŋ azja:ŋ p <sup>h</sup> epkizu]	[tini a:sjaŋ febarbalɑ]	[ɑ:za ma:ma aunuho:lɑ]	To maternal uncle may come.
[Pemba hembur lepzu:]	[Pemba jamburi dɔ:tala]	[Pemba kat <sup>h</sup> mandau pu:gjɔho:lɑ]	Pemba may have reached Kathmandu.
[hat <sup>si</sup> ts <sup>h</sup> erba gepkjuza]	[dha:re nam k <sup>h</sup> ala:]	[b <sup>h</sup> are Pani parla:]	It may rain later.
[sapti sɔsung ha:tsi kan giju]	[tsabam tsa:zi d <sup>h</sup> are tik tala ho]	[k <sup>h</sup> anu ta k <sup>h</sup> ajɔ bhare ke ho:lɑ]	He ate but what happens later.
[nup ŋits <sup>h</sup> ezu]	[tsjo:n ts <sup>h</sup> ɔrtala:]	[b <sup>h</sup> ai bjüz <sup>h</sup> e ho:lɑ]	Brother may have awoken.

In the above sentences [p<sup>h</sup>epkizu], [lepzu:], [gepkjuza], [kan giju] and [ŋits<sup>h</sup>ezu] in Sherpa language, [febarbalɑ], [dɔ:tala], [k<sup>h</sup>ala:], [tik tala ho] and [ts<sup>h</sup>ɔrtala:] in Tamang language and [aunuho:lɑ], [pu:gjɔho:lɑ], [parla:], [ke ho:lɑ] and [bjüz<sup>h</sup>e ho:lɑ] in Nepali indicate subjunctive sentences.

### Demonstrative Sentence

If the two clauses in a sentence have cause and effective relation, it is called demonstrative sentence (Adhikari, 2068: 220). In Sherpa language and Tamang language to show the cause and effect relation demonstrative sentences are used. Examples

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[num ts <sup>h</sup> emsi giju:θjɔ]	[buriŋ sja:sai taselɑ]	[bahini natse hunθjɔ]	I wish my sister to dance.
[tiwa: hju:si gijuθjɔ]	[θingate b <sup>h</sup> ra:sam taselɑ]	[tiniharu hide hunθjɔ]	I wish them to walk.
[sa:ma sɔ:si hugjuθjɔ]	[sɔ:l ts <sup>h</sup> jɔ:isai tasailɑ]	[k <sup>h</sup> ana: k <sup>h</sup> ae hunθjɔ]	You'd better take food.
[ts <sup>h</sup> erba gepsi gjar ljamu ts <sup>h</sup> arkju:θjɔ]	[na:m k <sup>h</sup> arsam sɑ:ŋga tahasailɑ]	[pa:ni pare kɔdɔ maulauθjɔ]	If it rains, the millet will grows.
[ti hju:si ŋa higu:θe]	[na:m b <sup>h</sup> ra:mas ŋal b <sup>h</sup> ramaba]	[u: hide ma hidθe]	If he goes, will go too.

In the above example [tshemsi giju:θjɔ],[hju:si gijuθjɔ],[sɔ:si hugjuθjɔ], [ts<sup>h</sup>arkju:θjɔ] and [higu:θe] in Sherpa language, [sja:sai taselɑ], [b<sup>h</sup>ra:sam taselɑ], [ts<sup>h</sup>jɔ:isai tasailɑ], [tahasailɑ] and [b<sup>h</sup>ramaba] in Tamang language and [natse hunθjɔ],[hide hunθjɔ], [k<sup>h</sup>ae hunθjɔ], [maulauθjɔ] and [hidθe] in Nepali indicate demonstrative sentence.

### Exclamatory Sentence

Exclamatory sentence expresses the basic emotions like happiness, anger, hatred, surprise, pain, regret (Yadav and Regmi, 2058: 233). Unlike other sentences, exclamatory sentences may not be completed. Some of the examples of exclamatory sentences from Sherpa language and Tamang language presented here.

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[o:ho tsɔ lja:mu na:ziŋma]	[o:ho gha:te zja:ba ts <sup>h</sup> a:me]	[o:ho kati ra:mri jubati]	What a beautiful girl?
[ŋiŋze sin]	[o:n ts <sup>h</sup> ja:n dɔŋzim]	[bitsara marets <sup>h</sup> a]	Alas he dead.
[aija: kaŋba ts <sup>h</sup> aksun]	[aija: kaŋ kju:t tsi]	[aija: k <sup>h</sup> u:ta: bhatsijɔ]	Ouch! my leg is broken
[e ts <sup>h</sup> ila: ziwa: kju:bu:za]	[e tidɑ: lo:ŋba]	[e kina daræko]	Oh! why are you frightened?
[la: ts <sup>h</sup> ju: pesun]	[la: kjuI k <sup>h</sup> hwazi]	[la: pani pɔ:k <sup>h</sup> jɔ]	Eh! water dropped.
[ɑ: ts <sup>h</sup> ju: khja:ba: lasun]	[ɑ: ts <sup>h</sup> ju: k <sup>h</sup> a:ŋtsi]	[ɑ: ts <sup>h</sup> ju za:dɔ bhajɔ]	Sss! it's cold.

In the above examples, both Sherpa language and Tamang language have similarly in meaning in deep structure, though they differ in surface structure.

From the structural point of view there are three types of sentences in Sherpa language and Tamang language. They are simple sentence, compound sentence and complex sentence.

### Simple Sentence

A simple sentence has only one clause. A simple sentence has two basic parts as subject and predicate (Adhikari, 2068: 268). The examples of simple sentences from Sherpa language and Tamang language are given below.



Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[do:ma: ts <sup>h</sup> emsuŋ]	[do:ma: sja:zi]	[do:ma na:tsin]	Doma danced.
[a:ŋa: nusun]	[ko:ka: kra:zi]	[na:ni rɔ:jo:]	The baby cried.
[tsebu:k kegesun]	[na:ka: kra:zi]	[b <sup>h</sup> ale ba:sjo:]	The Cock crowed.
[ts <sup>h</sup> erwa: lesun]	[na:m k <sup>h</sup> ozi]	[pa:ni a:jo:]	Water flowed.
[hwa:ma: pɔ:psun]	[nhe taizi]	[du:d <sup>h</sup> z <sup>h</sup> arjo:]	Milk dropped.

In the above sentences there is only one finite verb in both Sherpa language and Tamang language. [ts<sup>h</sup>emsuŋ], [nusun], [kegesun], [lesun] and [pɔ:psun] in Sherpa language and [sja:zi], [kra:zi], [k<sup>h</sup>ozi] and [taizi] in Tamang language are the finite verbs in simple sentences.

### Compound Sentence

Compound sentences are formed by joining two or more simple sentences with equal status (Adhikari, 2068: 271). The examples of compound sentences of Sherpa language and Tamang language are given in the following table.

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[tigi tu:tu: me ŋekiŋ tu:tu: me]	[θesenu:n k <sup>h</sup> u:ba a:re ŋainu:n k <sup>h</sup> u:ba a:re]	[u:nle pɔ:ni nu:hə:eko ts <sup>h</sup> aina maile pɔ:ni nu:hə:eko: tshoina]	Neither she nor I have taken both.
[nu:pki sama: sɔsun tama: lɔpk <sup>h</sup> a:ŋ ga:l]	[tsjo:n ts <sup>h</sup> e ka:n tsa:zi ani lɔpk <sup>h</sup> a:ŋ nazi]	[b <sup>h</sup> aile b <sup>h</sup> a:t k <sup>h</sup> a:jo ani sku:l gajo:]	Brother took meal and went to school.

In the above examples two finite verbs of Sherpa language and Tamang language are joined by similar type of conjunction as [tama:] in Sherpa language and [ani] in Tamang language.

### Complex Sentence

In a complex sentence these are more than one clauses. The clauses are not in absolute relation like compound sentences rather they are in relative relation (Adhikari, 2068: 274). In Sherpa language and Tamang language complex sentences are formed by joining dependent clauses in the independent clause. For example

Sherpa language	Tamang language	Nepali language	English language
[pemaki sa:sun gja:garla zu:lus nɔk]	[pemase biba: gjo:garila zu:lus mu:larc:]	[pema:le b <sup>h</sup> anjo: maɖsma: zu:lus rahets <sup>h</sup> a]	Pemaki said that there was a procession in the Terai.
[ŋa sama: sai sja:masa]	[ŋa ka:n tsa:ba sja: atsaba]	[ma b <sup>h</sup> a:t k <sup>h</sup> ants <sup>h</sup> u ma:su k <sup>h</sup> anna]	I eat rice but not meat.
[tak θoŋne pasang nusun]	[tsja:n mra:ŋsi pasang kra:zi]	[bag <sup>h</sup> dek <sup>h</sup> era pasang rɔ:jo:]	Pasang cried when he saw the tiger.

## CONCLUSION

Sherpas and Tamangs both of these language fall in Tibeto-Burman family. The study is qualitative in nature. The conclusion has been drawn by collecting data with purposive interview. Both the language have similar sentence structure as subject + object + verb. While comparing sentences on meaning, declarative sentence [ŋeki sama soi] in Sherpa language and [ŋai ka:n tsa:zi] in Tamang language, imperative sentence [lɔ:pk<sup>h</sup>arŋ gju:k] in Sherpa language and [lɔ:pk<sup>h</sup>arŋ niu] in Tamang language, interrogative sentence [su: sisung ?] in Sherpa language and [k<sup>h</sup>a:lɔ sizi ?] in Tamang language, optative sentence [heju: hɔsi luŋki k<sup>h</sup>undɔsi] in Sherpa and [tɔrse hints<sup>h</sup>am lab: luŋse bɔ:rka:i] in Tamang language, subjunctive sentence [hɔriŋ azja:ŋ p<sup>h</sup>epkizu] in Sherpa language and [tini a:sjaŋ febarbalɔ] in Tamang language, demonstrative sentence [num ts<sup>h</sup>emsu gju:θjo] in Sherpa language and [buriŋ sja:sai taselɔ] in Tamang language and exclamatory sentence [o:hɔ tsɔ lja:mu na:ziŋmɔ] in Sherpa language and [o:hɔ ghɔ:te zja:ba ts<sup>h</sup>a:me] in Tamang language seem similarly. Simple sentence [do:ma: ts<sup>h</sup>emsuŋ] in Sherpa language and [do:ma: sja:zi] in Tamang language, and complex sentence [pemaki sa:sun gja:garla zu:lus nɔk] in Sherpa language and [pemase biba: gjo:garila zu:lus mu:larc:] in Tamang language bear similarity. Both of these languages are agrammatical.

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