

Mangde (མང་ལྗེ་བའི་ཁ་) in Bhutan

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1. Introduction

Mangde or, in Dzongkha, མང་ལྗེ་བའི་ཁ་ Mangdebi-kha, is a language of the East Bodish group spoken in the Mangde river basin, on the eastern slopes of the Black Mountains of west central Bhutan and also in adjacent parts of the western Black Mountains. The language is also spoken in several villages to the east of the Mangdechu between Trongsa and Zh'ämngang. The language is also known by the names 'Nyenkha¹, Ngenkha, Henkha, Mangdekha and a slew of loconyms whereby the language is named after one of the villages where it is spoken. The Mangde speaking area is bounded to the west by Dzongkha, to the east by the Bumthang language, to the north by the Lakha speaking area, and to the south by the Kheng and Black Mountain Mönpa languages. The Mangde speakers refer to Dzongkha as 'Ngalongkha and to the Brokpas of Sephu Geo to the north as Lap 'inhabitants of the mountain passes', which is also what these Brokpas call themselves.

There does not exist any census on the population of the speaker of this language. Earlier literature, however, just show that the number of speaker is 10,000 (van Driem 1998). All of those who speak Mangde are regarded as members of the Mangde ethnic group, but not all of them speak Mangde. All ages and sexes use Dzongkha, and most people can talk about common topic in Dzongkha, the national language in Bhutan which is regarded as economically and politically advantageous.

Mangde is one of East Bodish languages in Tibeto-Burman stock. These languages are considered the most archaic branch of Bodish, more conservative in some respects than Old Tibetan. The genetic classification of Mangde within the Tibeto-Burman family is still unclear, but it is usually classified in the East Bodish branch, which comprises languages such as Kurtöp, Kheng, Nubikha, Dzala and Chali. I assume these languages may be lexically and grammatically close to TGTm languages (Tamang-Gurung-Thakali-Manang)². These languages share many features, but it is still unknown whether these innovations are due to chance resemblance, borrowing, language contact or genetic relationship. The investigation on subgrouping of these

¹ It means 'language of yore', which is derived from the older term 'Ngenlung.

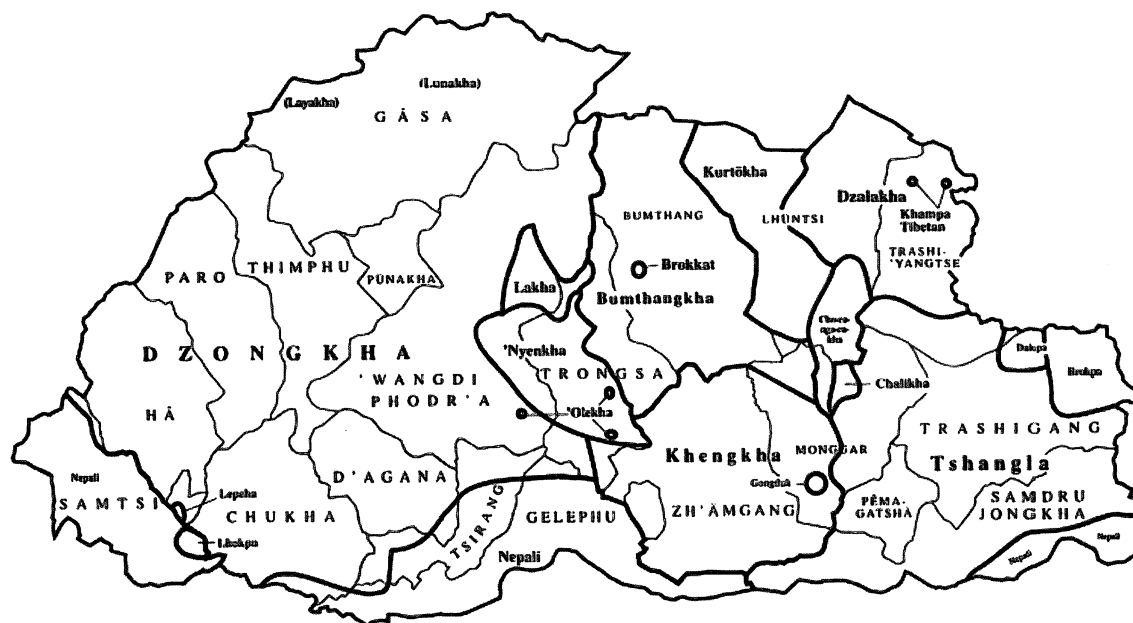
² Suwa (1981) suggests the possibility of genetic relation of TGTm and East Bodish languages. See the data set below:

	'two'	'four'	'six'	'seven'
Mangde	zoen	bre	drok	nis
Kheng	zon	ble	do	nī
Tamang	nhi	ble	tu	nis
Manang	nhi	ble	tu	nis

languages deserves further study.

Now with more universal access to Dzongkha schooling and to radio and television, even small children in remote villages can speak Dzongkha. The number of fluent Mangde speakers becomes smaller year by year. As van Driem (2007) claims, Mangde seems to be a potentially endangered language.

Languages of Bhutan



Distribution of Languages in Bhutan (van Driem, 1998: 37)

Dzongkha	160,000
Cho-ca-nga-ca-kha	20,000
Lakha	8,000
Brokpa	5,000
Tibetan	1,000
Brokkat	300
Kheng	40,000
Bumthang	30,000
Dzala	15,000
Kurtöp	10,000
Mangdebi-kha	10,000
Chali	1,000
Black Mountain	1,000
Dakpa	1,000
Tshangla	138,000
Gongduk	2,000
Lepcha	2,000
Nepali	156,000

Estimated numbers of speakers of languages in Bhutan (van Driem 2001:871)

2. Typological overview

Mangde is an agglutinative language. Mangde can be said to be an SOV language, meaning that the basic constituent order of transitive sentences is subject - object - verb. However, strictly speaking, that statement is not accurate. The Mangde language obeys a strict grammatical constraint requiring that the sentence end with a verb. As long as the sentence obeys this constraint, a permutation of the major constituents in a sentence is permissible.

When a given sentence contains both direct object and indirect object, the most usual order is S IO DO V. Cases in Mangde are indicated by postpositions. The case system is ergative-absolutive. Mangde also possesses a postposition that indicates topic. Mangde possess postposition, but lacks prepositions. The genitive is indicated by postposition -gi/-i. The genitive phrases precede the possessed noun. The genitive postposition cannot be omitted.

There are two open lexical classes: nouns, those forms which can take definite marking and number marking, and verbs, those forms which can take the negative prefix and person marking. Adjectives are a subset of the verbs, and can be identified as a set by their semantics and their morphosyntactic behavior. Closed lexical classes include pronouns, including demonstratives, interrogatives, and personal pronouns, classifiers, postpositions, definite/indefinite markers, clause-final particles, and adverbs. Of these the pronouns and classifiers are subsets of the nouns.

A demonstrative pronoun precedes the noun it qualifies. Mangde does not have any classifier, therefore, when nouns occur with numerals, anything are attached to the numerals. An adjective usually precedes the noun it qualifies. Mangde employs genitive maker to form relative clauses. The verb in a relative clause takes the modifier form, i.e. verb stem + genitive marker.

There are intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive verbs, plus some ambitransitive verbs where the single argument of the intransitive use corresponds to the actor of the transitive use. Transitives can be formed from intransitives, or ditransitives from transitives, by the addition of the causative suffix. There is no intransitivizing marking other than the reduplication that marks the reciprocal. When a verb is part of a predicate (verb complex), it can be preceded by an adverbial, a directional prefix, a negative marking prefix, and an aspectual prefix, and can be followed by the causative suffix, aspectual suffixes, and person marking suffixes. This complex can be followed by clause final particles marking illocutionary force, modality, mood, and evidentials.

Verbs can change the forms by means of suffixes, for tense, aspect, mood, style etc. Mangde does not have honorific forms, but style might be expressed by means of particles. Verbs do not indicate the number, person, or gender of the subject.

Deletion of subject is allowable as long as subjects are recoverable from linguistic or non-linguistic context. Deletion of the first person and second person in Mangde is

especially free. The proper noun precedes the common noun.

3. The Phonological System

3.1 Syllable canon

The syllable canon is given below:

$$(C_1) (C_2) V G (C_3) (C_4) / P$$

The Mangde Syllable Canon

The minimum syllable type is a single vowel, such as one of the forms for the word for /a/ 'interjection'. Although a glottal stop frequently appears at the beginning of a syllable beginning with no consonant, there is no phonemic contrast between vocalic onset and glottal onset.

3.2 Consonants

Mangdebi has 38 consonants at six points of articulation, plus consonant clusters, both initial and final position. Unlike most Tibeto-Burman languages, Mangde has many consonant finals, including clusters, due to the collapsing of two syllables into one. The phonetic characterisation of Mangde consonant phonemes is listed in Table 1:

Plosive	unaspirated	p	t	t̚		k	ʔ
	aspirated	p ^h	t ^h	t̚ ^h		k ^h	
	voiced	b	d	d̚		g	
Affricate	unaspirated		ts				
	aspirated		ts ^h				
	voiced		dz				
Fricative	unaspirated	f~ɸ	s		ɕ		h
	voiced	v~β	z		ʒ		ɦ
nasal	voiced	m	n		ɳ	ŋ	
	voiceless	m̥	n̥		ɳ̥	ŋ̥	
Liquid	voiced		l	r			
	voiceless		l̥	r̥			
semi-vowel	voiced	w			j		

Table 1 : Phonetics of Mangde consonant

The Mangde consonant phoneme inventory is listed in Table 2:

plosive	unaspirated	p	t	tr	k	ʔ
	aspirated	ph	th	trh	kh	

	voiced	b	d	dr		g	
affricate	unaspirated		ts				
	aspirated		tsh				
fricative	voiced		dz				
	aspirated	f	s		sh		H
	unaspirated	v	z		zh		'H
nasal	voiced	m	n		ny	ng	
	voiceless	hm	n		hny	hng	
liquid	voiced		l	r			
	voiceless		hl	hr			
semi-vowel	voiced	w			y		

Table 2 : Phonemes of Mangde consonant

The Mangdebi vowels are given below:

short vowels			long vowels		nasalized vowels		
i[i]	ü[y]	u[u]	i:[i:]	u:[u:]	in[in]	ün[yn]	un[un]
e[e]		o[o]	e:[e:]	o:[o:]	en[en]		on[on]
	a[a]		a:[a:]			an[an]	
e.g. : i[i]			^L ri	'mountain'	i:[i:]	^H khi:	'ice'
ü[y]			^H ü	'rain'			
u[u]			^L Bru	'thunder'	u:[u:]	^H gu:	'wait'
e[e]			^L se ^H ke	'fog'	e:[e:]	^H se:	'gold'
o[o]			^H pho	'cave'	o:[o:]	^H o:m	'come'
a[a]			^H ka	'snow'	a:[a:]	^H ka:m	'star'

There are four diphthongs; iu, eu, ou, ai, and au.

e.g. : iu	[iu]	^L yi	'shake'
eu	[eu]	^H seu	'hail'
ou	[ou]	^H shou	'force'
a	[i ai]	^L go tai	'ash'
au	[au]	^H lau	'moon'

3.3 Pitch

The initial of every Mangde syllable is obligatorily marked for high or low tone. Therefore, we computed pitch measurements based on initial tone of the word and the means of pitch peak and average. The mean pitch for initial syllables with high tone was 197 Hz while the mean pitch for initial syllables with low tone was 165 Hz. By the second syllable, these tonal differences have nearly neutralized. High toned words had a

mean pitch of 188 for second syllable and low-toned words had a mean pitch of 179 Hz for second syllable.

It should be noted that in Mangde tone moves to the first syllable of a word if negative marker <ma-> precedes verbs or adjectives. Native speakers of Mangde also have the intuition that the first syllable of the word is somehow more prominent. Synchronically, tone in Mangde is contrastive on the first syllable following the sonorants and the palatal fricative. Tone in these instances is realized by either high or low pitch. The data in (2) show the contrast following sonorant consonants:

- (1) $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ mi ‘thing, issue, aim’ $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ ra ‘hair’ < PTB. s-kra
 $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ mi ‘person’ <PTB. r-mi(y) $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ ra ‘root’ < PTB. r-sa
 $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ waj ‘blessing’ < PTB. dwaj
 $\begin{matrix} H \\ L \end{matrix}$ waj ‘hole’ < WT. bde-gro

In the environment following obstruents except the palatal fricative, tone is predictably high when following the voiceless obstruents and predictably low when following the voiced obstruents. The voiceless palatal fricative is the only obstruent which does not have a voiced or aspirated counterpart and is the only obstruent to occur preceding both high and low tone.

Our data suggests that tone following the sonorants has developed in Mangde by means of historically present onset clusters in which the first member was a voiceless fricative /s/. The historical pattern of a complex onset is reflected in WT but Mangde have reduced their onsets and added a high tone to the nucleus.

The summary of tone in Mangde is as follows: (1) Glottalised sonorants conditioned high tone; (2) Voiced palatal fricatives conditioned low tone and are devoicing; (3) Voiceless palatal fricatives condition high tone.

In terms of Tibetan loanwords, pitch contrast can be summarized as table 3:

high pitch : $C_1C_2C_3$ ($C_3 = \text{nasal/w/l/r/j}$) or $C_3[-vd]$

low pitch : C_3 ($= \text{nasal/w/l/r/j}$) or $C_3[+vd]$

syllable initial consonant(s)	$C_3[-vd]$	$C_3 = \text{nasal/w/l/r/j}$	$C_3[+vd]$
		C_1C_2-	
syllable final consonant(s)	high pitch		low pitch

Table 3 : Historical development of Pitch in Mangdebi

For reference, the summary of suprasegmental systems of some Bhutanese languages is illustrated in Table 4:

Language	Suprasegmental Features
Dzongkha	High/low register following sonorants and voiced Consonants. Level/falling contour on long Vowels.
Mangde, Bumthap, Khengkha Dakpa, Dzala, 'Olekha	High/low register following sonorants.
Tshangla, Lepcha,	None

Table 4 : Suprasegmental systeme of some Bhutanese languages

4. Ongoing phonological phenomena

Monosyllabification is going on progress in many Mangde words. As Nishida (1983) pointed out, it can be summarized as follows:

$$\#C_1C_2C_3- \rightarrow \#C_3- \quad \text{and} \quad C_3[+vd] \rightarrow C_3[-vd]$$

Initial consonant clusters -> simple consonants
(Nishida 1983:18)

eg:

1. a. *-VC + pa/po > -V : p (C = s, ŋ) rtsis + pa > ^Htsi:p 'astronomer'
- b. *-VC +pa/po > -Vp (C = elsewhere) rtsig + pa > ^Htisp 'wall'

2. a. *-VC + ma/mo > -V : m (C = s,ŋ) N/A
- b. *-VC + ma/mo > -Vm (C = dsewhere) srin + mo > ^Hsim 'demon'

3. a. *-VC = + ba > -V : u (C = l/r) dar + ba > ^Hda:u 'butternilk'
- b. *-V + ba > -Vu pho+ ba > ^Hphou 'belly'

5. Numerals

Mangde employs vigesimal system for numerals:

0	^h she ^l mül	16	^l tshe ^h dro
1	^l the	17	^l tshe ^h hni
2	^l zün	18	^l tshek ^h ke
3	^l sum	19	^h tshe ^l dok
4	^l bre	20	^h khye ^l di
5	^l lang	21	^h khye ^l di ^h the
6	^l dru	22	^h khye ^l di ^l zün
7	^h nis	30	^h khye ^l di ^h kyap ^h tshe
8	^l gye	31	^h khye ^l di ^l tshou ^h de
9	^l dok	40	^h khye ^l zün
10	^h kyap ^h tshe	41	^h khye ^l zün ^l ni ^h the
11	^l tshou ^h de	50	^h khye ^l zün ^l ni ^h kyap ^h tshe
12	^l tshu ^h ni	60	^h khye ^h sum
13	^h tsho ^l sum	70	^h khye ^h sum ^h kyap ^h tshe
14	^h tshep	80	^h khye ^l bre
15 ^l	tshe ^h lang	90	^h khye ^l bre ^l ni ^h kyap ^h tshe
100	^h khye ^l lang	700	^l nish ^h the ^l ni ^h tsa ^h nis
200	^h khye ^l kyap ^h shi	800	^l nish ^l zün
300	^h khye ^l tshe ^h lang	900	^l nish ^l zün ^l tsa ^h the
400	^l nish ^h the	1,000	^h thong ^h tsha ^l the
500	^l nish ^h the ^l ni ^h tsa ^l lang	10,000	^h thong ^h tsha ^l kyap ^h she
600	^l nish ^h the ^l ni ^h tsa ^l dru	100,000	^l bum ^h the

6. Sociolinguistic situation

Here I would like to analyse social sociolinguistic features of Mangde, and discuss the major factors that caused Mangde to become potentially endangered.

Since 2007, I have been working under the auspices of the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan toward the completion of a grammar of Mangde. I have been undertaking a series of linguistic fieldworks at Tshangkha village, Tangsibji gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag (ཁོང་གསལ་རྫོང་ཁག་), the kingdom of Bhutan. I conducted interviews with local officials, teachers and community leaders to investigate their languages use and its functions. During the fieldwork, local administrators, teachers, ten families were interviewed³. Along with elicitation data taken from the

³ Several other Mangde have also been generous enough to help me. The information I obtained from them has been directly utilized in this work, and it is extremely significant for my understanding of Mangde in general. I am pleased

language consultant, I have also collected a large amount of text and data on socio-cultural aspects of Mangde speakers. The fieldwork has been carried out in Dzongkha. The main objective was to find appropriate native speakers and to gather materials on Mangde speaking people.

The data show that all of the Mangde people are bilingual or trilingual. In general, the younger generation have adopted Mangde or Dzongkha as their first languages. English is also an additional resource in their verbal repertoire among younger generation in a multilingual setting. It is worth noting that 20.8% of the Mangde people speak Mangde as their third language, as in the table 5:

Languages	First language	Second Languages	Third language
Mangde	77.6%	12.6%	20.8%
Dzongkha	22.4%	78.7%	33.9%
English	0.0%	8.7%	45.3%

Table 5: The language use of the Mangde people

During the fieldwork, I have been involved in the participant observation. In the instances under examination, the results of this study show that code-switching is motivated by environmental rather than linguistic factors: although significant in some situation, the linguistic limitations of Mangde could not account for the vast majority of switches that occurred. The following data are the result of my preliminary survey on language use of Mangde speakers in Tshangkha village generation by generation.

	1st generation			2nd generation			3rd generation		
	Dzongkha	English	Mangde	Dzongkha	English	Mangde	Dzongkha	English	Mangde
Personal	8.0	6.7	85.3	38.9	15.7	45.4	52.5	37.2	10.3
Official	91.3	3.0	5.7	79.7	20.3	0.0	59.4	30.6	0.0
Public	87.6	0.0	13.4	68.0	23.4	8.6	87.2	13.8	0.0
Written	89.2	10.8	0.0	76.3	23.7	0.0	51.4	48.6	0.0
Media	90.2	9.8	0.0	55.6	45.4	0.0	11.2	88.8	0.0
Education	84.5	16.5	0.0	10.0	90.0	0.0	16.0	84.0	0.0

Table 6: The difference between age and their language use

(1st generation: over 50 y/o, 2nd generation: 25-50 y/o, 3rd generation: below 25 y/o)

The age group clearly illustrates the distinctive language shift from Mangde to Dzongkha and English. Most of the younger generation tend to count the numbers in Dzongkha and English. Not a single song was to be sung by them.

to record my warmest thanks to them.

A number of factors have made Mangde become a potentially endangered language. Firstly, migration is the major factor. This has changed the previous social and economic isolation of the Mangde people. Secondly, through inter marriage, socio-economic contacts with Dzongkha speaking people, the Mangde language has gradually lost its language function and Dzongkha and English have become practical communication tools. Thirdly, this social contact has had a strong impact on family language use patterns.

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Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to the following people for their assistance and guidance: George van Driem, Picus Ding, Yeshe Needup, Namgay Wangmo, Pema Wangdi, and Phuntsho Dorj.