

KINSHIP IN THREE TAMANGIC VARIETIES

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We examine kinship terms in three closely related Tamangic varieties: Manange, Nar, and Phu. Using Proto-Tamangic and Proto Tibeto-Burman reconstructions, we track cognate forms as well as structural innovations. Our account allows a first examination of lexico-semantic aspects of Phu, an under-documented representative of the Nar-Phu complex. While Nar-Phu is usually treated as a single language, considerable differences exist in the organization of all three kinship term systems. Kinship terms are considered to be conservative, basic vocabulary and thus indicative of close within-family relationships, but our study shows that even closely related varieties can show considerable differences in kin nomenclature.

Kinship, Tamangic, Social organization, Etymology, Structural innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

The documentation and classification of kinship terminology is a major type of ethnographic fieldwork, with importance to both linguistics and to anthropology. Analyses of kin terms shed light on specific types of culturally defined interpersonal relationships within and across family lines, and they allow for a greater understanding of how these relationships either change or remain stable through time (Zeitlyn 2005).

Structurally, kinship terms are part of the greater, relational (noun) system of a language. The formal and functional encodings cross-cut cognitive-linguistic boundaries and show a remarkable ability to replicate across different components of the lexicon and to shift in function (e.g. moving from referential to vocative). As such, kinship is described as a kind of language within language, “a microcosmic or embryonic register interspersed with larger structures of linguistic coding” (Dziebel 2007: 175).

Kinship systems are an important social organizing force in Sino-Tibetan and Tibeto-Burman languages and also throughout south and southeast Asia as a whole, and have been documented for languages across multiple sub-groupings (Benedict 1942; Doherty 1974; Jacques 2012; Turin 2001, 2008). They may also be viewed as a way to better understand structural and semantic similarities and differences between closely related varieties within a sub-grouping. Our account examines kinship terms in three closely related varieties within Tamangic: Manange, Nar and Phu. On a descriptive level, this account allows for a first examination of lexico-semantic aspects of Phu, an under-documented representative of the Nar-Phu complex. Using comparative data from these varieties in relation to Proto-Tamangic and Proto Tibeto-Burman reconstructions, we can track cognate forms as well as those that display structural innovations and semantic shifts.

The structure of this paper is as follows: We first consider the varieties under investigation and methods of data collection and analysis; we then engage in form analysis beginning with immediate family members and branching outward to parents' siblings and their offspring. We demonstrate that while Nar-Phu is usually treated as a single language in family trees, and self-reported mutual intelligibility between Nar and Phu is considerably higher than with Manange, considerable differences exist in the organisation of all three kinship term systems. While kinship terms are often considered to be conservative, basic vocabulary, and thus potentially indicative of close relationships between varieties, our study shows that even closely related varieties can show considerable differences in the organization of their kin nomenclature.

2. THE LANGUAGES AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

This study focuses on three closely related Tamangic language varieties: Manange, Nar, and Phu.¹ Despite a good deal of lexical and grammatical overlap, it is commonly accepted that Manange, Nar, and Phu comprise a cluster (as demonstrated by the tree in Figure 1, based on Noonan 2011 and replicated in Thurgood 2017: 11).

Tamangic

Tamangic complex:

Tamang

Gurungic:

Manange-Nar-Phu complex

Gurung

Thakali complex:

Thakali, Chantyal, Seke

Figure 1. Location of Manange, Nar and Phu

However, the linguistic distance between these three varieties has never been fully confirmed via a comprehensive lexico-statistic or grammatical data comparison. Noonan (2003) reported a suspicion that Nar and Phu demonstrate a substantial degree of lexical variation. This suspicion of differences has been further supported by speaker comments about mutual intelligibility. For example, Hildebrandt, Dhakal, Bond, Vallejo & Fyffe (2015) reported on sociolinguistic attitudes, usage and comprehension between these varieties, where 30% of Manange respondents reported that they understood all of Nar and where 48% reported that they understood some Nar. In contrast, the comprehension of Phu by Manange speakers is lower, where 22% report understanding all of Phu, and where 52% report understanding some. Conversely, among Nar-Phu speakers, 85% reported understanding all of the Manange language, and only 15% reported

¹Manange has the Ethnologue ISO-639 entry *nmm* and a Glottolog code *mana1288*; Gurung has the Ethnologue ISO-639 entry *gvr* and a Glottolog code *west2414*; Nar-Phu has the Ethnologue ISO-639 entry *npa* *narp1239*.

Map of the Annapurna Conservation Area showing the distribution of three languages: Manange speaking, Nar speaking, and Phu speaking. The map includes geographical features like Khatung Kang, Khatung, Khangsar, Manang, Hukunde, Pisang, Lamjung Kailas, Machhapuchhre, Parche, Namarijung, Phu speaking, Nemjung, Thoché, Pangpang Himal, Manaslu, Dharapani, Jagat, and Himalchuli. Three clusters of language speakers are highlighted with black circles: Manange speaking (around Manang and Hukunde), Nar speaking (around Khatung and Khatung Kang), and Phu speaking (around Phu speaking).

All three varieties in this study are spoken in the northern and north-eastern regions of the Manang District of Nepal, as shown in Map 1. Manange speakers are predominantly spread across eight villages, while Nar and Phu speakers are largely concentrated in two villages, although there is some movement particularly between Nar and Phu villages at the time of marriage. This map also shows Gurung and Gyalsumdo-speaking communities, to which we make occasional comparisons in this account (clustered in the lower section of the map). Gurung is also Tamangic, while Gyalsumdo is a Tibetan variety.

Of the three varieties under examination in this account, Manange has the most documentation outputs over a longer period of time (e.g. Nagano 1984, Hoshi 1986, Hildebrandt 2004, 2005, 2007a, 2007b, 2009, Hildebrandt & Bond 2017). Publications on Nar have been less frequent through time (Mazaudon 1996, Pohle 1990, Noonan 2003, Hildebrandt & Bond 2011, Hildebrandt 2013, Noonan & Hildebrandt 2017), and virtually nothing has been published on Phu specifically. Kinship terms often are included to varying degrees of detail in dictionaries and glossaries, with and without structural and semantic analysis (for example, for Gurung see Glover 1977, for Thakali see Georg 1996, for Manange see Hildebrandt 2004). Within Tamangic, some description sections or chapters devoted to kin

discussion and analysis are available (for Gurung see Doherty 1974, for Thakali see Vinding 1998, for Tamang see Toffin 1986).

Our repeat-design fieldwork in the Manang District of Nepal included the collection of kin terms from multiple speakers of Manange, Nar and Phu, as well as data from the two other major languages of the area (Gurung and Gyalsumdo). We interviewed at least one male and one female from each variety, and when possible we also interviewed both older and younger representatives. The interviews were all conducted using Nepali (a regional lingua franca) and began with Nepali kin terms as a basis for our corpus, but in this account we also draw on commentaries based on observations from interactions with Manange and Nar-Phu community members as they have gone about using their mother tongues on a day-to-day basis. For etymology considerations, we draw from Benedict (1942) and from Matisoff (2003) and the companion online database, *The Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus* (<http://stedt.berkeley.edu/~stedt-cgi/rootcanal.pl>).

The national census 2011 (Yadava 2014) records that there are a total of 392 Manange speakers in Nepal. The national census, however, does not record Nar-Phu as a distinct language. Self-reports of the Manange speaking population collected during fieldwork conducted by the authors are considerably higher, with an estimated 2,000-3,000 speakers living in Manang, and a couple thousand diaspora speakers in other parts of Nepal and overseas. Self-reports of Nar stand at about 400 and Phu at under 200.

3. FORM ANALYSIS

Our account makes use of the same standard terms and abbreviations encountered in many other ethnographic accounts of kinship, given in Table 1.

<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Relative age</i>
mother (M)	father (F)	elder (e)
sister (Z)	brother (B)	younger (y)
daughter (D)	son (S)	
wife (W)	husband (H)	

Table 1. Abbreviations used for expressing kinship terms

These abbreviations are used in combination to express kinship terms in relation to a reference point, known as ego. This reference point is always implicit, yet unexpressed when the abbreviations are used. So for example, ego's elder brother (i.e. a brother older than ego) would be represented eB. Some expressions involve two or more reference points. For instance, ego's father's younger sister (i.e. younger than father) has two reference points: ego and (ego's) father. This would be represented as FyZ. When a relative age distinction scopes over a complex relation, we use brackets to indicate the domain to which it applies. For instance, y[MZS] refers to a son of ego's mother's sister (MZS) who is younger than ego (i.e. ego's younger male cousin).

In our analysis, all forms are given in their bare (i.e. absolutive) case form. We list female-referring forms first, then male. The sex of the speaker appears to be irrelevant to the form of kinship terms in Manange and Nar, but appears to be a minor factor in Phu when referring to the children of ego's siblings (see Jacques 2012 for Tangut and Turin 2008 for Thangmi, where sex of speaker is also a differentiating factor).

First, we present kin terms for 'mother' and 'father' in Table 2.²

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
mother (M)	¹ ama	fame	ama
father (F)	¹ apɜ	âtɕu	hâtɕi

Table 2. Terms for 'mother' and 'father'³

All three varieties have similar terms for 'mother' (M), yet a split is observable in the origins of the terms for 'father' (F). The Manange form ¹apɜ is cognate with masculine kin terms in many varieties of Tibetan, where a low vowel (the Proto Tibeto-Burman (PTB) prefix **a-*) precedes a **po~*bo~*pho~*pa* root (Benedict 1947: 314). A similar pattern is evident in the neighboring Gurung term *apa*, and in Gyalsumdo *awa*.

The terms in Nar and Phu, are cognate with a reflex denoting both 'father' and 'uncle' in some other Tibeto-Burman languages. For example, in Motuo Menba the form for 'father' and 'uncle' is *ʔa-dza~ʔa-dzan* (Huang & Dai 1992). However, in Nar and Phu, *âtɕu* and *hâtɕi* are restricted to a male parent (i.e. F) only. Different terms are employed to make reference to maternal uncles (MB), paternal uncles (FB) and the husbands of maternal and paternal aunts (MZH and FZH) (see Tables 7, 8, 11 and 12).

The sex of ego's immediate offspring (i.e. 'daughter' and 'son') is lexically distinguished in all three varieties, as shown in Table 3.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
daughter (D)	¹ tsɜmi	êŋi	semi ~ mriŋ
son (S)	³ tsɜ	âle	kola

Table 3. Terms for 'daughter' and 'son'

The Manange forms ³tsɜ 'son' (S) and ¹tsɜmi 'daughter' (D) are cognate with conservative Tibeto-Burman terms for offspring (cf. PTB **tsa~*za* 'child'). Phu exhibits an alternation between a conservative form for 'daughter' (D) in *semi* and a general term in Tamangic for female in *mriŋ* (see Matisoff 2003). The term *kola*

² For many of these forms in Nar and Phu (and also with proper names), the final vowel changes to /o/ in vocative, as in Phu: *hâtfo* 'Oh, father!'

³ We use shading in these table cells when a single kin term is used to make reference to two or more concepts that are lexically distinguished in one or more of the other varieties under consideration, or to highlight a contrast between varieties that share cognate material and those that do not.

‘son’ (S) in Phu is cognate with Manange *kola* ‘child’ (see Table 4) and Gurung *kolo* ‘child’. Nar has distinct forms for ‘daughter’ and ‘son’ which are substantially different from the Manange or Phu terms. The Nar term *âle* ‘son’ (S) is cognate with *ele* a general term for a younger relative. See also Table 7 for Nar *ele* ‘younger brother’ (yB) and Table 10 for Nar *ele* ‘younger male cousin’ (y[MZS], y[FZS], y[MBS] or y[FBS]). While the lexical resources the languages have are similar, they are deployed in different ways to maintain a distinction between the generic term for ‘child’ and a kinship term meaning ‘son’ (S).

Children/offspring as a collective group are referred to by co-compound forms in each of the varieties. The compound is clearly formed from components meaning ‘son’ and ‘daughter’ in Manange and Phu, as shown in Table 4.⁴ In Nar, one of the compounded variants has a base in *tshe* ‘child’ while the other has a base in *âle* ‘son’ (S).

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
child	¹ kola	tsfie	setʃi ~ se
children	³ ts3ts3mi	tsfietsuke ~ âlênjitʃuke	kolasemi

Table 4. Terms for ‘child’ and ‘children/offspring’

While each of the varieties has different individual forms for ‘daughter’ (D), ‘son’ (S) and ‘child’, we can make two clear observations based on this data set: (i) the reflexes of PTB **tsa~*za* ‘child’ and *kola* have undergone different semantic shifts in each of the three varieties; and (ii) co-compounding is a shared resource for word-formation across the languages of Manang District.

We turn now to forms referring to grandparents in Table 5.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
grandmother (MM or FM)	⁴ me	mame	epi
grandfather (MF or FF)	¹ ak ^{he}	eki	pop

Table 5. Terms for grandparents

No distinction in kin terminology is made according to whether ego’s grandparents are maternal or paternal. Manange and Nar pattern together here, having etymologically related terms for ‘grandmother’ (MM or FM) and ‘grandfather’ (MF or FF). Phu retains older forms cognate with PTB **pi* ‘grandmother’ and **puw* ‘grandfather’.

Terms for grandchildren (DD, SD, DS or SS) are shown in Table 6.

⁴ Similar compounding patterns are found in Gurung and Gyalsumdo.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
granddaughter (DD or SD)	¹ kome	kwōme	kwemi
grandson (DS or SS)	kwōsa	kwōsa	kuntsə
grandchildren	kwōsakwōme	kwōsakwōme	kuntsəkwemi

Table 6. Terms for grandchildren

All three varieties have distinct kinship terms for ‘granddaughter’ (DD or SD) and ‘grandson’ (DS or SS). For ‘grandchildren’ as a plural collective, co-compounds are used, as with the terms for ‘children’ in Table 4.

In Table 7, terms for ego’s siblings are shown.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
elder sister (eZ)	¹ ana	nane	nanə
younger sister (yZ)	³ nani	aŋe	aŋe ~ tseme
elder brother (eB)	¹ atɜ	ate	atə
younger brother (yB)	¹ aŋfō	ele	ele ~ tsentse

Table 7. Terms for siblings

This system of differentiating siblings is an example of what is described by Murdock (1968: 6) as the ‘Dravidian/Age-Sex’ classification; the kin terms in Table 7 encode both relative age and sex distinctions, as commonly attested in Tibeto-Burman languages (and Indo-Aryan languages, such as Nepali).

Each variety maintains a lexicalized distinction between elder and younger siblings of each sex. However, there are several differences in terms of how this is achieved, with some evidence for lexical shift or realignment.

While all three varieties have cognate terms for ‘elder brother’ (eB), there are differences in the lexical resources used to refer to a ‘younger brother’ (yB).

The Manange term ¹aŋfō ‘younger brother’ has cognates in other languages of Manang District. In Gyalsumdo (a Tibetan variety spoken in lower Manang) the term for ‘younger brother’ (yB) is *aŋfo*, while in Gurung, the term *afo* means ‘brother-in-law’ (ZH). It also shares some formal similarities with a base form *aŋaŋ* meaning ‘maternal uncle’ (MeB or MyB) in all three varieties of upper Manang (see Table 8), however, it is unclear if this is incidental.

In Nar, the term for ‘younger brother’ (yB) is an apparent re-assignment of *ele*, a generic term for ‘child’ (cf. Nar *āle* ‘son’). This is also an accepted variant in Phu, where *ele* alternates with *tsentse* (from the PTB form **tsa~*za* ‘child’).

All varieties show retention of some form of PTB **s-nam* ‘sister’ (or possibly **nau* ‘younger sibling’), however, these are distributed in different ways in Nar-Phu and Manange. In Nar and Phu forms *nane* and *nanə* denote ‘elder sister’ (eZ), while in Manange *nani* denotes ‘younger sister’ (yZ).⁵ Conversely, the Manange term *ana* ‘elder sister’ (eZ) is cognate with Nar-Phu *aŋe* ‘younger sister’ (yZ).

⁵ In Nepali *nani* means ‘daughter’ (D) and it is a term of endearment used to address younger females (the equal age of one’s daughters, for example).

The Phu term for ‘daughter’ (D) in *semi* (see Table 3) and an alternate term for ‘younger sister’ (yZ) in *tseme* appear to have a common origin in the PTB form **tsa~*za* ‘child’ or are potential reflexes of PTB **tshe* ‘female’.

Turning to extended familial relations, we look first at the ego’s mother’s siblings, and then at ego’s father’s siblings, shown in Tables 8 and 9.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
MeZ	¹ am ¹ thj3p3	am thjebe	ama krempə
MyZ	¹ aru	am tʃaŋbe	amtʃaŋ
MeB	¹ aʃaŋ	aʃaŋ thjeba	aʃaŋ
MyB	¹ aʃaŋ ³ tʃaŋp3	aʃaŋ tʃaŋba	aʃaŋ tʃaŋpə

Table 8. Terms for mother’s siblings

Here, all three varieties exhibit the use of modifiers to distinguish between elder and younger maternal aunts and uncles. The most symmetrical system is found in Nar, where there is a base form *am* meaning ‘maternal aunt’ (MZ) and another *aʃaŋ* for ‘maternal uncle’ (MB). Each of these terms is distinguished by the modifiers *thjebe/ thjeba* ‘big, old’ and *tʃaŋbe/tʃaŋba* ‘small, young’ indicating the relative age of the ego’s mother’s siblings. The differences in the form of the modifiers is most likely the lexicalized residue of an older gender-marking system in the nominal domain, although this does not permeate the lexicon in any of these varieties, and this distinction is not observed at all in Manange.

The ‘base + modifier’ pattern is also observed in the Manange and Phu terms for ‘mother’s younger brother’ (MyB). However, this is not the case for ‘mother’s elder brother’ (MeB). Here, the base form ¹*aʃaŋ* is used in reference to ‘mother’s elder brother’ (MeB) without any further modifiers.

Modifiers cognate with those observed in Nar are also found in the Manange term ¹*am* ¹*thj3p3* ‘mother’s elder sister’ (MeZ) and Phu *amtʃaŋ* ‘mother’s younger sister’ (MyZ). The Phu term for ‘mother’s elder sister’ (MeZ) also has a ‘base + modifier’ structure. Phu speakers observe that *krempə* is a word meaning ‘smaller’ (*ama krempə* is literally ‘smaller mother’), and we speculate that this modifier may be related to Written Tibetan (WT) *chuŋba* ‘young’.

Finally, we note from Table 8 that Manange *aru* ‘mother’s younger sister’ (MyZ) is unlike the counterparts in Nar and Phu. We propose that this form may be cognate with PTB **sru* (possibly a lexicalization of *ama-sru*). If this is the case, then the Nar and Phu forms for ‘mother’s younger sister’ appear to be an innovative semantic generalization of the base form *am(a)* + modifier into this semantic domain.

Turning to siblings on the father's side, these are presented in Table 9.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
FeZ	¹ ani ¹ tʰjɜpɜ	eŋi tʰjebe	eni
FyZ	¹ ani ¹ tʰaŋpɜ	eŋi tʰaŋbe	tʃũŋku
FeB	¹ ap ¹ tʰjɜpɜ	ogu tʰjeba	oku
FyB	¹ aku	ogu tʰaŋba	

Table 9. Terms for father's siblings

Once again, Nar has the most symmetric system. There is a base form *eŋi* meaning 'paternal aunt' (FZ) and another *ogu* for 'paternal uncle' (FB). Each of these terms is distinguished by the modifiers *tʰjebe/ tʰjeba* 'big, old' and *tʰaŋbe/tʰaŋba* 'small, young' indicating the relative age of the ego's mother's siblings. The same 'base + modifier' structure is seen in the Manange terms for 'paternal aunts' (FeZ or FyZ).

Manange uses ¹*ap*, a clipped form of 'father' as a base in ¹*ap* ¹*tʰjɜpɜ* 'father's elder brother' (FeB), but ¹*aku* for 'father's younger brother' (FyB); Phu uses *oku* as the term for 'father's brother' (FB) and does not make an age based distinction. We return to the significance of these overlaps for kinship classification in Section 4.

The Phu form for 'father's younger sister' (FyZ) *tʃũŋku* in Table 9 is interesting, as it stands out from Manange and Nar. One possibility for this difference is that it is cognate with PTB **sru(w)* 'elder sister'.⁶ A more likely candidate may be an etymological source in WT *chuŋba* 'young'.

Comparing the forms in Tables 8 and 9, we see a difference between forms used for ego's mother's siblings and those for ego's father's siblings across gender categories. Setting aside the two individual differences in Manange, for the female siblings, we see a clipped form of 'mother' as a base for mother's female's siblings (MZ) and we see a base meaning 'aunt' (PTB **ni(y)* 'aunt', **ne~*ni~*nei* 'father's sister') for father's female siblings (FZ). For male siblings, we see a system like that of many Tibetan varieties: ¹*aku/ogu/oku* (Tibetan *a-khə*) for 'paternal uncle' (FB) and ¹*aŋaŋ/aŋaŋ* (Tibetan *a-zaŋ* and PTB **(z)ryan* 'uncle, superior') for 'maternal uncle' (MB).

Also of interest here is that Nar most consistently uses compounded structures (noun plus nominalized adjectival). There are times when this makes Nar kin terms structurally more similar to those in Manange, than Phu. However, Nar appears to use 'base + modifier' compounding more consistently than Manange, resulting in a more symmetrical system of kin nomenclature.

Next, we turn to the encoding of 'cousin'. It is not uncommon in South Asian languages for cousins to be denoted in the same way as siblings, and this is true in

⁶ While the surface similarities are not striking, it is not that unlikely that a former */sr/* cluster has palatalized in the Tamangic family, and that this form has generalised in meaning to mean 'sister' (Z) rather than 'elder sister' (eZ) over time. We leave the precise etymology of this kin term to further research.

all three varieties, as shown in Table 10. In all varieties, both elder sibling (eZ or eB) and younger sibling (yZ or yB) terms are used for elder and younger cousins, respectively.

	<i>Manange</i>		<i>Nar</i>		<i>Phu</i>	
	<i>elder</i>	<i>younger</i>	<i>elder</i>	<i>younger</i>	<i>elder</i>	<i>younger</i>
MZD or FZD MBD or FBD	¹ ana	³ nani	nane	aŋe	nanə	aŋe
MZS or FZS MBS or FBS	¹ atɜ	¹ aŋð	ate	ele	atə	ele

Table 10. Terms for ego's cousins

The subject of cousin nomenclature has received a good deal of attention (Dousset 2011), particularly within the practice of marriage. In some Tibeto-Burman ethnolinguistic groups, cross-cousin marriage, that is, marriage of a man to his mother's brother's daughter (MBD) or marriage of a woman to her father's sister's son (FZS), is either prohibited or else highly restricted (Turin 2008). In other groups, cross-cousin marriage is permitted. An example is Thakali, where distinct kinship terms across mother and father-originating groupings suggest this is not viewed as incest (Vinding 1998). Bradley (1989) notes that in Loloish languages, the situation is mixed, but that proto-Loloish communities preferred cross-cousin matrilineal marriage.

In Manange, Nar, and Phu, cross-cousin marriage of any direction is permitted and uncontroversial to people with whom we have discussed the practice, but interestingly, the terms for cousins across mother and father-originating groups are not different and sibling terms are used. According to information gleaned from personal communication with Manange and Nar speakers, there are only intergenerational restrictions. Specifically, polygamy is irregularly practiced, and a man may be presented with a choice to marry two sisters from the same parents. If a man marries a woman but does not also marry the younger sister due to extreme age differences, then his son may marry the younger sister. But once this has happened, intermarriage between those two families is not permitted. Beyond these reported observations, we acknowledge that the practices are in need of further research. Furthermore, these differences in both lexical form and accepted/prescribed practices across ethnolinguistic groups of Nepal underscore Dousset's (2011: 217) recommendation that pragmatic usages and adaptations of kinship terms should be analyzed and understood only as recorded and discussed in their contextual usages.

Table 11 shows terms for spousal relations.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
wife (W)	³ pje ~ ¹ tsaŋ	p ^h ie	p ^h jê
husband (H)	¹ p ^h ɜ	p ^h æ	p ^h ə ~ p ^h e

Table 11. Terms for 'wife' and 'husband'

There is regularity across varieties here. One difference is that in Manange, ¹*tsaŋ* is more specifically used for ‘bride’, or the woman’s status at the time of marriage, while ³*pje* denotes a ‘married woman, wife’. The terms for ‘marriage/get married’ in Manange and Nar-Phu are virtually identical with the exception that in Manange the construction is a complex verb, literally ¹*tsaŋ* ¹*tsʰaŋ-pɜ* ‘bride’ + ‘marry’, while in Nar-Phu it is *tsʰaŋ*.

Next is an examination of terms for the spouses of mother’s and father’s siblings, respectively, shown in Tables 12 and 13. First, we turn to the spouses of ego’s mother’s siblings (i.e. spouses of maternal aunts and spouses of maternal uncles).

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
MeZH	¹ ap ¹ tʰjɜpɜ	ma tʰjebe	mɦâ
MyZH	¹ aku	ma tʰaŋbe	
MeBW	¹ am ³ tʰaŋ	ŋeŋi tʰjebe	ŋjeŋi
MyBW	¹ am ³ tʰaŋ ³ tʰaŋpɜ	ŋeŋi tʰaŋbe	

Table 12. Terms for the spouses of mother’s siblings

The data demonstrate that Phu has only two kinship terms for the spouses of maternal aunts and uncles, *mɦâ* (MeZH or MyZH) and *ŋjeŋi* (MeBW or MyBW). Cognates of these terms are also seen in Nar, but these are modified with nominalized attributive adjectives, to distinguish between the spouses of ego’s mother’s elder and younger siblings. Note that the modifiers are invariant in form here, and do not alternate based on the gender of the base. The base form *ma/mɦâ* is likely cognate with PTB **maŋ* ‘big, elder (brother, uncle), old’. Nar-Phu *ŋeŋi* /*ŋjeŋi* ‘maternal uncle’s wife’ (MBW) is cognate with Written Tibetan *nene* ‘aunt’ and PTB **ney/ni(y)* ‘aunt, mother-in-law’.

The Manange terms have a different origin from those in Nar and Phu. The Manange term for ‘mother’s younger sister’s husband’, ¹*aku*, is identical to the term used for ‘father’s younger brother’ (see Table 9). Meanwhile, ¹*ap* ¹*tʰjɜpɜ* (lit. ‘big/old father’) for ‘mother’s elder sister’s husband’ (MeZH)) consists of a clipped base form from ¹*apɜ* ‘father’ and a nominalised adjective. The modified base in ‘mother’s brother’s wife/mother’s sister-in-law’ (MBW) is ¹*am*, a clipped form of ¹*ama* ‘mother’ (M) together with ³*tʰaŋ* ‘brother’s wife/sister-in-law’ (BW) (see Table 14). This juxtaposed possessive construction has become lexicalized as a general term meaning ‘uncle’s wife’ (MBW or FBW), as demonstrated by the data in Table 12. This term can be further modified by ³*tʰaŋpɜ* to distinguish ‘mother’s younger brother’s wife’ (MyBW) from ‘mother’s elder brother’s wife’ (MeBW), for which no modification is used.

In Table 13, the terms for the spouses of father's siblings are presented.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
FeZH	¹ aku ¹ tʰjɜpɜ	ma tʰjebe	mɦâ
FyZH	¹ aku ¹ tʃaŋpɜ	ma tʃaŋbe	
FeBW	¹ am ³ tʃaŋ	mjẽ tʰjebe	me
FyBW	¹ am ³ tʃaŋ	mjẽ tʃaŋbe	meni

Table 13. Terms for the spouses of father's siblings

The data in Table 13 once again demonstrate that Nar has the most symmetrical system of kinship terminology. Comparison with Table 12, shows that there is a single base term for 'aunt's husband' (MZH or FZH), which is modified to signal the age of the aunt relative to ego's parent. Phu also has a general term meaning 'aunt's husband' and does not distinguish the husbands of maternal aunts from the husbands of paternal aunts. Conversely, the wives of maternal and paternal uncles *are* differentiated in the kinship system. In Nar, there is a single base term *mjẽ* 'paternal uncle's wife' (FBW) that is further modified for the relative age of the uncle. In Phu there are two distinct terms: *me* is used for 'father's elder brother's wife' (FeBW), while *meni* is used for 'father's younger brother's wife' (FyBW). Comparison with Table 8 shows that in Phu more kin distinctions are made with respect to non-consanguinal relations (i.e. the spouses of paternal uncles) than consanguinal ones (the paternal uncles themselves).

In Manange, there is general form ¹am ³tʃaŋ for 'father's brother's wife' (FBW) which literally means 'mother's sister-in-law' and is also used for 'mother's brother's wife' (MBW) as seen in Table 12.

Next we turn to the spouses of ego's siblings in Table 14. All three varieties show considerable similarity here in the kin terms. Manange has two terms: ¹ma 'sister's husband/brother-in-law' (ZH) and ¹tsaŋ 'brother's wife/sister-in-law' (BW), the latter of which may be optionally modified depending on whether the sibling is older or younger than ego. In Phu, status modification is also observed for 'brother's wife/sister-in-law' (BW), and optionally so for 'sister's husband/brother-in-law' (ZH). In Nar attributive modification is lexicalized, and thus obligatory.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
eZH	¹ ma	ma tʰjeba	ma (tʰjeba)
yZH		ma tʃaŋba	ma (tʃaŋba)
eBW	¹ tsaŋ (tʰjɜpɜ)	tʃaŋ tʰjeba	tʃaŋ tʰjeba
yBW	¹ tsaŋ (tʃaŋpɜ)	tʃaŋ tʃaŋba	tʃaŋ tʃaŋba ~ elepfje

Table 14. Terms for spouses of ego's siblings

The Nar term for 'elder sister's husband' (eZH) is almost identical to that used in reference to 'elder aunt's husband' (MeZH or FeZH), while the term for 'younger sister's husband' (yZH) is almost identical to 'younger aunt's husband' (MyZH or

FyZH), indicating that males who have married into a family are distinguished lexically from males with the same blood-line.

Finally, we consider encodings for the children of ego's siblings in Tables 15 and 16. All three varieties have kinship terms that distinguish between the sex of nieces (ZD and BD) and nephews (ZS and BS). Phu has a considerably more complex system that is structured according to the biological sex of the ego and the sex of the offspring.

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
eZD	(¹ ana) ³ ts3mi	aŋe	nane-ki seme
yZD	(³ nani) ³ ts3mi		
eBD	(¹ at3) ³ ts3mi		ate seme
yBD	(¹ aŋö) ³ ts3mi		
eZS	(¹ ana) ³ ts3	ele	nane-ki kola
yZS	(³ nani) ³ ts3		
eBS	(¹ at3) ³ ts3		
yBS	(¹ aŋö) ³ ts3		

Table 15. Terms for the children of female ego's siblings

	<i>Manange</i>	<i>Nar</i>	<i>Phu</i>
eZD	(¹ ana) ³ ts3mi	aŋe	aŋe (+ name)
yZD	(³ nani) ³ ts3mi		
eBD	(¹ at3) ³ ts3mi		ate seme
yBD	(¹ aŋö) ³ ts3mi		
eZS	(¹ ana) ³ ts3	ele	ele (+ name) ~ kweme
yZS	(³ nani) ³ ts3		
eBS	(¹ at3) ³ ts3		(ate) kola
yBS	(¹ aŋö) ³ ts3		

Table 16. Terms for the children of male ego's siblings

First consider the simplest system, represented by Nar. Here there is a distinction between *aŋe* 'niece' (ZD or BD) and *ele* 'nephew' (ZS or BS). These terms are identical to those used for 'younger sister, female cousin younger than ego' (yZ or y[ZD] or y[BD]) and 'younger brother, male cousin younger than ego' (yB or e[ZS] or e[BS]) respectively. The same terms are used when the ego is female (Table 15) or male (Table 16).

Manange also exhibits a biologically based split between the kinship terms used to refer to the female and male offspring of ego's siblings. Unlike in Nar, the basic form for 'niece' (ZD or BD) is identical to ³ts3mi 'daughter' (D) and the term for 'nephew' (ZS or BS) is identical to ³ts3 'son' (S). This reveals a fundamental difference in the way that sibling's offspring are conceived in Nar and Manange culture.

In Manange, speakers may optionally distinguish between nieces and nephews through identifying which of their siblings is the parent of the offspring. For example, ¹ana ³ts3mi is 'elder sister's daughter' (eZD). However, the sex of ego is

irrelevant in determining which kin term is used, as shown by the identical distribution of Manange forms across Tables 15 and 16.

While Nar and Manange do not differentiate the sex of the ego when naming siblings' children, Phu has a considerably more complex system determined by the sex of the ego and the sex of the offspring. These somewhat remarkable patterns are summarized below. Female ego's make a primary distinction based on sex of the *offspring* (as shown in Table 15). All nephews (ZS or BS) are treated alike, regardless of the sex of the relevant sibling. Nieces are distinguished on the basis of whether they are offspring of a sister (ZD) or a brother (BD):

1. A female ego with a sister who has a daughter (ZD) uses the term *naneki semi*, literally 'elder sister's daughter', regardless of the relative age of ego's sibling.
2. A female ego with a brother who has a daughter (BD) uses the term *ate seme*, literally 'elder brother('s) daughter', regardless of the relative age of ego's sibling.
3. A female ego with a sister or a brother who has a son (ZS or BS) uses the term *naneki kola*, literally 'elder sister's son', regardless of the relative age or sex of ego's sibling.

Male ego's make a primary distinction in the structure of kin terminology based on the sex of their sibling. If male ego's brother's children are referred to, a similar pattern of kinship terms as seen for female ego's is observed:

1. A male ego's brother's daughter (BD) is referred to as *ate seme*, literally 'elder brother('s) daughter', regardless of the relative age of ego's sibling.
2. A male ego's brother's son (BS) is referred to as *kola* 'son' (this can be further specified as *ate kola* literally 'elder brother('s) son') regardless of the relative age of ego's sibling.

When a male ego's sisters' children are referred to, a similar set of terminology as seen in Nar is used:

3. A male ego's sister's daughter (ZD) is referred to as *aje*, which is also used for 'younger sister, younger female cousin' (as in Nar).
4. A male ego's sister's son (ZS) is referred to as *ele*, which is also used for 'younger brother, younger male cousin' (as in Nar).

In Thangmi, Turin notes that the offspring of the brother (if ego is male) and sister (if ego is female) are classificatory offspring in terminology and in the social care structure (2008). On the other hand, the offspring of the sister (if ego is male) and brother (if ego is female) are classificatory nieces/nephews, and the social care structure is in the hands of the siblings of the speaker's in-laws. In Manange and Nar, the system is either entirely sibling-referencing or else offspring-referencing. The situation is considerably more mixed in Phu, with some terms referencing a sibling's child, one term referencing immediate offspring, and one other term referencing a sibling.

There is a frequent observation that cultures have organized systems of kinship terms that conform to one of six commonly occurring patterns (Bohannon and Middleton 1968; Murdock 1968; Levi-Strauss 1969). A skewed Omaha system has been observed for Tangut (Jacques 2012) and can be gleaned also for Thangmi based on cross-cousin marriage restrictions (Turin 2008: 33). With an Omaha system, there is formal overlap between encoding of ego's father and ego's uncle on both father's and mother's side. At the same time, there is formal overlap in the encoding of cousins and siblings. Nar and Phu show (partial) cousin-sibling formal overlap, but that is about the extent of any similarities to the Omaha system.

4. COMPARISON OF LEXICAL SIMILARITY BETWEEN VARIETIES

One generalization that emerges from the forms presented in Section 3 is that there is no obvious Nepali influence in Manange and Nar-Phu kinship terms, and this makes them quite unlike sister language Gurung, for example, also spoken in lower Manang District (and beyond), but which shows considerable incorporation of Nepali forms into the kinship lexicon. Our observation from kin terms recorded from Manang District-dwelling Gurungs are similar to what Glover listed for Ghacok Gurung (1977). He (and we) observe around 30% Nepali replacement, Nepali-plus-Tibeto-Burman blends, or else lexical free variation between Nepali and Tibeto-Burman forms.⁷

Returning to the three varieties in focus here, to determine the degree of similarity between the kin terms used in each system, we distinguish three broad categories of cognacy: ≤ 1 segmental alternation, ≥ 1 alternation, and non-cognate.

Identical and virtually identical forms differ by no more than one segmental alternation (≤ 1 segmental alternation). More substantial differences are observed where there are multiple segmental differences or where syllable structure is difference (≥ 1 alternation), yet the forms are clear still cognate. An example is 'father's younger brother' in Manange and Nar: *¹aku* and *ogu fʌŋba*. As this example also shows, we also include compound forms in this category. Forms are judged to be non-cognate when we identify (almost) completely different forms in corresponding cells, as with 'grandmother' in Manange and Phu (*⁴me* and *epi*), where the forms are completely different. Table 17 summarizes these patterns across the varieties.

⁷ Some examples of Nepali influence that we have observed in Manang Gurung include: 'younger sister' (yZ) *bahini* < Nep., 'father's elder brother' (FeB) *baje* < Nep., 'father's elder sister's husband' (FeZH) *mama tʰepa* (a blend of Nepali loan plus Gurung word 'big'), 'husband's elder brother's wife' (HeBW) *ana~didi* (free variation Gurung~Nepali).

Type	Nar & Phu	Nar & Manange	Phu & Manange
≤ 1 segmental alternation	(51/71) 72%	(42/71) 59%	(30/71) 42%
≥ 1 alternation	(2/71) 3%	(0/71) 0%	(8/71) 11%
Non-cognate	(18/71) 25%	(29/71) 41%	(33/71) 46%

Table 17. Form differences across varieties

Not surprisingly, Nar and Phu show the most total formal overlap, while Manange and Phu show the greatest difference in formal encoding of kin terms. Nar and Manange show somewhat more formal correspondence, particularly in the encoding of grandparents, spouses, and siblings, and also in the use of compound structures for many types of kinship relations. It is interesting again return to our earlier observation that speaker self-reporting indicates that Manange, Nar and Phu are mutually intelligible across communities. At the same time, there has been prior observation of at least some degree of lexico-structural variation between Nar and Phu such as to warrant their treatment as separate dialects within a language grouping (Noonan 2003). Our study shows that almost half of the kinship inventory we've assembled here are completely different between Nar and Phu, with Phu retaining a number of older family forms, while Nar shows more lexical innovation.

We would like to note that this study has some obvious limitations, and we are not in a position to make strong claims regarding dialect chains or continua in the sense of Chambers and Trudgill (1998). In this case, we are looking only at three varieties that are also separated by relatively great geographic distances (extreme terrain, non-motorable roads, journeys by foot of between two to four days from lower elevation Manang-speaking villages to higher elevation Phu village), as opposed to several varieties in close geographic contact. And, here, we are looking just at kinship patterns as opposed to larger portions of the lexicon. However, with the assumption that kinship terms show consistent patterns across closely related cultures, we are able to shine a light on a possible dialect continuum evident between these three varieties, and to set the stage for future comparisons across other semantic categories in the lexicons of these varieties.

5. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this paper we have presented a description of kinship terms in three closely related Tamangic varieties, including cross-variety comparison and some degree of etymological reconstruction. We also make some observations regarding kinship system organization in light of classification proposals, particularly in the encoding of siblings for cousins, although this does not seem to directly impact marriage conventions. We also note that while sex of the ego (speaker) is not a factor in kinship form variation, and while social practices regarding marriage practices are similar across groups, there is still interesting variation. Phu shows evidence of more retention of conservative forms, while Manange and Nar show more evidence of lexical innovations, particularly by compounding. Phu also demonstrates a

relatively complex and distinct sub-system of aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews, similar to patterns observed for aunts and uncles in Burmese (Bradley 1989).

Kinship is a basic organizing factor within ethno-linguistic groups and serves an important function in ego's representation and responsibilities within the larger immediate and extended family unit. We hope to have shed some light on how kinship is encoded in these three varieties, two of which have little to nothing by way of prior published descriptions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the representatives of the Manange, Nar and Phu communities who took the time and had the patience to sit with us and explain to us their kinship system. We wish to thank Mr. Ritar Lhakpa Lama for additional commentary on kinship and marriage patterns. We thank SIUE undergraduate research assistant Morgan Rogers for her work on creating our database for lexical comparison. This research was supported by funding from the National Science Foundation, NSF BCS/DEL 1149639, the British Academy, and the Christopher Hale Memorial Fund. All errors are the responsibility of the authors.

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