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Identifying who is who in Brokpa

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1 Introduction

Brokpa is a Bodish (Tibetic) language belonging to the Tibeto-Burman language family, also known as Trans-Himalayan (van Driem 1994, 1998; Eberhard, Simons, and Fennig 2019; Shafer 1955, 1966; Tournadre 2014). Brokpa is spoken by approximately 3,500 people in the highlands of Merak and Sakteng in Eastern Bhutan. Dondrup (1993) reports about 1,855 more Brokpa speakers living in small parts of Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India.

Brokpa is a close linguistic relative of Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan. Brokpa is spoken in direct contact with Tshangla belonging to the Bodic Division within the Tibeto-Burman family (Shafer 1955, 1966; Benedict 1972; van Driem 1998, 2011; Andvik 2010). Brokpa is also spoken in direct contact with Dakpa, an East Bodish language (Shafer 1955; van Driem 1994; Hyslop 2013), in Bhutan as well as in Northeast India.

Animal husbandry and subsistence farming form the main means of livelihood for the Brokpa people. The Brokpa people predominantly practise transhumance, moving with their livestock from one grazing land to another in a seasonal cycle. They take their livestock to highlands in spring and summer and to lowlands in autumn and winter. The Brokpa people follow Buddhism.

Brokpa is a traditional small-scale society. There are no stratified social classes and no local chiefs. There are community councils known as Gewog Tshogde in the main villages. The members of the Gewog Tshogde (Community Council) are all elected by the people for a fixed term of five years. Every decision is taken democratically. The heads and the staff of District and Subdistrict offices are bureaucrats with specific executive and judicial functions.

This chapter¹ deals with the ways in which the Brokpa language and the society are closely related and mutually reinforcing in relation to three Parameters (A, B, and E) outlined in Chapter 1 of this book:

Parameter A — Relations within a community, social hierarchies, and kinship categorization;

Parameter B — Social constraints (taboo and avoidance);

Parameter E — Means of subsistence and physical environment.

Linguistic categories examined, as points of integration with these non-linguistic parameters, include: a comparative construction which correlates with relations within the community and social categorization (Parameter A); the honorific forms and social deixis (Parameters A and B); and topographic deixis (Parameter E).

Section 2 provides a brief overview of the key linguistic features of Brokpa. Section 3 examines the comparative construction as indicative of attitudes and societal practices of the past and the present. Section 4 investigates demonstratives indicating height and distance (deictic reference). Section 5 describes social deixis by focusing on honorific speech. Section 6 offers brief conclusions.

2 Key linguistic features

Brokpa is an agglutinating language with some fusion. Brokpa has three open lexical classes of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, and a semi-open class of adverbs. Closed classes include personal pronouns, demonstratives, interrogatives, relators (relator nouns), time words, number words, quantifiers, connectives, and interjections. Grammatical categories typically associated with nouns are case, possession, number, definiteness, natural gender, and augmentative and diminutive marking. Grammatical categories typically associated with verbs include aspect, modality, mood, evidentiality, and egophoricity.

Some grammatical categories occurring with nouns occur with verbs in different functions and with different meanings. For example, some case

¹ Linguistic data for this chapter come from a textual corpus of about four hours of recordings of different genres with corroborative grammatical and lexical elicitation. The information on the non-linguistic parameters are based on immersion fieldwork and participant observation. They are also based on the personal observation and knowledge acquired as a citizen of Bhutan and as a native and near-native speaker of Tshangla and Dzongkha, which are spoken in the same sociocultural and topographical environments.

markers may occur with verbs and mark different types of dependent clauses. All verbs and a smallish group of adjectives can be negated with a bound morpheme. Negation of an adjective has scope over a word whereas negation of a verb has scope over an entire clause or a sentence. Many of the grammatical categories occurring with nouns can appear with adjectives modifying the head in an NP, with agreement determined by the head noun. Both nouns and adjectives can function as a copula complement argument within a copula construction, but pre-modifiers such as *násmeti* 'very' and *deśmeti* 'extremely' apply only to adjectives and not to nouns. There are a number of word-class-changing derivational suffixes, specific to each open class.

New words can be derived through the morphological processes of compounding, reduplication, change of tone, internal change, and affixation. Transitivity value of a predicate can be understood from the presence or absence of ergative marking on the NP argument in the subject slot. In addition to dedicated markers, certain grammatical information such as transitivity and imperative mood can be marked by tone, voicing, and aspiration. Grammatical relations are shown by a system of case marking.

There are certain areas of the lexicon in Brokpa which particularly reflect the sociocultural values and lifestyles of its speakers. For example, Brokpa has a wealth of lexical items related to livestock, indicative of their transhumant lifestyle. There is also a rich set of vocabulary items related to polygamy, directly indicating that Brokpa embraces this practice. However, the lexicon is outside the scope of this chapter and we will limit ourselves to examining the connection between some grammatical systems and societal practices.

3 Comparison and recreational activities

As noted in Chapter 1 and in Dixon (2008), small egalitarian societies tend to have little in the way of comparative constructions, perhaps because notions such as competition and hierarchy are not important in these societies. Brokpa is a small egalitarian society, so we may not expect notions such as competition and hierarchy to be important, and yet the language does have a comparative construction. We can associate a comparative construction in Brokpa with two relevant societal factors: (a) the traditionally competitive recreational activities; and (b) the comparison of people through social deixis (§5). Both (a) and (b) suggest that a comparative construction is not a recent grammatical phenomenon in Brokpa nor is it a result of borrowing or

influence from other languages. This is also not the case with the concepts of winning and losing, as they are clearly expressed in Brokpa.

Horse racing known as *tabraŋ~tabaŋ* (also *tagyuk*) has been popular among the Brokpa people for hundreds of years. Typically, men would take part in horse racing at a place called Jomo Tathaksa when they go on the Jomokora pilgrimage with family members, relatives, and friends. Jomokora is a pilgrimage trip to Jomo Phodrang, a sacred mountain crag believed to be the dwelling place of the protecting deity Ama Jomo. Ama Jomo was an ancestral Brokpa lady who guided the Brokpa ancestors when they first came to the present settlement areas more than 600 years ago. Ama Jomo is now worshipped as the local deity and every Brokpa man and woman goes to the mountain crag of Jomo Phodrang at least once a year, or whenever they can, to receive blessings from her.

It is believed that when Ama Jomo and her entourage arrived at Jomo Tathaksa, her warriors took part in a horse race to keep her entertained. After that, it was continued as a tradition.

Brokpa has a unique genre of oral literature known as *k^hapɛo* 'singing dialogue', similar to 'ballads'. It is quite common for young men and women to have a *k^hapɛo* competition, as a form of entertainment, in the evening during the Jomokora pilgrimage, as well as during other social events. Brokpa people love singing and dancing. Any family or community celebration is not complete without men and women bursting into song and dance. Men and women sing and take turns in dancing and, more often than not, this leads to a joyful competition.

The Brokpa people also have great fondness for other competitive sports such as *bet^ha* 'wrestling'. Wrestling is generally held as a form of entertainment but it is also a way of demonstrating prowess among men. Occasionally, during big national celebrations, organized wrestling competitions are held; and Brokpa men are famed for being hardcore wrestlers. Some have emerged victorious in such big wrestling matches in the past.

Archery is a favourite pastime among Brokpa men. Every Brokpa village has one or more archery grounds and men indulge in this popular national sport whenever they can. They also organize archery competitions against neighbouring villages. There are other sports played in groups such as *k^hur* 'darts' and *degor* 'circular stone', which are also popular among young men.

In all such societal practices, including games and sports, one person or one team tries to be better than another. Spectators need to talk about who is faster/fastest, stronger/strongest, better/best and this results in making direct comparisons between two or more participants. Comparison of participants

in sporting events is extended to other phenomena. Not only are there several words with the meanings of 'competition', 'win', 'lose', 'draw', etc., in the vocabulary, in addition to these, Brokpa also has grammatical means of coding comparison.

Dixon (2008, 2012: 343) provides three basic elements in a prototypical comparative scheme: the two participants being compared and the property in terms of which they are compared. The participants are, first, the one which is compared (Comparee) and, second, what the Comparee is being compared against (Standard); the property is the Parameter of comparison; a prototypical comparative scheme may also involve an Index of comparison (more, less, etc.). The Parameter in a mono-clausal comparative construction may be a copula complement, the head of an intransitive predicate, or a verb within a serial verb construction (Dixon 2008).

In Brokpa, the Parameter of comparison is realized as an adjective which takes a morphological marking of index of comparison. There are two contrasting suffixes, comparative and superlative. The adjective in a comparative construction, typically making up the whole of a copula complement argument, is marked by the suffix *-go*. The adjective in a superlative construction is shown by suffix *-da* (and its allomorphs, *-ta* and *-tʰa*). In other words, comparative and superlative in Brokpa are distinguished by morphological marking of Index on adjectives. The suffix *-kyan* 'too/also' is also used as a superlative strategy.

Table 1 provides examples of adjectives and their comparative and superlative forms.

Note that adjectival roots undergo phonological processes before the suffixation of comparative and superlative markers. For example, the final syllable from the adjectival root is omitted, as in *tompo* → *tom-*, or a diphthong is made a monophthong, as in *kʰeu* → *kʰe-*. In some cases, the coda consonant from the root is replaced by another consonant, as in *ramo* → *rap-* (Wangdi forthcoming).

Table 1 Brokpa adjectives and their comparative and superlative forms

Bare form	Meaning	Comparative	Superlative
<i>ramo</i>	'thin'	<i>rap-go</i>	<i>rap-ta, rap-kyan</i>
<i>tompo</i>	'short'	<i>tom-go</i>	<i>tom-da, tom-kyan</i>
<i>kʰeu</i>	'cheap'	<i>kʰe-go</i>	<i>kʰe-da, kʰe-kyan</i>
<i>dzokpʰo</i>	'quick'	<i>dzok-go</i>	<i>dzok-tʰa, dzok-kyan</i>
<i>guibu</i>	'slow'	<i>gui-go</i>	<i>gui-da, gui-kyan</i>
<i>sarbo</i>	'new'	<i>sar-go</i>	<i>sar-da, sar-kyan</i>

Examples (1a) and (1b) show suffix *-go* marking a comparative construction contrasting two participants:

- (1) a. *zo=læ yáʔ ɖak-go yin*
 Zo=ABL yak good-COMPAR COP.EGO
 Yak is better than Zo. (a cross-bred bull)
- b. *Tashi=læ Lham ɕe: tɕʰe-go*
 Tashi=ABL Lham energy big-COMPAR
 Lham is stronger than Tashi.

In (1a), the adjective *ɖak-go* 'better', with the Index suffix, makes up the whole copula complement argument and is involved in the comparison of two participants, *zo* (Standard) and *yá:* (Comparee). The ablative enclitic *=læ* (Mark) marks the Standard of comparison.

Examples (2a) and (2b) show suffix *-ta* and *-da* marking the superlative construction in which the best among many or a unique participant or an item out of a set is identified:

- (2) a. *gonor ganyu naŋ=næ yáʔ ɖak-ta*
 farm.cattle all inside=ABL yak good-SUPER
 Of all the farm cattle, yak is the best.
- b. *Merak naŋ=næ ɕe: tɕʰe-da*
 Merak inside=ABL energy big-SUPER
 Lham yin
 Lham COP.EGO
 Lham is the strongest (one) from Merak.

Lham from the village of Merak came first in the wrestling category of the Strong Men Competition held at the national level in Bhutan. He also won titles at the local and regional levels. So the speaker takes it for granted that Lham is the strongest man in Merak and uses the superlative form, as in (2b). It is also a known fact that Lham is a strong man who can throw down a yak on the ground just by holding the horns with his hands. So the speaker uses the egophoric copula *yin* which denotes a personal knowledge (or a privileged access to knowledge).

Examples (3a) and (3b) show suffix *-kyan* used as a marker of superlative strategy:

- (3) a. *muz ʔani ʔadzaŋ yak-kyan yona*
 non-self aunt uncle good-SUPER COP.FACTUAL
 They, aunty and uncle, are excellent/super good (people).

- b. golam yin-ne=ye sarbu-sar-*kyan*=raŋ
 clothes COP.EGO-COND=EMPH new~new-SUPER=EMPH
 gon=næ dʒo-go-p^{hi}-na
 wear=ABL.SEQ GO-MOD:OBLIGATION-NOMZ-FACTUAL
 Even the clothes, you must wear the newest one.

The adjective with the suffix *-kyan* typically modifies the head noun within an NP and shows that the referent of the head noun is of the most excellent type or quality, the same function achieved by the suffix *-da*. The existence of traditional competitive practices correlates with the presence of well-defined comparative and superlative constructions.

4 Physical environment and deictic reference

Brokpa is spoken in a mountainous terrain. There are special monomorphemic lexical words like *gyen* to refer to ‘slope up’ and *t^hur* to ‘slope down’ which do not involve compounding with words meaning ‘up’ or ‘down’. The villages are scattered and are separated by high mountains, dense forests, and fast-flowing rivers. Brokpa has several words encoding relative height, stance, and direction in its demonstrative system. Some demonstratives include information regarding whether a referent is on the same level as the speaker or whether it is higher or lower than the speaker, which is typical of small communities living in mountainous terrain (Dixon 2016). These demonstrative words directly correlate with social deixis (§5).

Some body-part terms are used with the locative/allative marker to refer to the upper or lower part of something, especially rivers and mountains. For example, *go=la* ‘head=LOC’ can be used to mean the upper reaches of a valley, river, mountain, valley, etc., and *dʒuk=la* ‘tail=LOC’ can be used to refer to the lower reaches. In the same manner, the nouns *to*: ‘upper part’, *bar* ‘middle part’ and *mæ* ‘lower part’ of something can occur with the locative/allative enclitic *=la* and refer to the upper part, middle part, or lower part of a mountain, river, village, and so on.

Two types of demonstratives are of relevance here, the nominal demonstratives and the local adverbial demonstratives (Dixon 2003, 2010: 224). Nominal demonstratives make a two-way spatial contrast, ‘near speaker’ and ‘away from speaker’. There are two sets of nominal demonstratives, one set commencing with a voiced apico-alveolar stop /d/ and another with a glottal stop /ʔ/. The

first set are named ‘archaic nominal demonstratives’ and the second ‘innovative nominal demonstratives’ for an easy distinction.

Table 2 provides the two sets of nominal demonstratives.

The nominal demonstrative forms *di* and *de* are common to many Bodish languages including Dzongkha (van Driem and Tshering 2019; Watters 2018), Classical Tibetan (Beyer 1992; DeLancey 2003a), and Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 2003b); this is the reason why they are described as ‘archaic nominal demonstratives’ in Brokpa. The functions of nominal demonstratives are also fulfilled by the innovative demonstratives *ʔoti* and *ʔup^{hi}*, sometimes reduced to *ʔot* (further reduced to *ʔo*) and *ʔu*. The archaic set of nominal demonstratives *di* ‘proximal’ and *de* ‘distal’ do sporadically retain their deictic functions, but are neutralized into a single form *di* which takes on the role of a definite article. However, the forms *di* and *de* can be used for deriving other demonstratives, as we will see later in this section.

A nominal demonstrative in Brokpa can occur in an NP with a noun or a pronoun, and can make up an NP on its own. The syntactic functions of nominal demonstratives will not be explored here. Of relevance are those adverbial demonstratives that code height and stance in addition to the spatial pointing references. Following Post (2011, 2019), and Aikhenvald (2015: 188), the demonstratives which include information about height and stance determined topographically, among other criteria, will be referred to as markers of ‘topographic deixis’.

First, we briefly look at the local adverbial demonstratives that do not code height. Table 3 gives a list of local adverbial demonstratives that make a two-way spatial contrast.

Table 2 Nominal demonstratives in Brokpa

	ARCHAIC	INNOVATIVE	MEANING
PROXIMAL	<i>di</i>	<i>ʔoti ~ woti</i>	this
DISTAL	<i>de</i>	<i>ʔup^{hi}</i>	that

Table 3 Local adverbial demonstratives in Brokpa

FORM	ETYMOLOGY	FEATURE	MEANING
<i>ʔol(a), ʔotil(a)</i>	this + loc	PROXIMAL	‘here’
<i>dil(a)</i>	this + loc	PROXIMAL	‘here’
<i>ʔon</i>		PROXIMAL	‘here’
<i>dotil</i>		PROXIMAL	‘here’
<i>ʔup^{hi}il(a)</i>	that + loc	DISTAL	‘there’
<i>ʔun(la)</i>	that + loc	DISTAL	‘there’

Table 4 The expression of topographic deixis in Brokpa

FORM	ETYMOLOGY	FEATURE	MEANING
<i>yal, ya:te</i>	up + loc/all	UPWARD	'up there/upwards'
<i>mal, ma:te</i>	down +loc/all	DOWNWARD	'down there/ downwards'
<i>ʔoyil(a)</i>	this + up + loc	UPWARD + DISTAL	'up there'
<i>ʔumil(a)</i>	that + down + loc	DOWNWARD + DISTAL	'down there'
<i>p^hal(a)</i>	that.side + loc/all	SAME LEVEL + DISTAL	'over there/thither'
<i>ts^hul(a)</i>	this.side + loc/all	SAME LEVEL + PROXIMAL	'over here/hither'
<i>dite^hok(la)</i>	this + direction + loc/all	SAME LEVEL + PROXIMAL	'here/this side'
<i>p^hete^hok(la)</i>	that + direction + loc/all	SAME LEVEL + DISTAL	'there/that side'
<i>gyente</i>	up.slope + all	UPHILL	'uphill'
<i>t^hurte</i>	down.slope + all	DOWNHILL	'downhill'

All the local adverbial demonstratives, provided in Table 3, can form an NP on their own. They can have spatial pointing reference and include stance in relation to the speaker, proximal or distal, but do not have height reference such as upward or downward or higher or lower than the speaker. The nominal demonstrative and the local adverbial demonstrative which do not mark topographic deixis are introduced because the two-way spatial contrasts achieved by them have parallels with comparative constructions in which two participants are compared (§3) and with social deixis based on bipartite social categorizations (§5).

Table 4 provides a list of markers of topographic deixis in Brokpa. Similar to the regular local adverbial demonstratives in Table 3, the forms sensitive to topographic deixis are derived from the nominal demonstratives and directional adverbs by means of the locative/allative case marker *=la*². Some are formed by means of the allative *=te*. With *dite^hok* 'this side' and *p^hete^hok* 'that side', the entire locative/allative marker including the initial consonant is optional. The allative *=te* also forms a prosodic unit with the root.

All the demonstratives in Table 4 encode relative height, stance, and direction in addition to spatial reference and can be analysed as exponents of topographic deixis (Aikhenvald 2015: 188; Post 2019). Consider:

- (4) a. *nor=di* *den* *nám* *so:* *yal*
cattle=DEF DEM:ABL season spring up.there

² The locative/allative case enclitic *=la* has coalesced with the root and the final vowel /a/ is optional leading to syllable reduction.

la=la *za-zin*
mountain=LOC climb-DUR
Then while taking the cattle up there to the mountain...

- b. *den* *gun* *ma:te* *ton* *ma:te*
PART winter downward autumn downward
loʔ=næ *te*
return=ABL.SEQ PART
So then in winter and autumn, we return downwards...

In these two examples, (4a) and (4b), the speaker is talking about the trans-humant lifestyle. He uses the demonstrative *yal* to refer to the practice of taking the cattle up in the spring season and *ma:te* to refer to bringing them back down in autumn and winter. In both the expressions, *yal* and *ma:te* have a deictic function and combine reference to height and to distance.

The demonstratives *dite^hok* 'this side' and *p^hete^hok* 'that side' have deictic functions as examples (5a) and (5b) illustrate:

- (5) a. *den* *dite^hok* *k^him=la* *dok=næ*
DEM:ABL this.side house=LOC reach=ABL.SEQ
Then, after arriving at the house this side ...
- b. *Yeshi Khandom Numa=gi* *p^hete^hok=di=la*
Yeshi Khandom Numa=GEN that.side=DEF=LOC
bæyu: *yo:*
hidden.village COP:EXIST.EGO
There is Hidden Village on the other side of Yeshi Khandoma Numa.

Both *dite^hok* and *p^hete^hok* encode the same height level. They can refer to this side or that side of something at the same level as a point of reference such as a river in between. These two terms can also function as markers of social deixis, and can be used with a deictic effect for distinguishing people (for instance, they are employed in categorizing kinship relations, referring to consanguineal relations as 'people this side' and to affinal relations as 'people that side').

5 Social deixis and the honorific system

As mentioned in §3, Brokpa is a small egalitarian society. At the same time, there is a strong culture of showing deference towards elders and seniors. As a

result, several bipartite and tripartite systems of social categorizations have been developed. Examples of terms reflecting a bipartite categorization include *te^{he}-te^{hu}* or *bom-te^{hu}* ‘big-small’, *tho-mæn* ‘high-low’, and *ḡak-zæn* ‘stronger-weaker’. We also find examples of tripartite categorization (where three distinctions are made). Examples of tripartite categorizations include *te^{he}-ḡiṅ-te^{hu}-sum* ‘the three—big, medium, and small’, *tho-mæn-bar-sum* ‘the three—high, low, and middle’, *teṅ-flok-bar-sum* ‘the three—upper, lower, and middle’.

Terms associated with such categorizations are used as markers of social deixis. They are used as referential terms and, in certain contexts (such as addressing an audience), they can be used as forms of address. Most of these terms can also be used, with deictic effect, to refer to the height or size of a natural phenomenon such as mountains, rocks, and trees.

The bipartite and tripartite categorizations are for the purpose of according deference to people who are ‘elders’ not only in terms of age, but also in terms of responsibility, experience, knowledge, contribution, and suchlike. The terms used in this chapter such as ‘social status’, ‘higher status’, ‘lower status’, ‘big’, ‘small’, ‘superior’, and ‘inferior’ include these parameters in the context of Brokpa and Bhutanese society and not in the sense of a rigid social class system. The honorific forms have additional functions of expressing politeness or ‘social niceties’ (Dixon 2010: 201–3).

For some speakers, the bipartite and tripartite terms sound too hierarchical and appear to reflect stratified social classes. On the face of it, these concepts sound ordered and hierarchical. However, at a deeper level, they reflect a culture of according deference towards others, particularly elders. This reflects a way of thinking in which people who are elders in terms of the parameters mentioned above are duly recognized and formally acknowledged.

The first person, the speaker, is always included in the ‘small’ or the ‘low’ category in both bipartite and tripartite categorizations. Placing oneself in the bottom-most category stems from a culture of self-effacing or self-deprecating known as *k^{he}ṅpa teṅwa* literally ‘casting away of pride’ in Classical Tibetan. This self-deprecating culture is associated with a politeness register referred to as humilifics, as in Mabzhi Amdo Tibetan (Samdrup and Suzuki 2019). Brokpa too has a culture of showing humility by belittling oneself. Among others, humility is shown by using lexical items—usually adjectives—such as *preṅbu*, *d^hukpu*, *kyambu* (all meaning ‘poor’), *kukpa* ‘dumb’, and *zænba* ‘feeble/weaker’.

The speaker and the people from the ‘small’ category are supposed to use the honorific forms (§5.1) while interacting with people from the ‘middle’ and

the ‘big’ categories; and those in the ‘middle’ category are supposed to do the same with those from the ‘big’ category’. However, this is not a hard-and-fast rule and the conventions for personal interaction are extremely complex. For example, social status can be absolute for some while relative for others. A person may be in the ‘big’ category in one context and in the ‘middle’ or even ‘small’ category in another.

Note that the honorific system is the same across all the Bodish languages of Bhutan and beyond, in which the language of liturgy is Classical Tibetan also known as Chöke (literally ‘Dharma Language’). Classical Tibetan originally written in *d^ha-niṅ* ‘old orthography’ and now in *d^ha-sar* ‘new orthography’ was once used as a medium of instruction in Bhutan. Classical Tibetan continues to be the medium of monastic education in the Brokpa-speaking community and other language communities in the Himalayas. Looking at the shared honorific forms in the spoken languages, the honorific forms clearly spread through Classical Tibetan.

There may be subtle variations in the honorific forms depending on the phonology of the main languages. However, the forms and functions of the honorific nouns and verbs and their derivational processes are essentially the same across all these languages despite differences in the main lexicon, construction patterns, and grammatical elements.

Some publications³ dealing with social deixis including honorifics in Bodish languages are DeLancey (1998), Denwood (1999: 215–17), van Driem and Tshering (2019: 399–404), Watters (2018), and Agha (1993). Nepali, an Indo-Aryan language, which is not genetically related to Brokpa but spoken in some parts of Bhutan, also has morphological means for expressing deference (van Driem 2019).

5.1 Morphophonology of honorific forms

The phonology and phonotactics of the honorific nouns and honorific verbs do not differ from those of the ordinary nouns and verbs. Typically, monomorphemic honorific nouns and verbs in Brokpa are monosyllabic, to the exclusion of affixes, clitics, and other derivational processes. New honorific nouns and verbs are derived from a given set of monomorphemic honorific

³ General discussions on ‘honorifics’ include Comrie (1976), Brown and Levinson (1987: 276–80), Levinson (1983: 89–94), Frawley (1992: 117–21), Agha (1994, 1998), and McCready (2019). Some discussions related to honorifics and politeness in Japanese include Matsumoto (1988, 1989), Dunn (1998, 1999), and Jarkey (2015, 2017).

nouns and verbs by means of compounding and affixation. There are no monomorphemic honorific adjectives from which other honorific adjectives can be derived. What may appear like a derived honorific adjective, such as *ku-te^hem* 'HON-big', is actually an honorific noun. Similarly, there are no honorific forms for the members of other word classes.

5.1.1 Honorific nouns

Generally, nouns from the semantic types of HUMANS (and their PARTS), ARTEFACTS, and concrete objects and abstract phenomena which are related to humans have honorific forms. There are more monosyllabic monomorphemic honorific nouns than disyllabic ones in Brokpa. Table 5 gives some monomorphemic and monosyllabic honorific nouns from these semantic domains.

Note that the honorific noun *suj* 'speech/talk:HON' can also be used as an honorific verb root *suj*, 'tell: HON', an instance of double duty or zero derivation.

There are also a few monomorphemic honorific nouns which are disyllabic, e.g. *te^höme* (cf. *karme*) 'butter lamp', *námza* (cf. *golam*) 'cloth'. No monomorphemic trisyllabic honorific nouns have been attested in Brokpa; and there are more monosyllabic monomorphemic honorific nouns than disyllabic ones. As mentioned in §5.3, a largish set of honorific nouns can be derived from the honorific noun roots *ku* 'body: HON', *suj* 'speech: HON', and *thuk* 'mind: HON'.

Table 6 gives examples of honorific nouns derived on the basis of the monomorphemic honorific root *ku*.

The meaning of every derived honorific compound in Table 6 is the same as that of the ordinary form which is the second component of the compound. There are exceptional cases in which the second component of the compound is not the ordinary form. Furthermore, in some cases, the second component is another suppletive form. I will discuss these later in this section.

Table 5 Monosyllabic monomorphemic honorific nouns in Brokpa

Honorific noun	Ordinary form	Meaning
<i>ku</i>	<i>luspa</i>	'body'
<i>te^hak</i>	<i>lakpa</i>	'hand'
<i>zæl</i>	<i>k^ha</i>	'mouth'
<i>ɛaŋ</i>	<i>ná</i>	'nose'
<i>yap</i>	<i>ʔapa</i>	'father'
<i>zap</i>	<i>kaŋba</i>	'leg'
<i>ʔu</i>	<i>go</i>	'head'
<i>suj</i>	<i>ló</i>	'speech'
<i>thuk</i>	<i>sem/samba</i>	'mind'

Table 6 Honorific nouns derived on the basis of honorific root *ku* in Brokpa

Derived	Ordinary form	Meaning
Honorific noun		
<i>ku-wóŋ</i>	<i>wóŋ</i>	'power'
<i>ku-par</i>	<i>par</i>	'photo'
<i>ku-ts^he</i>	<i>ts^he</i>	'life'
<i>ku-ts^hou</i>	<i>ts^hou</i>	'nephew'
<i>ku-te^hem</i>	<i>mi bombo</i>	'VIP'
<i>ku-phuy/ku-duy/ku-pur</i>	<i>phuyba/ro:</i>	'dead body'
<i>ku-pho</i>	<i>suip^ha</i>	'stomach'
<i>ku-te^hak</i>	<i>lakpa</i>	'hand'

Table 7 Honorific nouns derived on the basis of honorific root *suj* in Brokpa

Derived	Ordinary form	Meaning
Honorific noun		
<i>suj-ph^hrin</i>	<i>ph^hrin</i>	'message'
<i>suj-læn</i>	<i>læn</i>	'answer/response'
<i>suj-te^ho:</i>	<i>te^hoga</i>	'liturgy/recitation'
<i>suj-qö</i>	<i>tun-qö</i>	'discussion'
<i>suj-ɛæ</i>	<i>ɛæba</i>	'description'
<i>suj-kæ</i>	<i>kæ</i>	'voice'
<i>suj-gyün</i>	<i>k^ha-gyün</i>	'verbal tradition'

The first component *ku* is a light CV syllable. When it enters into compounding, there is no phonetic lengthening, as in isolation, and it functions like a grammaticalized prefix. Table 7 provides examples of honorific nouns derived on the basis of the honorific root *suj*.

Table 8 provides examples of honorific nouns derived on the basis of the monosyllabic honorific root *thuk*⁴.

The form *te^hak*, which is the honorific form of *lakpa* 'hand', is also a robust honorific root which can derive a largish set of honorific nouns. Table 9 gives examples of honorific noun stems derived by means of compounding with *te^hak*⁵.

⁴ The dorso-velar /k/ is phonetically realized as glottal stop [ʔ] word-finally and it is severely weakened in some compounds while completely lost in others leading to phonological compensatory lengthening, e.g. *thuk-dze* [t^hu:dze].

⁵ An additional phonological process taking place in a derived honorific compound is consonant epenthesis. The final /k/ from the honorific root is omitted and, instead of the anticipated compensatory lengthening, the apico-alveolar /n/ is inserted as part of the phonological adaptation. e.g. *te^han-d^ha* 'HON-arrow'.

Table 8 Honorific nouns derived on the basis of honorific root *thuk* in Brokpa

Derived	Ordinary form	Meaning
Honorific noun		
<i>thuk-sam</i>	<i>samba</i>	'thought'
<i>thuk-món</i>	<i>mónlam</i>	'aspiration'
<i>thuk-tæ</i>	<i>lótæ</i>	'trust'
<i>thuk-gen</i>	<i>genk^{ha}</i>	'responsibility'
<i>thuk-gyö</i>	<i>gyöpa</i>	'regret'
<i>thuk-dok</i>	<i>dokpa</i>	'doubt'
<i>thuk-d^hö</i>	<i>d^höba</i>	'desire'
<i>thuk-gyæ</i>	<i>gyæ</i>	'pride'
<i>thuk-dze</i>	<i>nígdze</i>	'compassion'
<i>thuk-don</i>	<i>sam-don</i>	'expectation'

Table 9 Honorific nouns derived on the basis of form *te^hak* in Brokpa

Derived	Ordinary form	Meaning
Honorific noun		
<i>te^hak-dí</i>	<i>dí</i>	'knife'
<i>te^hak-t^ham</i>	<i>t^hiu</i>	'seal'
<i>te^hak-g^ham</i>	<i>g^ham</i>	'wooden box'
<i>te^hak-díl</i>	<i>dílbu</i>	'bell'
<i>te^hak-d^hup</i>	<i>d^hugu</i>	'bracelet'
<i>te^ha-n-d^ha:</i>	<i>d^ha:</i>	'arrow'
<i>te^hak-pe</i>	<i>pete^ha</i>	'book/scripture'
<i>te^hak-ph^hrenj</i>	<i>ph^hrenja</i>	'rosary beads'

All common monomorphemic honorific noun roots listed in Table 5 and others can form honorific compounds in the same way, although the degrees of productivity vary. The patterns of compounding and phonological processes before compounding are the same as those in Table 7.

Based on the examples given in Tables 6, 7, 8, and 9, we can conclude that the monomorphemic honorific roots, typically occurring as the first element of the derived honorific compound noun, share some similarities with class nouns or noun classifiers (Aikhenvald 2000: 87, 2017: 81–97). DeLancey (1998) describes such phenomena in Tibetan as class nouns.

Brokpa provides clear evidence that the honorific noun derivation process is also a noun categorization device. Most concrete objects and abstract

Table 10 Honorific nouns derived from honorific verb roots in Brokpa

Derived	Ordinary form	Meaning	Honorific	Ordinary	Meaning
Honorific noun			Verb root	Verb root	
<i>zuk-t^hi</i>	<i>kajt^hi</i>	'chair'	<i>zuk</i>	<i>d^ho</i>	'to sit'
<i>zuk-tan</i>	<i>tan</i>	'mattress'			
<i>dzön-lam</i>	<i>lam</i>	'path'	<i>dzön</i>	<i>d^ho</i>	'to go/walk'
<i>dzön-te^haj</i>	<i>te^haj</i>	'farewell drink'			
<i>zim-k^haj</i>	<i>ja:-k^haj</i>	'bedroom'	<i>zim</i>	<i>ja:</i>	'to sleep'
<i>zim-t^hi</i>	<i>ja:-t^hi</i>	'bed'			
<i>jé-ts^hor</i>	<i>ga-ts^hor</i>	'gratitude'	<i>jé:</i>	<i>ga:</i>	'be happy'
<i>zej-dza</i>	<i>loj-dza</i>	'bed tea'	<i>zej</i>	<i>lanj</i>	'to wake up'

phenomena that are related to the body take the honorific form *ku* 'body: HON', and most abstract nouns related to speech combine with the honorific root *suŋ* 'speech: HON'. Most mental states, including emotions, feelings, and intellectual processes combine with *thuk*, the honorific form of 'mind'.

In the same manner, most concrete nouns including artefacts associated with 'hand' take the honorific form *te^hak* 'hand: HON' as the first component of the honorific compound. Note that *te^hak* in *ku-te^hak* 'HON -prostration' is an ordinary term meaning 'prostration' and is a homonym of the honorific term for 'hand'. This principle applies to all other body parts, which generally have a monomorphemic honorific form; as well as to other monomorphemic honorific roots which participate in the honorific noun derivation process.

The honorific verb roots also take part in the derivation of honorific nouns. An honorific verb can enter into compounding with an ordinary noun and derive honorific noun stems. Table 10 provides examples of honorific noun stems derived from honorific verb roots via compounding.

In this type of honorific compound noun, the honorific verb root appears as the first component and the ordinary noun root as the second component of the compound. The base is the nominal component because its meaning is the referential meaning of the compound. The verbal component adds 'honorificity' to the compound.

Honorific nouns can also be derived by means of lexical nominalization. Nominalizers are realized as suffixes forming one grammatical word with the host and the derivation process involved will be affixation. The categories of nominalization involved in honorific noun formation are agentive nominalization as in (6a), locative/place nominalization as in (6b), and, as shown in (6c), manner nominalization (Comrie and Thompson 1985, 2007; Aikhenvald 2007):

- (6) a. *gak-kan*
die: HON-NOMZ:AG
the late/one who died
- b. *t^huŋ-sa*
be.born-NOMZ:LOC
birthplace/village
- c. *suŋ-t^haŋ*
speak: HON - NOMZ:MANNER
style of speaking

We can now make some generalizations about the morphology of honorific nouns. Honorific nouns involve only two derivational process—compounding and affixation. There is no reduplication, inherent or total. All honorific compound nouns fall into the category of endocentric compounds (Aikhenvald 2007, 2015: 123). An honorific compound noun denotes the same item referred to by the second component, which is an ordinary noun. The first component of the compound, which is a monomorphemic honorific noun or verb root, adds an honorific sense to the compound.

There are three compounding patterns in the formation of Brokpa honorific nouns:

In Pattern A, the honorific root is added to an ordinary form as is, e.g. *suŋ-læn* 'HON -answer' in which the ordinary form *læn* does not undergo any phonological process before compounding.

In Pattern B, the ordinary component of the compound is already a compound noun; and the first component of the ordinary compound is replaced by the honorific root in the derived honorific compound stem, e.g. *suŋ-qö* (cf. *tun-qö* 'discussion').

In Pattern C, the final syllable from the ordinary component which is disyllabic is omitted before compounding with the honorific root, e.g. *suŋ-te^ho*: (cf. *te^hoga* 'liturgy/recitation'), *suŋ-ææ* (cf. *ææba* 'description') wherein the second/final syllable *-ga* and *-ba* are dropped.

The Brokpa honorific noun compounding patterns are similar to some patterns of honorific noun formation in Tibetan (Brokpa Pattern A to Tibetan Pattern I, B to IV, and C to III (DeLancey 1998)), but one Tibetan pattern (Compounding Pattern III of Tibetan), in which honorificity is built on the second component of the compound noun, is not found in Brokpa. However, in Brokpa, an honorific form may enter into compounding with another honorific root such as *ku-te^hak* 'hand', wherein the root *te^hak* is already the honorific form

of *lakpa* 'hand'. In this type of compound, both the components are honorific. Following the general pattern, we can assume that honorificity is indicated by the first component or both, but not exclusively by the second component.

An honorific root may also enter into compounding with an ordinary root which is not an expected root but is synonymous with or semantically related to the expected ordinary root. For example, in *ku-te^hem* 'VIP', the expected ordinary form would be *bom* from *bombo* 'big', but *te^hem* from *te^henmo* which is a synonym of *bombo*, appears in the honorific compound. Structurally, it is like Pattern C.

The honorific nouns derived from honorific verb roots, provided in Table 10, follow these same compounding patterns (A–C). All the derived honorific nouns are disyllabic.

There are some additional phonological processes involved. The first syllable from the ordinary component may be omitted and there may be changes in the vowel quality. For example, in *ku-p^ho* 'HON-stomach' in which the first syllable *sui-* from the ordinary form *suip^ha* is omitted and the final vowel /a/ changes to /o/. In other instances, the second syllable of the ordinary form is omitted, but the final consonant from the first syllable is also omitted and there is a change in vowel quality. For example, in *ku-rü*, the honorific form of *ruspa* 'bone', the final syllable *pa* is omitted; and the coda consonant /s/ from the resulting syllable *rus* is also dropped leading to change in vowel quality from /u/ to /ü/.

The honorific nouns, both monomorphemic and derived, have the same inflectional possibilities as the ordinary nouns including case, gender, number, and markers of other grammatical systems which may be realized as affixes or clitics. The honorific nouns, as well as honorific verbs, bear the same suprasegmental features as ordinary nouns and verbs including tone and stress.

5.1.2 Honorific verbs

There is a closed set of monosyllabic monomorphemic honorific verbs. No disyllabic honorific verb roots that are monomorphemic are found in Brokpa. Table 11 provides some common monomorphemic honorific verb roots, which are all monosyllabic.

Honorific verb stems are derived from the monomorphemic honorific verb roots and noun roots via compounding. The honorific verb stems basically follow the same compounding patterns as the honorific nouns.⁶ We have seen that all resulting honorific noun compound stems contain the maximum of two syllables and two morphemes. If a monosyllabic honorific root forms a compound with a disyllabic ordinary (or non-honorific) root and the expected

⁶ The phonological processes that occur in some honorific noun formation, such as deletion or changes in vowel qualities, are not found in honorific verb formation.

Table 11 Monomorphemic honorific verb roots in Brokpa

Honorific verb	Ordinary form	Meaning
<i>náj</i>	<i>džin</i>	'to give'
<i>suŋ</i>	<i>láp</i>	'to tell'
<i>zu</i>	<i>láp</i>	'to tell'
<i>sen</i>	<i>ɲæn</i>	'to listen'
<i>zim</i>	<i>ɲa:</i>	'to sleep'
<i>zeŋ</i>	<i>loŋ</i>	'to wake up'
<i>dɛ:</i>	<i>ge:</i>	'to age'
<i>dzon</i>	<i>dɔ</i>	'to go'
<i>zúk</i>	<i>d^ho:</i>	'to sit'

number of syllables of the resulting form is three, a syllable from the ordinary compound is reduced and the resulting form is always disyllabic. In contrast, a derived honorific verb stem can be disyllabic, trisyllabic, or more. There can also be more than two morphemes in an honorific verb compound.

An honorific verb stem can be derived through 'lexical compounding' (Aikhenvald 2007; Mithun 1984) by incorporating an honorific noun into an honorific verb stem. The honorific compound verb stem can be endocentric as in (7a); or it can be an exocentric compound as in (7b) with the meaning of the derived honorific compound verb different from either of its components (Aikhenvald 2007, 2015: 123):

- (7) a. *t^huk-ɲé:*
mind: HON-be.happy:HON
to be pleased
- b. *tɕ^ha-zu*
hand:HON-receive:HON
to serve

Further relatively uncommon honorific verb stems can be formed by compounding an honorific noun and an ordinary verb root. This clearly suggests that honorificity is indicated by the first component of the compound. An honorific compound verb of this type can be endocentric as in (8a) or, although semantically predictable, it can be exocentric as in (8b). In this kind of compound, the first component is an honorific noun and the second is an ordinary (non-honorific) verb:

- (8) a. *goŋma-t^hel*
thought: HON-scorn
to get angry

- b. *t^huk-p^ham*
mind: HON-defeat
to be disappointed
- (9) a. *zæl-ken*
face/mouth: HON-be.embarrassed
to be embarrassed
- b. *t^huk-den*
mind: HON-be.true
to be true

In (9a), the honorific noun root *zæl* is incorporated into the ordinary verb *ken*, as is *t^huk* into *den* in (9b). In both, the meaning of the derived complex honorific verb remains the same as the meaning of the ordinary verb. The incorporated honorific noun root adds honorificity in both cases.

An honorific verb stem can be formed by adding a derived honorific compound noun to an honorific verb root. This type of honorific compound verb stem will have three roots and two of the three roots may be lexicalized. The first component of the compound can be an honorific noun, the second an ordinary noun, and the third an honorific verb, as in (10a) and (10b). The entire resulting compound functions as a single honorific verb:

- (10) a. *t^huk-món-nán*
mind: HON-aspiration-do:HON
to bless
- b. *ku-t^hü-nán*
body:HON-wash-do:HON
to bathe
Lit. 'to body-wash'

The honorific verb *náj*⁷ 'give/do' is the most productive root. It can combine with most verb roots or verb stems and form honorific predicates. The honorific verb root *náj* can combine with an ordinary verb root, e.g. *k^hur-náj* 'carry-do:HON = carry'; or with an honorific verb root, e.g. *zik-náj* 'watch: HON-do: HON = watch'. A verb stem may also have an honorific verb root before compounding with *náj*, e.g. *t^huk-k^hur-náj* 'mind:HON-carry-do:HON =

⁷ The form *náj* is the honorific form of verb *džin* 'give' as well as the honorific form of verb *gya* 'do'. It is glossed 'do' throughout for consistency.

shoulder responsibility'. If a verb root that forms a compound with *náj* is already an honorific root or if a verb stem already has an honorific root, *náj* serves to further reinforce the honorific meaning.

The honorific verb root *náj* can also occupy a predicate slot on its own, as in (11):

- (11) ʔama dzomo mo=raŋ=ge=raŋ
 Ama.Jomo 3:SG:FEM=REFL=ERG=EMPH
 kakte^ha-náj-ŋai
 restriction-do:HON- PERV
 Ama Jomo herself stopped.

The honorific verb *náj* can occur in different types of predicate. It combines with an intransitive verb as in *yar-náj* 'run-do:HON = run'; with a transitive verb as in *t^{hi}-náj* 'guide-do:HON = guide'; or with an extended transitive (ditransitive) verb as in *ton-náj* 'show-do:HON = show'.

There are more monomorphemic honorific nouns than monomorphemic honorific verbs. New honorific verbs are derived only through compounding. This is in contrast to the formation of honorific nouns, which involves both compounding and affixation. Most predicates can be made honorific by adding one or more monomorphemic honorific verb roots, particularly *náj* 'do:HON'. The honorific verb roots and stems take the markers of all the grammatical systems associated with ordinary verbs.

5.2 The use and the function of honorifics

The analysis of honorifics can be undertaken in terms of three main axes: (a) speaker-referent; (b) speaker-addressee; and (c) speaker-bystander (Comrie 1976; Brown and Levinson 1987; Levinson 1983; Frawley 1992). Levinson (1983: 90) and Brown and Levinson (1987: 181) add a fourth axis: (d) speaker-setting. Type (a) is referred to as 'referent honorifics', (b) as 'addressee honorifics', (c) as 'bystander honorifics', and (d) as 'setting honorifics' (situation honorifics). Addressee honorifics and referent honorifics are also referred to as 'utterance honorifics' and 'argument honorifics' respectively (McCreedy 2019).

In a referent honorific expression, respect is conveyed to the addressee by referring to the target of the respect; in an addressee honorific, respect is conveyed without necessarily referring to any referential target; in a bystander

Table 12 A three-way contrast in the verbs of GIVING and SPEAKING in Brokpa

	Downward	Upward	Horizontal
GIVE	<i>náj</i>	<i>p^{hu}</i>	<i>dzin</i>
SPEAK	<i>suŋ</i>	<i>zu</i>	<i>láp</i>

honorific, the intended target of respect is the participants in audience role or the non-participating hearers; and setting honorifics are triggered by the setting or the circumstances in which a conversation is occurring. Typical examples of setting honorifics include formality levels of Japanese or the diglossic variants of Tamil (Levinson 1983: 93).

Honorifics in Brokpa convey deference, humility, and politeness. They also convey formality and social distance. All types of honorifics are encoded in Brokpa through one, or more, of these three techniques: (i) variant honorific forms (lexical); (ii) compounding or affixation (morphological); and (iii) the polite particle *lá* (syntactic). The first two (lexical and morphological) encode referent honorifics. The third technique, the use of particle *lá*, encodes addressee honorifics and setting honorifics. We will first illustrate referent honorifics by using the verbs of SPEAKING and GIVING. Then we will briefly illustrate addressee honorifics and setting honorifics.

Verbs of SPEAKING and GIVING make a three-way contrast involving two honorific forms and one ordinary form. Theoretically, one honorific form is to describe the speaking/giving from a higher to a lower (downward), another from a lower to a higher level (upward), and the ordinary form to be used with the equals (horizontal). Table 12 shows verbs of SPEAKING and GIVING making these three distinctions.

The use of an honorific verb has a semantic basis. There are three semantic roles with regard to these two verbs. For the verb 'give', the three semantic roles are Donor, Gift, Recipient; and for the verb 'speak', the semantic roles are Speaker, Addressee, and Message/Medium (Dixon 2010: 127). A particular verb form will be used depending on the referent of each semantic role, in terms of the bipartite and tripartite social deixis, and its syntactic functions. Consider:

- (12) a. [Dasho=ge] DONOR:A dirin [ŋa=la] RECIPIENT:E
 Dasho=ERG today 1:SG=DAT
 [gokap] GIFT:O náj-ŋai
 opportunity give:HON- PERV
 Today, Dasho⁸ gave me (an) opportunity.

⁸ Dasho here is used as a term of address for someone important.

- b. [p^hadzu=la]RECIPIENT:E [ɲensem=tɕik]GIFT:O p^ha=te
 astrologer=DAT report=INDEF that.side=ALL
 p^hu:=næ
 give:HON=ABL.SEQ
 After giving a report to the
 astrologer...
- c. [söri=di]GIFT:O ganyu [lumbe=i mi=bak=la]RECIPIENT:E
 tip=DEF all village=GEN person=PL=DAT
 dzin=næ
 give=ABL.SEQ
 By giving all the tips to the people of the village...

The Donor role is in A function, the Gift is assigned to o function, and the Recipient is in E function marked by the dative =la in all the three examples of (12). Note that A is not overtly stated in (12b) and (12c). In (12a), the downward honorific verb *náy* is used because the Donor is perceived to belong to 'big/high' category in the eyes of the Recipient who is the speaker. In the same manner, the upward honorific form *p^hu:* is used in (12b) because *p^hadzu* 'astrologer', fulfilling the Recipient role, is an important person in the village who is always accorded deference by the people. In (12a), the speaker is the Recipient and the verb *náy* shows respect to the Donor as well as humility of the Recipient.

If the Gift in (12a) were to someone other than the speaker, the choice of the honorific verb would depend on the relative status of the Donor and the Recipient, according to the speaker's perception. If the Donor is perceived to be of higher status than the Recipient, then the same downward honorific verb *náy* will be used. If the Recipient is perceived to be higher than the Donor, then the upward honorific verb *p^hu:* will be used. If the Donor and the Recipient are somewhat equal, the speaker will still use one of the two honorific forms and not the 'horizontal' form to show humility with regard to himself. The choice between the 'downward' form and the upward form may be determined by whether or not one of the two referents (Donor, Recipient) is with the speaker at the time of speaking.

Similarly, in (12b), the verb *p^hu:* shows both the humility of the Donor and respect to the Recipient. If the Donor in A function were people with whom the speaker identifies (e.g. the people in the speaker's village), the speaker will still use the upward honorific form *p^hu:*. If the Donor is someone other than the speaker or those with whom the speaker identifies, the choice of the

honorific form will again depend on the relative status of the Donor and the Recipient. If the Donor has higher status than *p^hadzu* 'the astrologist', as does the chief lama of the village, the speaker will shift to the 'downward' honorific form *náy*.

In (12c), the speaker is talking about the local wedding practices. The Gift in o function must preferably be in an honorific form when the predicate is realized by an honorific verb. The parents of the groom, the underlying Donor in A function in (12c), leaves tips for the friends and neighbours of the bride when they go to fetch her. Since both the Donor and the Recipient are village folks, viewed at equal level in terms of social deixis, the horizontal (ordinary) form *dzin* is used. When the predicate is realized by an ordinary verb, the Gift in o function must preferably be an ordinary noun.

The same principle holds for the transitive verb of speaking. The Speaker is in A, the Addressee in E, and the Message/Medium in o function. If the referent of the Speaker role in A function is supposedly from the big/high category, then the honorific form *suŋ* is felicitous. If the referent of the Addressee role in E function is perceived to be from that same big/high category, the honorific form *zu* is felicitous. If the referent of either of these two semantic roles is perceived to be from the middle/equal/small category, then the ordinary form *láp* is more felicitous. The Message/Medium must preferably be in an honorific form when one of the honorific verbs is used.

Only the verbs of GIVING and SPEAKING make three-way contrasts. Other monomorphemic verb roots and derived verb stems make two-way contrasts—ordinary versus honorific. We can also find intransitive predicates realized by monomorphemic honorific verb roots or derived honorific verb stems. Consider:

- (13) a. láma ɕum-p^hi
 lama cry:HON-PERV
 The Lama cried.
- b. mákpon=bak=daŋ tɕ^hatsaŋ
 general=PL=CONJ complete
 söwa-ɲúŋ=næ
 food:HON-be.hungry:HON=ABL.SEQ
 The generals and all felt hungry.

In (13a), the predicate slot is filled by an intransitive monomorphemic honorific verb *ɕum*; and in (13b), a derived verb stem or a complex predicate, in which the incorporated honorific noun *söwa* does not have argument

status, fills the predicate slot. As with the referent of transitive subject A of an honorific transitive predicate, the referent of an intransitive subject s must be from the 'big/high' category.

Examples (12a) and (12b) are instances of both referent honorifics and bystander honorifics. The Donor in A function in (12a) and the Recipient in E function in (12b) which are the targets of honour can be speech act participants as well as bystanders. Examples (13a) and (13b) are bystander honorifics. The referents of the s arguments in (13) and (13b), the targets of honour, are not the speech act participants. The referent of these s arguments can be non-participant hearers or they can be absent from the conversational moment.

Brokpa has a polite particle *lá* shared with all the Bhutanese languages. Its function is similar to the polite particle *khá* or *kháp* in Thai (McCready 2019: 43; Levinson 1983: 91) except that there is no natural gender distinction of the speaker in Brokpa. In Thai, the closed syllable *kháp* can only be used by male speakers and the open syllable *khá* only by female speakers.

The polite particle *lá* in Brokpa occurs in vocative expressions after a personal name, e.g. *Tashi lá* 'Tashi POLITE', after a term of address as in *Dasho lá* 'Dasho POLITE', and after a kinship term *ʔapa lá* 'father POLITE'. The particle *lá* also occurs with a predicate, *ta-gu lá* 'see-IMPERV POLITE'. When *lá* occurs with an NP, its scope is only over a word or a phrase, but when it occurs with a predicate its scope extends over an entire clause. When it has scope over an entire clause, the polite particle *lá* functions as a marker of an addressee honorific in Brokpa:

- (14) a. p^ha=yi=la=ya toptsa=zík yon-gu
 there=GEN=LOC=EMPH food=INDEF be.there-FUT.IMPERV
 lá
 POLITE
 There will be a meal there also.
- b. ʔotsins lap-ki lá
 like.this say-PRES.IMPERV POLITE
 It is said like this.

In both (14a) and (14b) neither the speaker nor the addressee is a referent and the particle *lá* can also be used in these kinds of sentences. This is distinct from, though often compatible with, the referent honorifics.

Brokpa does not have a distinct marker of setting honorifics such as a marker of formality level. However, in a situation where formality needs to be

maintained, one uses honorific verbs and honorific nouns wherever possible complemented by the particle *lá*, as in (15). There can also be a change in prosody such as a flat intonation at the end of the clause:

- (15) ʔo-ɬou suŋ-nán-na námpardakpa
 DEM-same tell:HON-give: HON-COND perfect
 yon-ro=se zu-yo lá
 be.there-IMPERV=QUOT say: HON-EGO POLITE
 I would like to say that, 'If you say like this, it will be perfect.'

Essentially, in (15), the speaker is trying to achieve a maximum level of formality using whatever honorific resources the language has.

It is important to bear in mind that if the s/A argument is a respectable person who is doing something with the referent of the honorific noun in an instrumental function, the predicate should be cast as honorific:

- (16) ɲæn-sen-k^han=bak=k^he t^huk=ke
 ear:HON-listen: HON-NOMZ:AG=PL=ERG mind:HON=INST
 zöba-ze-nán
 patience-take:HON-do:HON
 Those who listen, please be patient
 Lit. Those who listen, please feel patience with the mind.

In (16), the referent of the A argument who does the listening is the audience, which is the target of honour. The honorific noun *t^huk* 'mind' in instrumental function triggers the predicate *zöba-ze-nán* to be in the honorific. If any of the two honorific verb roots in the predicate is replaced with an ordinary verb root, as in **zöba-za-nán* or **zöba-ze-dzin*, it will sound incongruous and can even be considered ungrammatical.

A couple of caveats must be noted concerning the use of honorific language. Employing honorific forms with someone who is very close, such as close relatives or close friends, might be viewed as a distancing strategy. One is generally expected to use ordinary forms among family members. While it is not uncommon to find the use of honorific forms with one's parents or elder family members, particularly if the parent is a religious practitioner such as a lama, using honorific language among family members and close relatives may sound ludicrous to others.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, it is not uncommon for people from the 'big/high' category to use honorific forms with those from the

'medium/small' category. However, care must be taken lest this be perceived as an expression of disdain or mockery, akin to similar effects produced by gender reversals in some languages (Aikhenvald 2019). It also runs the risk of creating an unfriendly environment for conversation. In any case, the use of honorific forms in an infelicitous situation, whether among close friends and relatives or from high to low, will sound oddly formal and become a social distancing strategy.

5.3 Origin and development of honorifics

The honorific system is a deep-rooted feature of Brokpa and other Bodish languages. Its origin and development can be associated with Buddhist values. Akin to social categorizations in the spoken languages, Buddhism has a distinguished tradition of enumerating various, but related, phenomena in terms of numbers. The number word and the enumerated concepts together function as a lexical unit. Common examples include *gewa tɕu* <dge ba bcu> 'Ten Virtues', *mi-gewa-tɕu* <mi dge ba bcu> 'Ten Non-virtues', *ʈaɕi-ta:gyæ* <bkra shis rtags brgya> 'Eight Auspicious Symbols', *rintɕʰen-ná-dün* <rin chen sna bdun> 'Seven Precious Possessions'. There are hundreds of such expressions which consist of enumerated concepts. Some common ones have become part of the vocabulary of spoken languages, including Brokpa.

Perhaps the most important of such enumerated sequences is *kön-tɕʰo:sum* <dkon mchog gsum> 'Three Precious Jewels'. The Three Precious Jewels are the Buddha Jewel, the Dharma Jewel, and the Sangha Jewel. The Buddha Jewel refers to Buddha, the Dharma Jewel to the Buddhist teachings including all the Buddhist scriptures, and the Sangha Jewel refers to the monastic community.

In the Brokpa tradition, as is the case with other Bodish language communities, the monastic community includes all of the *láma* 'lama', *geɕe* 'learned teacher', *geloŋ* 'monk', *ʔanim* 'nun', *gomtɕʰen* 'noncelibate monk', and *dzambeyáy/pʰadzu* 'astrologer'. All the three Jewels are precious to every person and people pray to them and seek refuge with them all the time.

A further concept enumerated in terms of three, related to the Three Precious Jewels, is *dordze sum* <rdo rje gsum> 'Three Indestructible Realities' which refers to the 'body', 'speech', and 'mind' of a buddha. The ordinary term for body, speech, and mind in most Bodish languages including Brokpa are *lū* 'body' (with synonyms such as *luspu*), *ŋaʔ* 'speech' (with synonyms such as *ló* and *ponŋoŋ*), and *yi*: 'mind' (with synonyms such as *sem*). The term *dordze*

sum is related to the Three Precious Jewels in general—'body' relates to Sangha Jewel, 'speech' to Dharma Jewel, and 'mind' to Buddha Jewel.

Given the infelicitous effects of employing the ordinary terms to refer to the body, speech, and mind of a buddha or any of the Three Precious Jewels, it is only natural for speakers to come up with variant forms. So there is a variant form for each of the Three Indestructible Realities—*ku* for 'body', *suŋ* for 'speech', and *ʰuk* for 'mind'. These three words became the honorific forms of the ordinary terms *lū*, *ŋaʔ*, and *yi*: respectively.

The development of honorific forms extends to anything related to the Three Jewels, over and above body, speech, and mind. Honorific forms have developed not just for the words describing these concrete objects, but also for words describing actions and states associated with the Three Jewels.

For example, Avalokiteshvara, originally one of the closest disciples of Buddha and now worshipped as the Deity of Compassion, is called Chenrezig ['tɕɛ:n.ɾɛ:zi:] literally meaning 'Watching with the Eyes'. He is given the epithet *tɕʰak-toŋ-tɕæŋ-toŋ* <phyag stong spyang stong> 'Thousand Hands and Thousand Eyes'. The reason for him having a thousand eyes is that he watches over all the people with compassionate concern. Apart from the number word *toŋ* 'thousand', only the honorific forms—*tɕæŋ* <spyang> 'eye', *tɕʰak* <phyag> 'hand', and *zik* <gzigs> 'to watch'—are used in his name and epithet, instead of the ordinary forms *mik* 'eye', *lakpa* 'hand', and *ta* 'see/watch'.

There are a host of monomorphemic nouns and verbs all associated with the Three Jewels, body parts as well as artefacts, and also actions and states associated with the body parts and artefacts of the Three Jewels. Other honorific nouns and honorific verbs are derived from the given set of monomorphemic honorific nouns and verbs by means of compounding and affixation (such as nominalization). As illustrated in §5.1.1, a largish set of honorific nouns can be derived from *ku* 'body:HON', *suŋ* 'speech:HON', and *ʰuk* 'mind:HON'. The honorific forms, although originating in these spiritual contexts, have become part of the everyday language style in Brokpa and other Bodish languages.

5.4 Forms of address

Brokpa does not have special honorific pronouns. This is a little surprising since it has honorific forms for most nouns and verbs, either monomorphemic or derived. The form *kʰoŋ* 'he/she/it' which is the third person honorific pronoun in Classical Tibetan is the ordinary third person plural pronoun

in both Brokpa and Dzongkha. Classical Tibetan also has 2nd person honorific pronoun <khyed> distinguished with a vowel from its ordinary 2nd person pronoun <khyod>; but they are neutralized in the ordinary 2nd person pronoun *khyö* in Brokpa and Dzongkha. Dzongkha has innovated a polite or honorific second person *nā* (van Driem and Tshering 2019: 100; Watters 2018: 190), but there is no such innovation in Brokpa. In addition to its pronouns with regular three persons, Brokpa makes use of *raŋ* 'self' and *muzu* 'other' as independent personal pronouns with a wide range of functions.

However, Brokpa makes use of other terms of address or honorific titles⁹ as a strategy for avoiding the use of pronouns to refer to respected persons. The forms of address (honorific titles) are distinct from linguistic honorifics, but they are related because the target of an honorific title is usually the target of respect in honorific speech. All the forms of address or the honorific titles in Brokpa are used as a forms of address in the 2nd person and as terms of reference in the 3rd person. McCready (2019: 79–103) describes honorific titles such as Japanese *sensei* 'teacher' or Thai *mǔo* 'doctor' as 'role honorifics'.

There are three common honorific titles which are used for the king—*miwaŋ*, *ŋádaʔ*, and *zap* (all similar to 'Majesty'). The term *zap* is used in isolation, more as a referential term than a term of address. The other two, *miwaŋ* and *ŋádaʔ*, can be used in isolation or they can be juxtaposed and compounded with *rinpote^he* literally 'precious' and derive a single term of address *miwang ŋadaʔ rinpote^he* which is exclusively used for addressing the king. The term *gyætsun* is used only for addressing the queen. The honorific title *miwaŋ* can be used for addressing the queen and the members of the king's family.

The prime minister and the ministers would be addressed as *midze* 'Excellency' (literally 'Human Lord').¹⁰ There is a special group of individuals who have received a special award from the king, a red scarf and a symbolic sword, in recognition of their outstanding contributions in different fields. These people are addressed as *ḍakeo* <drag shos> which is, interestingly, an adjectival root *ḍak* with comparative index marker *-eo* (involving omission of the final syllable *-po* from the adjective *ḍakpo* 'better' applied before the morphological process of suffixation). Note that these are not honorific adjectives but honorific titles or honorific terms of address, which is a subclass of noun.

Members of parliament are addressed with a term coined recently which is bit of a mouthful, *te^hötöteangi thümi* literally 'Praise-worthy Member'. People

respectfully address members of parliament, other senior civil servants, senior corporate employees, and in fact anyone perceived as respectable with the title *ḍakeo*. A term *te^hog* literally 'supreme' may be added to the name of anyone occupying a 'big/high' slot preceded by a relevant term of address.

There are also several terms of address used among the people. Some common ones are *lópon* (lit. 'teacher'), akin to the Japanese *sensei* or the Thai *aacaan*, both meaning 'teacher' (McCready 2019: 4), *ḷau* (lit. 'elder brother'), *ḷap(a)* (lit. 'father'), *ḷam(a)* (lit. 'mother'), *ḷagi* (lit. 'elder sister'). English terms including *sar* 'sir', *medam* 'madam', *ḷan^hkal* 'uncle', *ḷan^hti* 'aunt' are popularly used. Another address term *sayab* [sə'jəp] originally from Arabic *sahib* 'companion', borrowed via Hindi in which it is used as an honorific title, was once popularly used in Brokpa possibly due to proximity to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. Now it is less popular and has been replaced by the English loan *sar* 'sir'.

6 Conclusion

The Brokpa language and society are intricately related and mutually reinforcing. The language which is a result of a distillation of the thought processes of its speakers from generation to generation shapes the society as a whole.

The culture of deference, politeness, and self-effacement, all of which have their roots in the Brokpa belief system, is reflected in the social deixis and honorific systems. Some aspects of social deixis have striking parallels with the topographic deixis. The comparative construction, reflecting the sociocultural practices of the past and the present, is yet another means of categorizing people possibly for the same purpose—that of showing deference to the deserving ones.

There are two-way and three-way contrasts in all the three grammatical systems we have seen—the comparative construction, topographic deixis including demonstratives, and social deixis.

A mono-clausal comparative construction in which the Parameter of comparison is modified by the index marker *-eo*, compares two participants. This is the prototypical comparative scheme (Dixon 2008) of Brokpa which fits into its system of making bipartite categorization. A comparative construction involving the superlative form of an adjective *-da* relates to the system of making tripartite categorization. When the Parameter is modified by the index marker *-da*, the participants or entities are compared in terms of three degrees of gradable properties—the unmarked form, the comparative form, and the superlative form.

⁹ Most terms of address and honorific titles are shared with other Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in Bhutan.

¹⁰ The term for 'minister' is *lónpo* and not *midze*.

In the same manner, nominal demonstratives and some local adverbial demonstratives make a two-way contrast, proximal and distal, which again conforms with the bipartite classification system. Topographic deixis, part of the local adverbial demonstratives, involve three height levels—higher, lower, or same level as the speaker. The speech act participants, in particular, and the people in the world in general, are categorized into twos (bipartite) and threes (tripartite). The bipartite categorization—big versus small or high versus low—is a broad and simple way of categorization for the purpose of employing the honorific forms and the tripartite classification—‘big, middling, small’ or ‘high, medium, low’—is a subtler or a finer system of categorization.

These three grammatical systems, among others, are reflective of one common social value—that of identifying who is who and according due deference using honorific forms and constructions.

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