

Performance and Text of the Manglakhangma Ritual: An Anthropological Linguistics Analysis

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1 Introduction

This paper deals with the *Manglakhangma* ritual, one of the endangered rituals practised among Chhulung Rai people, inhabitants of east Nepal. More precisely, it analyses the text used in the ritual and performance strategies adopted in the ritual. This is a descriptive study whose aim is to describe the text and performance strategies of the *Manglakhangma* ritual anthropo-linguistically. I have recorded the data from the field on the occasion of real performance of the *Manglakhangma* ritual. Then, I transcribed the text and analysed it through toolbox. Text which is used in the course of ritual performance is also known as the ritual language. It is not ordinary language since ordinary community members cannot understand it perfectly. It is spoken by only certain persons such as *wattong* 'knowledgeable elders' and tribal shamans.

There are three major annual rituals celebrated by *Chhulung* Rai people, inhabitants of *Akhisalla* of Dhankuta, east Nepal numbering 2046 population altogether according to latest census report 2011 (Lama and Gurung 2014). Among three, the *Wadhangme* (pronounced as *wad^hangme*) is the one important ritual. It is celebrated for six days. It is a group dance festival. People of different age gather in particular place and dance in a group making circle. On this occasion, each household organises one ritual which is called *Manglakhangma*, part of *Wadhangme* ritual. The term *Manglakhangma* is transcribed as *Manlak^hangma* which consists of two words, namely *manla* and *k^hangma*. The first word is also further categorised into two morphemes, namely *man* and *la*. Here the word *man* has the meaning which means 'the king' and the second morpheme *la* cannot be interpreted in the *Chhulung* language. Similarly, the second word *khangma* consists of /*k^hang*/ 'look', a stem and /-*ma*/ an 'infinitive marker'. It means 'to look'. In this way, the term *Manlak^hangma* can be etymologically interpreted as 'to look the deity'. But, this etymological interpretation of *Manlak^hangma* cannot be able to capture the true sense of ritual if we analyse the objective of the performance of the ritual. The real purpose of performance of the ritual is to do future prediction through divination in the presence of the deities. Here, I have used the term *Manglakhangma* rather than *Manlak^hangma* throughout this article for my writing convenience. I have analysed the two aspects of *Manglakhangma* ritual, viz. Performance and text. While describing the *Manglakhangma* ritual, I have followed some issues practised by anthropological linguists such as Gaenzle (2002), Rai (2007, 2012).

2 Performance of *Manglakhangma* ritual

In the performance of *Manglakhangma* ritual, there are three participants whose roles are obligatory. The first one is ancestral deities who are so-called participants, but it is believed that all ancestral deities enter the house that day which happens once a year. The second one is tribal priest who is one of the close relatives of the householder and the third one is *wattong* 'a knowledgeable elder'. It is not so long ritual and can be finished within 3 to 4 hours but it depends on the preparation and style of knowledgeable elder. There are series of small worships before performing the *Manglakhangma* ritual. These small worships are organised for addressing the deities. On the occasion of the *Manglakhangma* ritual, Chhulung people worship and address some major ancestral deities which are *Budhahang*, *Ruchchhehang*, *Pomanri* and *Piyala*. *Budhahang* is father deity, *Ruchchhehang* is son deity, *Pomanri* is an adopted son deity and *Piyala* is followers of them. Starting worship is performed outside the house in which *Ruchchhehang*, *Pomanri* and *Piyala* are addressed. Then, inside the house, *Budhahang* is addressed and then they perform the *Manglakhangma* ritual. All of these series of worships are mandatory to perform the *Manglakhangma* ritual.

It is told that ancestral deities, especially *Budhahang* and other deities walk across the village on the occasion of *Manglakhangma* ritual so they should be worshipped. When they finish making a temporary altar, they sit in line facing the altar. For this case, a priest is selected from outside the household members. The priest is not a priest but he is a so-called priest. It is not necessary that a priest should know about the traditional knowledge. In most of the cases, the priest puts hands together and follows the instruction given by the knowledgeable elders. In each ritual, the knowledgeable elders instruct the priest what to do one after another. The knowledgeable elder chants the *mundum* text. Priest, knowledgeable elders and other participants squat in a line. One or more than one person can work as knowledgeable elders. There should be at least one knowledgeable elder who is able to chant the *mundum* text. The knowledgeable elder addresses the ancestral deities. In each ritual, *Ruchchhechang*, *Pomnari* and *Piyala* are worshipped outside the house and they are not worshipped inside the house. But it is believed that all deities, *Ruchchhechang*, *Pomnari* and *Piyala* enter the house on the occasion of *Manglakhangma* ritual and listen to their request. Then, the knowledgeable elder chants the *mundum* text continuously for the sake of householder. Normally, each text is started and ended with *baba pameswora* which words seem to be borrowed from the Sanskrit. But it is not sure about how they started to use such Sanskrit words.

The main pragmatic meaning of performing the *Manglakhangma* ritual is to address the ancestral deities and make them happy. If the deities became happy, it is not seen a bad sign in divination. Bad sign is observed. For divination, they sacrifice two chickens which chanting the *mundum* and chickens are killed by hitting on their back with opposite part of knife. Then they catch chicken's legs and hang it and if the chicken vomit blood, it is taken as a good sign and if chickens do not vomit blood, it is taken as a bad sign. Vomiting blood has an important cultural value among *Chhulung* Rai. When they offer *pakuwa* 'roasted meet' to the deities, they eat rice and meat as holy food. They distribute local liquor and local beer to participants. They think that a piece of ginger used in the performance of the *Manglakhangma* ritual is important for avoiding any kind of illness.

2.1 Context *Manglakhangma* is one of the major parts of the *Wadhangme* festival celebrated once a year for six days. It is celebrated on the fixed day. Among *Chhulung*, it is started on Wednesday immediately after the full moon of *Kartik* (Oct-Nov) and ended it to the following Monday. From Wednesday to Monday, this ritual is celebrated so it is called a week-long festival. In six days, each household should arrange the performance of the *Manglakhangma* ritual. Among *Chhulung*, Thursday, Friday and Saturday are common days for ordinary people to perform the *Manglakhangma* ritual.

There are certain rules to obey during these six days. Nobody from *Chhulung* community works in the field and makes a journey for any place far from the house. This practice is called as *baran* 'restriction'. Sometimes, it happens to violate the case or event to make a journey from the house. In such a particular case, the person who needs to make a journey from the house should offer a pair of pigeons in the name of *Budhahang*. Then *Budhahang*, it is told, forgives him/her and allows him/her to travel. It is believed that *Budhahang* travels in each house during the six days and he is observing whether they are violating the rules or not and recalling him or not. It might be the case that everybody should worship and recall *Budhahang* during these six days without working in the field and traveling to any place. When *Budhahang* is worshipped and recalled, he will take care of all as his children.

Normally, most of the people start the *Manglakhangma* worship in the morning. Sometimes, it can be performed in daytime and in the evening. It depends on the householders. It does not take a long time in performance. Normally, everything is completed within four to five hours, but it depends on both householder's management and the knowledgeable elder's direction. For the *Manglakhangma* ritual performance, the householder arranges the date and time. Then, he calls neighbours and at least one elder person who can work as the knowledgeable elder. Everybody gathers in his house according to his request for participation. Members of the household prepare the things which are required for the performance of *Manglakhangma* ritual. Pig, chickens and eggs are offered on the occasion of the *Manglakhangma* ritual. There are outside and inside worship in the *Manglakhangma* ritual. Outside worship is performed outside the house. It is normally done in the courtyard of the house. In the outside worship, they make a temporary altar with spreading three pairs of *khalabu laphok* (*guhēloko pa# N*) but they can use the banana leaves on the occasion of *Siruwa* and *Nuwagi*. Each pair is for each deity. First pair of *khalabu laphok* which is placed on the right-hand side is for *Pomnari*, *Budhahang's* adopted son, the second pair which is placed on the centre is for *Rechchhehang*, *Budhahang's* son and the last pair is for *Piyala*, *Budhahang's* followers. On each pairs of leaves, one to two handful of rice is placed on them. Besides rice, they place *siribung* flower on the leaves and put one *lota N* 'small water pot' near the altar for sprinkle. While performing the outside worship, the priest faces to east and starts the worship from the central leaves which is set for *Ruchchhehang*. On the occasion of the *Manglakhangma* ritual, priest (householder) offers one pig in the name of *Ruchchhehang* and some of the participants cut the pig near the

altar. They do sprinkle blood in the altar. At that time, the knowledgeable elder chants the *mundum* text. Then, they shift to the next altar which is set on the right-hand side. That altar is set for *Pomnari*. They offer only pigeon for *Pomnari* because he is a Brahmin boy. Then, they shift to the altar of *Piyala*. For the *Piyala*, they offer only rice and flowers but not sacrifice. Lastly, they offer *pakuwa* N 'roasted meat' to the respective altars. In this way, they finish the outside worship on the occasion of the *Manglakhangma*.

After a while, they enter the house and worship the *Budhahang*. For worshipping the *Budhahang*, there is one calabash required for setting its altar and one pair of leaves is placed in front of calabash and put rice and flowers on them. Same water pot is used to sprinkle water. They offer eggs, chicken etc. but it is not compulsory. It depends on their promise and plan. After finishing the *Budhahang*'s worship, they prepare the temporary altar for *Manglakhangma*. For worshipping the *Manglakhangma*, they use the banana leaves and put a pair of banana leaves on the floor. Then, one *mana* 'approximately half a kilogram' rice is placed on the banana leaves. They put three calabashes filled with *arkha* C 'local liquor', one *warbi* C 'clay pot' filled with *thi* C 'local beer' and one *tongba* N 'bamboo container' filled with *mangaca* C 'local beer of millet'. Besides these things, they put two leaf plates contained with *patana* 'pickle of radish'. After setting the altar, they start the worship. In the *Manglakhangma* ritual, household head cannot work as priest in other rituals. Someone from outside the house can work as priest for this ritual. Then, the knowledgeable elder starts to chant the *mundum* text and they offer chickens and kill the chicken with hitting by knife on its back. Then, they catch its legs and hang. If it vomits blood, that is a good sign. If it does not vomit blood from beak, it is taken as a bad sign. It is a traditional way for divination and predicting the future events. Then, they cook rice of one *mana chamal* N which was placed on the altar with chicken offered to *Manglakhangma*. It is called *manglasa* C and it is distributed to all as holy food. In this way, they finish the *Manglakhangma* ritual.

2.2 Required Materials They prepare a temporary altar very quickly. The temporary altar is prepared inside the house which may be near the hearthstones. In preparation of the altar, they spread the tip of the banana leaves on the floor. Then, they measure one *mana* N 'approximately half a kilo' rice and placed on the banana leaves. Then, they place ginger and unidentified flower. They say *rangphung* (*siribung barabung* in the *mundum* text). Further, three calabashes filled with local liquor are placed near the banana leaves. Then, they put one *tongba* and one *warbi* C 'clay pot' filled with local beer. Then, they place two leaf plates filled with pickle of radish. When they place these things, the construction of the altar is completed. Then, they start to perform the worship. Required materials for the worship of the *Manglakhangma* consist of the following materials.

- a pair of banana leaves
- rice placed on the banana leaves
- ginger
- *siribung barabung* (also known as *rangphung*) 'unidentified flower'
- three *wahums* C 'calabash' filled with local *arkha* C 'liquor'
- one *warbi* C 'clay pot' filled with *thi* C 'local beer'
- one *tongba* 'bamboo container' filled with *thi* C 'local beer'
- two leaf plates filled with *patana* C 'pickle of radish'
- one *lota* N 'water pot' filled with water for sprinkle
- two chickens
- one knife
- leaf plates

2.3 Sample of ritual text The text used in the ritual depends on the knowledgeable elder. It can vary person to person but the meaning of the text, style, rhythm is basically the same. I recorded the following text in the real ritual performance in one of the houses of *Akhisalla*. This text was chanted by Lal Bahadur Khukkhang Rai, 61 years old in the recording time (it was recorded in October, 2011). It is part of text (see Rai, 2012, 2015) of the *Manglakhangma* ritual.

- (1) *baba parmeswora khan bhonekona ambirahaṅ lo [Text_1]*
 baba parmeswora khan bhoneko-na ambira-haṅ lo
 Oh Lord 2s saying-PTCL Ambira-king PTCL
 N N Ch N Ch-RL
 Oh, Lord you became the king Ambirahang.
- (2) *rucchehaṅ lo alisachekina [Text_2]*
 rucchehaṅ lo a-lis-a-che-kina
 Rucche-king PTCL 2-be-PST-d-SEQ
 Ch-RL Ch
 You became the king Ruchchhehang.
- (3) *khan bhonekona naibakna [Text_3]*
 khan bhoneko-na naibak-na
 2s saying-PTCL here-PTCL
 Ch N Ch
 You (are) here.
- (4) *kāsi dillima uthapanna alisache [Text_4]*
 kāsi dillima uthapanna a-lis-a-che
 place_name origin 2-be-PST-d
 You originated in Kasi/Delhi.
- (5) *alisache na [Text_5]*
 a-lis-a-che na
 2-be-PST-d PTCL
 You became (originated there).
- (6) *Naṅkhenagolo [Text_6]*
 naṅkhena-golo
 in this way-PTCL
 In this way
- (7) *kohina mewaluṅmendaluṅlaa akadache [Text_11]*
 kohi-na mewaluṅ mendaluṅ-laa a-kad-a-che
 any-PTCL a_place a_place-MED 2-come-PST-d
 Some of you came from Mewalung Mendalung (unidentified place)
- (8) *akadaktachina [Text_12]*
 a-kad-akt-a-chi-na
 2-come-IPFV-PST-d-PTCL
 In the process of arriving
- (9) *kohi dillilaa akadache [Text_13]*
 Kohi dilli-laa a-kad-a-che
 some a_place-MED 2-come-PST-d
 Some of you came from Delhi (capital city of India).

These sentences in the text 3 to 13 narrate the origin of the deities. According to the text, they were from Kāsi and Delhi, probably today's major city and capital city of India respectively. It is far from the reality Chhulung Rai people were from Kāsi or Delhi if we consult the modern history of Nepal and India.

- (10) *akadache [Text_14]*
 a-kad-a-che
 2-come-PST-d
 You came.
- (11) *iti naibakna hecchawaa naibakna hambaknagolo [Text_42]*
 iti naibak-na hecchawaa naibak-na hambak-na-golo
 this here-PTCL household_head here-PTCL today-PTCL-PTCL
 Today, you are here in this household's house,
- (12) *kohi barkhe bandi bhagbandi ayuṅsache [Text_43]*
 kohi barkhe bandi bhagbandi a-yuṅs-a-che
 some year partition 2-keep-PST-2
 You kept once a year.
- (13) *bhagbandi ayuṅsachuna naibakna [Text_44]*
 bhagbandi a-yuṅs-a-chu-na naibak-na
 partition 2-keep-PST-d-PTCL here-PTCL
 You kept partition here.
- (14) *kohi pichami hecchawa naibakna [Text_45]*
 Kohi pichami hecchawa naibak-na
 some shelter household_head here-PTCL
 The household head is under your protection.
- (15) *janapa sunapa jokhana khaṅse [Text_51]*
 janapa sunapa jokhana kha-ṅs-e
 knowledgeable hearer divination see-PERF-PST
 Some knowledgeable (elders) had look divination.
- (16) *hambakna anchijana bahalmi [Text_52]*
 hambak-na anchijana-na bahal-mi
 today-PTCL 1de-PTCL altar-LOC
 (We are) in the altar today.
- (17) *pasuṅhaṅakka muglaa ambirahaṅ appinu jokhana khaṅsachiṅe [Text_53]*
 pasuṅhaṅ-akka mug-laa ambirahaṅ appi-nu jokhana khaṅ-ṅs-a-chi-ṅe
 elder-POSS hand-ABL a_person self-PTCL divination see-PERF-PST-d-EXCL
 You, Ambirahang, had seen divination on behalf of elders.
- (18) *bhonikana [Text_54]*
 bhon-ikana
 It is told.
- (19) *iti hambakna wasala chumbokla kuchommi iti naibakna [Text_55]*
 Iti hambak-na wasala chumbokla ku-chom-mi iti naibak-na
 this today-PTCL a_cock a_cock 3POSS-upper-LOC this here-PTCL
 Here is chicken (for offering).
- (20) *kohi toṅba khidia warbia saṅmaya soloṅwa naibakna [Text_56]*
 kohi toṅba khidia warbia saṅmaya soloṅwa naibak-na
 some bamboo container ginger calabash here-PTCL
 Some of them are a bamboo container, ginger, calabash for offering.

- (21) *eti nai bidhi [Text_57]*
 eti nai bidhi
 this much process
 Offerings are this much.
- (22) *eti patana panawa garikana [Text_58]*
 eti patana panawa gar-ikana
 this radish_piece beetle do-SEQ
 Piece of radish and beetle are offering.
- (23) *eti panphul naibakna siribuṅ barabuṅakka kuchommi [Text_59]*
 eti panphul naibak-na siribuṅ barabuṅ-akka ku-chom-mi
 this flower here-PTCL a_flower a_flower-POSS 3POSS-upper-LOC
 Here are flowers on the altar.
- (24) *naibakna barkhebandi sewa bhagbandi ayuṅsache [Text_60]*
 naibak-na barkhebandi sewa bhagbandi a-yuṅs-a-che
 here-PTCL year worship partition 2-keep-PST-d
 Here, you established a system of yearly worship and offerings.
- (25) *eti samma pasuṅhaṅakka khanchi ambirahaṅ rucchehaṅ [Text_61]*
 eti samma pasuṅhaṅ-akka khanchi ambirahaṅ rucchehaṅ
 this upto elder-POSS 2d a_deity a_deity
 You are Ambirahang and Rucchehang as elders.
- (26) *khanchina dudkunda sattenachi [Text_62]*
 khanchi-na dudkunda satte-na-chi
 2d-PTCL pond of milk true-PTCL-d
 You are true like the pond of milk.
- (27) *eti naibakna hecchawa ujjelo saṅlo sanca subista naibakna [Text_63]*
 eti naibak-na hecchawa ujjelo saṅlo sanca subista naibak-na
 this here-PTCL household_head light clean fine healthy here-PTCL
 Be household healthy and wealthy.
- (28) *rawachiwa annadhanna chembi casumkhiwa jiu parana naibakna [Text_64]*
 ranawachiwa annadhanna chembi casumkhiwa jiu parana naibak-na
 soul crops property crops body life here-PTCL
 raise the soul, be rich and live long.
- (29) *ujjelo saṅlo sanca subista naibakna [Text_65]*
 ujjelo saṅlo sanca subista naibak-na
 light clean fine healthy here-PTCL
 Be healthy and wealthy.
- (30) *nembanuṅ chimmanuṅ yuṅmahima bhonikana naibakna [Text_66]*
 nembanuṅ chimmanuṅ yuṅ-ma-hi-ma bhon-ikana naibak-na
 next year, a_year_next_year stay-INF can-INF tell-SEQ here-PTCL
 It is told that (household members) can live in the days to come.
- (31) *picawa sammawa naibakna kohi pasuṅhaṅakka bidhi [Text_67]*
 picawa sammawa naibak-na kohi pasuṅhaṅ-akka bidhi
 a_cock a_cock here-PTCL some elder-POSS process
 Chicken is offered to elders (deity) as requirement.

- (32) *ciņa calla e pameswora [Text_68]*
 ciņa calla e pameswora
 Oh, Lord, show the signs for future prediction.

2.4 Textual analysis: Basic features This oral tradition is guided by *mundum*. In the performance of rituals across Kirati groups they have their own ritual experts. There are numbers of categories of ritual experts. In *Chhulung* like other Kirati groups, there are numbers of categories of ritual experts who are responsible to produce the *mundum* language to address the deities. I have categorised the *mundum* language into two types though there are numbers of categories of ritual experts. These two types of *mundum* language are the shamanic and the ritual language (Rai, 2007). My concern, here, is to analyse the ritual language rather than the shamanic language.

The shamanic language is different from the ritual and ordinary language. It is spoken by only tribal shamans. In the case of *Chhulung* community, only *naṅsuba*, *chhambak* can chant the shamanic language when they possess the deity. In the shamanic scene, they produce such language. It is very difficult to understand and interpret perfectly. I have recorded some and asked them who produced that language. They could not perfectly translate the language used in addressing the deity. There are some differences between the shamanic language and the ritual language. First evidence is that the shamanic language is chanted by only tribal shaman who possesses the deity whereas the ritual language can be chanted by both tribal shamans or knowledgeable elders. Second evidence is that the shamanic language is used only for superhuman beings, especially ancestral deities whereas the ritual language is used for both human and superhuman beings.

The ritual language is one of the versions of the *mundum* language which can be chanted by both tribal shamans and knowledgeable elders. It is different from the ordinary language. There are some evidences which distinguish the ritual language from the ordinary language. First evidence is that the ritual language cannot be chanted and understood by all native speakers. Second evidence is that the ritual language is used to address both human and superhuman beings. There are two types of modes of speech. One is monologue and the other is dialogue. In the monologue, the speakers address the deities continuously. In this case, human beings address the superhuman beings. In a formal ceremony like marriage, special type of language is used to communicate between two parties in dialogue. In such dialogue, one is addressee and the other is addressor. Both of them are human beings.

There are some basic features of the ritual language which make the ritual language different from the ordinary language. The first feature of the ritual language is poetics. The ritual language is poetic language. There are so many features which make it so poetics. Some of the features are rhymes, metaphors, metonymies, parallelism, binomials etc. Another feature is formalisation. The ritual language is more thoroughly structured, or patterned, on the stylistic and semantic level, and hence discourse is more predictable (Gaenzle, 2002: 11). The formalisation refers to the formal speech, a type of speech. The speech can be formal speech if the speaker is very careful about pronunciation, selecting the words and sentence structure. It consists of code consistency, formal setting, focused situation, timing, certain process and authority. These features are found in the ritual language (Rai, 2007). So the ritual language consists of full of formality rather than productivity. For example, if they address the *Budhahang*, they start with certain words. If they address the *Pomnari*, they start with certain words. It does not matter who is chanting the text but all of them chant the same way except pause, personal style and vocal quality. It means that the discourse remains unchanged though there are personal style in chanting.

2.5 Rhetorical strategies of the ritual text Rhetorical strategies play an important role in textual performance. Rhetoric is not very much different from poetics. They are closely related to each other and poetics, in general sense, is a part of rhetoric. The rhetoric, in general sense, refers to the art of speaking. It is related to the art of oratory. It is related to a kind of strategy which makes the speech more effective and attractive. Rhetorical strategies aim at achieving particular reactions in the addressee, i.e. making him/her comply with certain expectations (Gaenzle, 2002: 144, Demmer and Gaenzle, 2007). In the performance of the ritual speech, the speakers cannot chant the speech in a direct way. They request the deities in an indirect manner very carefully to fulfil their expectations. Thoroughly structured, patterned and figurative languages are found in the ritual speech. So, it seems to be formulaic language. There are some strategies which make the speech more indirect and effectiveness.

Rhetorical strategy is concerned with the time, location, participants, context of the ritual. Time is important issue for ritual. Timing of the ritual performance is not based on arbitrary of the host. It is based on the traditions and follows a certain argument. It is believed that ancestral deities are walking across the village on the occasion of the *Manglakhangma* ritual. The speaker addresses the time or year of the ritual performance in ritual speech. Location is another important issue for ritual performance. The performance is inside the house or outside the house. The speaker

tries to relate the situation and location. While addressing the deity, the speaker specifies the addressee and offers them accordingly. Normally, in the text, the deities who are spoken to are addressed on the basis of their social identity. For instance, some of deities are addressed as the *hang* 'king'. If the text used in the ritual address Timing, location, participants, context, which make the speech more effectiveness and influence the deities. So, these issues play the important role for rhetorical strategy.

The way of presentation, selecting words, making syntax and using figures of speech are also important in rhetoric. The speaker follows a certain rhythm like adopting a formulaic way. The speaker maintains same beat of chanting and uses the stress where it is needed and unstress where it is needed. The way of presentation is important for the art of oratory. The ritual language is so poetic because of number of ways but the way of presentation make it live. Selecting words are another important strategy which make the speech more effective. There are so many typical words which are used in the ritual. Speech. For examples, the speaker uses the words *baba pameswora* 'Oh lord' to start and emphatic markers like *lo, na*, etc to give emphasis on special case. In the ritual speech, another interesting issue which makes the speech rhetoric is the sentence construction. Most of the verbs in the sentences are in sequential converb. For example, *rucchehaj lo alisachekina* [text 2], here *-kina* is sequential marker and it makes the speech more rhetoric. Similarly, in the sample text 57, *khanchina dudkunda sattenachi* 'you are pond of milk' is an example of figures of speech. The deities are compared with milk, which is taken as purity. Because of these features, the art of speaking is maintained in the ritual speech which is called rhetoric in the ritual speech.

2.6 Poetic forms of the ritual text Poeticity is another important feature of the ritual text. The ritual speech is full of formulaic. In the general sense, the ritual speech is a rigid, structurally patterned and formal. Further, there are other features like parallelism, figures, images, construction of sentences which make the ritual speech more poetical forms. In this text, there are three issues to be poeticity in the ritual speech. They are binomials, syntactical structure and figures of speech.

Binomial is the term coined by Allen (1978) in his article. He analysed the ritual idiom linguistically and used this term to address the paired nouns. Paired nouns like reduplication are called binomials. For example, *sirjani gurjani* [text 6], *pichami hecchawa* [text 42], *patana panawa* [text 58], *siribuñ barabuñ* [text 54] are typical examples of binomials. They seem to be reduplication, but they are not true reduplication. Reduplication stands for repetition of all or a part of a lexical item carrying a semantic modification. Reduplication, thus, can either be partial or complete (Abbi, 1992; 131 as cited in Rai, 2007). In this way, the reduplication is a process where either a morpheme or a lexical item is repeated with grammatical and semantic function. There is a vast difference between the morphemes or lexical items before and after reduplication grammatically and semantically. If there is reduplication, it carries changes in word classes and semantics. The features found in the reduplication cannot be found in the binomials. The binomials have some unique characteristics. In the binomials unlike reduplication, there is no repetition of a morpheme and a lexical item. Two separate nouns come together as a paired one and both of them cannot be separated from each other. In such a paired noun, first noun cannot be separated from the second noun. There are two types of binomials. First type is called typical/regular binomials and the second type is called irregular binomials (Rai, 2007: 95-96). Binomials consist of two limbs. In each limb, there consists of two or three syllables and second/third/last syllable of each limb is identical. It is main characteristic feature of typical binomials. In irregular binomials, they can be deviated from the standard feature. Binomials can be taken as the smallest unit of parallelism. Pervasive parallelism can be found in binomials. Parallel structures can be found in different levels, namely phonological, prosodic, morphological, syntactic and semantic level (Rai, 2007: 93-95). Such pervasive parallelism plays an important role to make the ritual speech more poetical.

Next issue is syntactic structure. The ritual language has its own basis syntactic structure. Sentence construction is simple and short. In the ritual speech, typical construction of syntax is L1, L2 V. Here, L1 stands for first limb, L2 stands for second limb and V stands for verb. For example,

- (33) *eti patina panawa garikana* [text 58]
 eti patana panawa gar-ikana
 this radish_piece beetle do-SEQ
 Piece of radish and beetle are offering.

I have observed some features in the construction of sentences. Imperatives which give order directly are not found in the ritual speech. Ordinary verbal forms are found in the ritual speech. Non-finite verbal forms, especially

sequential converb *-kina* are frequently found in the ritual speech. Sometimes, repetition of verbs can be found which makes the ritual speech more poetical.

(34) *kohi dillilaa akadache* [text 11],
 kohi dilli-laa a-kad-a-che
 some a_place-MED 2-come-PST-d
 Some of you came from Delhi (capital city of India).

(35) *akadache* [text 12]
 a-kad-a-che
 2-come-PST-d
 You came.

Likewise, next issue in the ritual language is figures of speech. In the sample text, there is a good example of metaphor.

(36) *khanchina dudkunda sattenachi* [text 62]
 khanchi-na dudkunda satte-na-chi
 2d-PTCL pond of milk true-PTCL-d
 You are true (like) the pond of milk.

In this example, truth is compared with milk and milk is taken as the symbol of purity. This example proves that metaphor is found in the ritual speech. Further, there are other types of figures of speech. One of them is metonymy. In text, the speaker addresses the deity as saying that 'you are creator' (*sirjani gurjani* [text 6]). The deities are requested as describing their qualities. In this way, these features play an important role to make the ritual speech more poetical.

2.7 Code mixing and vanishing the ritual idiom The ritual language can exist no longer. There are so many reasons behind it. One of the most important reasons is code mixing in the ritual idiom. In the sample text, there are 278 words altogether. Out of them, 39 words are true ritual words, 86 words are from the Nepali language and 153 words are from the *Chhulung* ordinary language. If we take the basis of this small corpus, it is proving us with clues. Majority words are from either the ordinary *Chhulung* language or Nepali language. There are a few typical rituals which cannot be preserved easily. It can be preserved if we adopt the effective planning. The other reason of vanishing is that new generation is not practising the oral tradition. They are not eager to continue their own traditional practice. So, young generation is not adopting such traditional oral knowledge. The other reason is that people are migrating from their own traditional settlement to other places. They are scattering in different places so they do not maintain and continue their own traditional practice. So these reasons hit the vanishing the ritual language. It is needed to address such issues before its disappearance.

3 Conclusion: Continuity and changes

In the ritual, there are two strong components, viz. performance and text. Both of them are equally important to analyse the ritual. While analysing the ritual, there are two issues which are continuity and changes. Both continuity and changes are occurring in the performance of ritual, incantation of the text and belief systems. If we analyse the *Manglakhangma* ritual, there are some overt changes which can be observed easily by anybody. It is no doubt that each household of *Chhulung* Rai is continuing to perform this ritual as the mandatory. It is a proof of continuation. *Chhulung* Rai people are, to some extent, orthodox because they are continuing their culture. Though they are continuing the rituals, there are some changes found in many respects. In their belief system, nobody is allowed to fight each other during six days at the time of *Wadhangme*/festival because it is a period of *baran* N (restriction). But, when I was there in *Chhulung* area on the occasion of *Wadhangme*/, two persons were fighting each other. In this way, they are violating belief system.

Similarly, in the case of performance, there are so many changes. Performance is affected by many things. In the past, they used to offer local chicken's eggs but nowadays, they buy broiler's eggs to offer because broiler's eggs are cheaper than local eggs. Offerings are affected by its price and availability. Similarly, another interesting issue about

changing patterns is that they mix both millet and water for the requirement of *thi C* 'local beer'. It is ad hoc way to perform and finish the ritual.

Similarly, the ritual speech is full of code mixing which is a good example of changing in the ritual speech. In the ritual speech, there are so many words borrowed from the ordinary and Nepali language. Typical ritual words are being replaced by either ordinary or Nepali language. If we take the basis of one sample text recorded in the real performance, it shows the clear picture of changing pattern in the ritual speech. In this text, typical ritual words occupy only 14% of the total text. Similarly, Nepali words occupy 31% of the total text and *Chhulung* ordinary words occupy 55% of the total text. This fact proves that ritual speech is totally being replaced by words from the other languages.

Abbreviations

2	Second person
3	Third person
ADDR	Addressive
C	<i>Chhulung</i> word
Ch	<i>Chhulung</i> language
Ch-RL	<i>Chhulung</i> ritual language
CONV	Converb
d	Dual
de	Dual exclusive
di	Dual inclusive
excl	Exclusive
FT	Free translation
GE	Gloss in English
HON	Honorific
IPFV	Imperfective
LOC	Locative
MB	Morpheme break
MED	Mediative
N	Nepali
NEG	Negative
NOML	Nominalizer
PERF	Perfective
POSS	Possessive
PST	Past tense
PTCL	Particle
s	Singular
SEQ	Sequence
Tx	Text

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