

College Students' Attitudes Towards Reading Dzongkha and Its Implications on Bhutan

Chencho Wangchuk, Kinley Namgay, and Nima Wangchuk

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Abstract

This study examined college students' attitudes towards reading Dzongkha and the possible implications of the preferential choice of either English or Dzongkha as a language for reading may have on Bhutan. Using mixed-methods triangulation, the study examined college students' attitudes toward reading Dzongkha. Data obtained from three data sources were merged and triangulated. Although the respondents showed a positive attitude towards reading Dzongkha, the majority of them, however, preferred English as a language for reading, which is deeply concerning for Bhutan. Based on the findings, the researchers have provided three recommendations, with the first being introducing additional but relevant Dzongkha modules for students pursuing higher degrees in English-medium colleges. Others include instituting mandatory DSTS test results for all opportunities and establishing Dzongkha medium preschools for preschoolers.

Keywords: Attitude towards reading Dzongkha, college students, Bhutan

Introduction

Bhutan is a linguistically diverse country. According to scholars, she speaks 19 different vernaculars (Phuntsho, 2013; Tashi, 2003; van Driem, 1994, 2003). Of these languages, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuk officially declared Dzongkha as the national language of Bhutan in 1961 (Gyatso, 2013; van Driem, 1994). Five reasons support this declaration. First, it is native to Bhutan, and it belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family (van Driem, 1999). Second, Dzongkha has been the official language in all district headquarters since the time of the Zhabdrung (Dzongkha Development Commission [DDC], 2013; Gyatso, 2013). Third, it also has historical significance to Bhutan's sociocultural, legislative, political, administrative, and religious aspects. Fourth, of all the languages that belong to the Tibeto-Burman family (van Driem, 1999), Dzongkha has been the only language that existed in both spoken and written forms (Gyatso, 2013). Finally, although both English and *Lhotsham Kha* (Nepali) also exist in spoken and written forms, neither of them could be adopted as the national language of Bhutan. This is because they do not have any relational roles in any of the aspects stated above as they belong to the Indo-European language family (see van Driem, 1999). While the former was adopted as the second language with the advent of modern education in the early 1960s, the latter became part of Bhutan's linguistic landscape with the integration of Nepali immigrants into Bhutanese society (Dorjee, 2014; Kinga, 2020; van Driem, 1994). Moreover, they are native languages of the United Kingdom and Nepal respectively. Thus, Bhutan officially declared Dzongkha as her national language in 1971 at the time of her admission to the United Nations Organization (DDC, 2013; Tashi, 2003). Today it is widely spoken among Bhutanese as both official language and lingua franca. Together with English, it also serves as a medium of instruction in all schools and some colleges that offer degrees in Dzongkha.

However, due to expansion of English-medium academic institutions and extensive use of and exposure to English language, Dzongkha appears to be losing the national language status considering the decline in its usage among Bhutanese. For example, from a total of 4,073 signboards within Thimphu Municipality, Wangchuk *et al.* (2013) observed 42% (1698) of those signboards displayed with mistakes in Dzongkha while 33% (1336) of them were found written only in English. Only 25% (1039) them were found displayed with no mistakes in Dzongkha. According to DDC (n.d.), only 10% (30,640) of 308, 277 correspondences were written in Dzongkha while 90% (277,013) of them appeared in English. Less than one percentage (624) of them was written in both Dzongkha and English. This is further substantiated by Tshering (2020) whose study noted English as the dominant language in all types of organizations with over 80% of the tasks performed in English. According to Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority (n.d.), only two of the seven print media houses publish their news in Dzongkha apparently due to poor sales of Dzongkha newspapers. Such extensive use of English suggests neither our strength in English nor weakness in Dzongkha. In fact, 39.1% of Wangmo's (2021) respondents admitted their incompetence in both Dzongkha and English while 34.8% remained unsure of it. The remainder, however, contended that they were equally competent in both the languages. Not only do these evidences explicate a popular Bhutanese proverb which says *while attempting to learn others' language, you forget yours*, but also indicate indifferent attitude towards Dzongkha though, publicly, they discuss its importance in legislative halls, workplaces, and conferences.

Studies on Bhutanese's attitude towards reading Dzongkha also reveal similar findings. Wangchuk (2020) found 86.2% of his respondents choosing English as their preferred language for reading against nearly 14% who selected Dzongkha as their language for reading. Wangmo (2021) also reported a similar finding where 65.2% of her respondents favored English as a language for written communication while 30.4% of them chose both of them. Only 4.4% of her respondents favored Dzongkha for written communication. In addition, 52.9% of her respondents claimed English as the easiest subject while Dzongkha was reportedly the toughest subject for their children. In both the studies, the respondents preferred English mainly for reading and writing activities. Phurpa (2021) attributes it to difficulties students face in writing Dzongkha, primarily, due to poor reading and writing habits as a consequence of scanty reading materials while Wangmo (2021) points it to lack of Dzongkha reading materials on digital platforms.

These evidences are quite concerning for Bhutan as her might lies in her ethnolinguistic, particularly Dzongkha, and other socio-cultural and religious factors including songs and dances, and art and literature. To address such a scenario, a resolution of the 45th National Assembly mandated all officials to write correspondences, circulars, notifications, and rules and regulations in Dzongkha (National Assembly of Bhutan, 1976). Later in 1988 and 1993 respectively, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuk decreed all government officials to use and promote Dzongkha as the main medium of communication. Today the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan also obligates all Bhutanese "Be able to speak and write Dzongkha" (Parliament of Bhutan, 2008, p. 12) including those applying for citizenship by naturalization. Despite these standing orders, notifications, circulars, and press releases from the government, two houses of the parliament, political parties, district and *gewog* headquarters, and other offices seldom appear in Dzongkha. Failure to comply with those commands and constitutional obligations, therefore, seemingly bespeaks either low competency in Dzongkha language skills among public officials or their indifferent attitude towards it.

As students are agents of change, their perceptions on Dzongkha deserve attention and examination. There are studies (e.g., Phurpa, 2021; Wangchuk, 2020; Wangmo, 2021) on it, but they were restricted to certain sites. Therefore, this study was designed to examine the college students' attitude towards reading Dzongkha, and they were studying at four constituent colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan. Findings from this study would possibly influence decision makers to consider additional Dzongkha modules for students attending English-medium programs so that they can continually strengthen their Dzongkha language skills. The findings might also convince all the executive, legislative, judiciary, political parties, and all employing agencies, whether public or private, to write their official correspondences, notifications, circulars, electronic mails, and office orders in Dzongkha. Unless these stakeholders lead, others may not heed. Further, to strengthen such leads, the Dzongkha Development Commission in collaboration with all employing agencies implement the requirement of *Dzongjug* test certificates for any new recruitments. Such initiatives may then increase Dzongkha users at least in the official settings and so possibly increase its readership eventually.

Research Questions:

1. What is the general attitude of college students toward reading Dzongkha?
2. From the two instructional languages, which one is preferred choice of language for reading among college students?
3. Why is English or Dzongkha the preferred choice of language for reading among college students?
4. What implications does the choice of English or Dzongkha as their preferred language for reading have on Bhutan?

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods triangulation. It is a design that employs both quantitative and qualitative methods in gathering data in a particular study (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Quantitative data was collected by means of a cross sectional survey design which surveys selected individuals only once at a particular given time unlike in the longitudinal survey (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Stockemer, 2019). Qualitative data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews, two open-ended questions, and essay writing. Finally, to understand the complex issue under investigation (Foss & Kleinsasser, 2001; Mathison, 1988) and "to increase confidence in the findings" (Heale & Forbes, 2013, p. 98), the data collected through these methods were methodologically triangulated (see Denzin, 1994; Mathison, 1988).

Population and Sample

The target population for this study was in-country college students pursuing bachelor's degrees in four constituent colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan. These colleges offer degrees in business, education, engineering, and natural resources management, and they are Gedu College of Business Studies (GCBS), College of Natural Resources (CNR), Paro College of Education (PCE), and College of Science and Technology (CST).

A representative sample from a total population of 4,234 students (as per Royal University of Bhutan) was selected by means of two sampling techniques. First, as the

colleges are geographically dispersed and academically diverse, the researchers chose cluster sampling technique that allows selection of total prospective respondents of the colleges. However, as in-person data collection was impossible during the Covid-19 pandemic, links of the same survey questionnaire, which was prepared on four separate Google forms, were sent separately to each of the participating colleges. Then, based on the total responses received from each college, the researchers applied systematic sampling method to select independent representative samples (see Table 1). Systematic sampling is a technique in which every n th member is selected from a full list. The sample sizes for each college was determined by means of Yamane's formula, that is $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$, and they are shown in the table below:

Table 1 Population and Sample Size

College	N	n
GCBS	1661	323
CNR	1020	287
PCE	564	234
CST	989	285
Total	4234	1129

Therefore, as shown in Table 2, this study involved a total of 1129 (542 females and 587 males) respondents.

Table 2 Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	587	52
Female	542	48
Total	1129	100

Four participants from each college's systematic sample sizes were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews and essay writing. Of these participants, 12 (7 females and 5 males) of them, who are hereafter identified as E1, E2, E3 . . . and E12, agreed to write essays while four (2 males and 2 females) of them, who are named as I1, I2, I3, and I4, participated in *Zoom* interviews. Their participation in this study was purely based on their ability, interest and willingness to deliberate on the stated issue.

Data Collection Tools

The survey questionnaire was adapted from McKenna and Kear (1990)'s Reading Attitude Survey (RAS). It consists of 20 items, 10 items each for recreational and academic reading. To ensure that it appropriately measured Bhutanese college students' attitude towards reading Dzongkha, *Dzongkha* was inserted as a replacement for English. Three additional questions have been asked to elicit more information with the first being their choice between Dzongkha and English as a preferred language for reading. Other two open-ended questions demanded their reasons for choosing reading books written in either of them. Before administering it, the questionnaire was piloted on 100 undergraduates of a college. The reliability of its data measured Cronbach's coefficient alpha 0.97, indicating it as highly reliable.

Other tools included semi-structured interviews and essay writing in addition to the two open-ended questions stated above. Appropriateness and relevancy of the questions were

checked by the researchers. In these cases, the researchers strictly implemented interview protocol, member checking, and data saturation as measures to obviate biases and increase credibility (see Denzin, 1989).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the respondents' attitude towards reading Dzongkha. The interpretation of scale values shown in Table 3 was used to determine any attitudinal variations among the respondents while choice between two languages of instructions, Dzongkha and English, was analyzed by means of frequency.

Table 3 Interpretation of the Scale Values

Scale	Range	Attitude
4	3.26-4.00	Very Positive
3	2.51-3.25	Positive
2	1.76-2.50	Negative
1	1.00-1.75	Very Negative

Qualitative data obtained from interview transcriptions, essays and two open-ended questions were analyzed by means of content analysis technique. It is "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). From the three approaches that they discuss in the paper, this study adopted the conventional approach, which allows the categories to emerge from the transcription data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researchers then coded the descriptive information into categories as per Fraenkel et al. (2012) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005) guidelines.

Finally, the data obtained from all sources were merged and triangulated. According to Mariam (1998), triangulation is "using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the merging of findings" (p.204), and it aims to reduce biases (Denzin, 1989) and strengthen reliability or dependability of the study (Golafshani, 2003).

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the analyses of the data, and they are collated, merged and triangulated to better understand the stated issue.

Respondents' Attitude towards Reading Dzongkha

As can be seen in Table 4, the attitude of college students towards reading Dzongkha was *positive* as the mean of their ratings fell between 2.51 to 3.25 as per the interpretation scale given in Table 3. This means, as in an earlier study by Wangchuk (2020), they were *little happy* reading Dzongkha considering its "significant role as a lingua franca in a linguistically diverse Bhutan" (E12) and, more importantly, as "the national language of Bhutan" (I2). Further, E4 exclaimed that it is "Dzongkha that identifies our country as a sovereign and independent nation". Yet, when 24% of the Bhutanese did not use Dzongkha at all (DDC, 2020), Dzongkha is likely to become a dead language owing to extensive use of English in schools, colleges, homes, and work places. Moreover, majority of the Bhutanese were not able to read (32.9%) and write (35.6%) Dzongkha (DDC, 2020), which are two important skills for developing competency in any language.

Other participants also articulated similar reasons that indicated their desire to continually read, write, and speak Dzongkha so as to assist it regain its popularity and official status especially among the younger generation. Such desires call for tangible actions from stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education and the Royal University of Bhutan. However, considering the dominance of English in education, business, media houses and governmental or private offices (Tshering, 2020) and on social media and digital platforms, it is likely to face enormous challenges, and more so when key players such as teachers and parents mostly use English for written communication (see Wangmo, 2021).

Table 4 Respondents' overall attitude towards two reading dimensions

Reading attitude	Mean	SD
Academic Reading	3.16	0.824
Recreational reading	3.06	0.846
Total	3.11	0.835

Slight variations between the means of the two reading dimensions suggest that the respondents apparently read more Dzongkha texts for academic (mean=3.16, SD=0.824) than recreational (mean=3.06, SD=0.846) purpose although the general attitude towards both the dimensions remained *positive*. This may be due to the identification of Dzongkha as a main subject in schools during the 18th annual National Education Conference (NEC) in 2017 (Pem, 2017). This resolution requires all students to compulsorily obtain “pass” mark in Dzongkha as opposed to earlier practice where they could still progress to the next grade without even scoring a pass mark of 35 out of 100 in it if they had fulfilled other set of criteria. This is, however, relevant only if the respondents of this study were studying in schools. Still, this appears to be an indication of their desire to have credited Dzongkha modules in English-medium undergraduate programs. The other may be a possible requirement for them to sit for Dzongkha Standard Testing System (DSTS), a test that intends to assess speaking, listening, reading and writing skills of employees and recruits (Dolkar, 2019).

Choice between Dzongkha and English as a Language for Reading

Regarding the choice between Dzongkha and English (see Table 5), 53.4% (n=603) of the respondents preferred English for reading against 46.6% (n=526) who stated Dzongkha as their preferred language for reading. This finding is consistent with Wangchuk (2020) and Wangmo (2021) who also reported similar findings. Conventional content analyses of the qualitative data affirmed three reasons why the respondents preferred English as a language for reading over Dzongkha.

First is what van Driem (2013) calls “socioeconomic”. It surrounds employability, professional advancement and educational opportunities that English offers to them both at home and abroad. One interviewee cited a case of his father, a Dzongkha-major graduate, who could not compete in any in-country open-job competitions because of no or little proficiency in English (E4). At present most in-country employing agencies or higher educational institutions do not mandate applicants to fulfill Dzongkha language proficiency tests either. Instead, they accept marks obtained in examinations and oral interviews. Considering these scenarios, two edicts have been issued to promote Dzongkha as the official language (His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, 1988, 1993) in addition to the resolution of the 45th National Assembly (National Assembly of Bhutan, 1976). Yet, the focus appears to be more on acquiring English language skills as schools, homes, and government offices are commonly seen using English

for both oral and written communications, which is apparently caused by difficulties they face in communicating in Dzongkha (see Phurpa, 2021; Wangmo, 2021). To this, E10 lamented, “Dzongkha is literally *insignificant* considering its *irrelevance* for both academic and professional progression” (emphasis hers).

Second, supporting Dorjee (2014) and Phurpa (2021), the participants pinpointed the lack of adequate Dzongkha references and other reading materials. As those available are mostly written in *Chokey*, the language of learning and liturgy, the respondents repeatedly said that they “. . . find them [available resources] difficult to understand” (E2). Moreover, students’ contact-time with Dzongkha in schools is very limited. For example, they study only one subject in Dzongkha while the remaining subjects are all delivered in English (Phurpa, 2021). Adding to this concern is Bhutanese authors publishing most of their writings in English for commercial and readership purposes (see Wangchuk, 2020). These factors now culminate to the next affirmation.

The last one, as in Wangmo (2021), was the perceived notion that “Dzongkha is a difficult subject”. Evidently, Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment [BCSEA] (2016) also found 31.7% of grade 10 students not being able to read Dzongkha at all. Linguistically, Dzongkha should be easier than English because of its relationship with other native languages that belong to Tibeto-Burman language family (van Driem, 1999) but with the exception of *Lhotsham Kha*. Poor reading habits among Bhutanese students (Phurpa, 2021) and attitudinal inclination towards English (see Wangchuk, 2020; Wangmo, 2021) appear to be the reasons why the respondents found Dzongkha difficult. For example, all interviewees admitted that they “. . . have not read any Dzongkha books after graduating from high school[s]” (I3) because “Dzongkha offers fewer opportunities for work and scholarship . . .” (I4). This may be the consequential effect of adopting English as an administrative language (see Tshering, 2020) and absence of intensive credited Dzongkha modules in English-medium colleges. Limited use of Dzongkha for learning and teaching in all schools, lack of parental support, and fewer career options for Dzongkha graduates are other reasons (Phurpa, 2021).

Table 5 Choice between Dzongkha and English

Language	Frequency	Percent
Dzongkha	526	46.6
English	603	53.4
Total	1129	100

Statistically, the choice of English as a language for reading among Bhutanese students is worrisome for Bhutan. According to the qualitative data, the popularity of English as a preferred language in a linguistically diverse and culturally vibrant Bhutan depicts two concerns. The first is slow, but eventual loss of Dzongkha altogether due to reasons stated in the preceding paragraphs. Extensive use of English potentially leads to marginalization of Dzongkha and all other native vernaculars. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] (2010), all native languages including Dzongkha are either “vulnerable” or “endangered” (p.63). Also, DDC (2020) predicts that “Dzongkha will not survive as a lingua franca after 50 years” (p. 62).

Today Bhutanese generally take “immense pride in using English in most public forums” (E9). Its extensive usage among Bhutanese, either formally or informally, is more a generally accepted practice. Such practices could mean “. . . adopt[ing] others’ values, cultures, belief systems, and practices . . .” (I3) leading to linguistic acculturation. Formally, eight of the nine subjects including Bhutan history in the middle schools, for instance, are studied in English while only one is delivered in Dzongkha. This formal endorsement appears to promote English instead of Dzongkha as it is the main medium of instruction in all educational institutions. Informally, all children are excessively exposed to English-medium animated cartoons and videos on television and YouTube. These exposures not only assist them gain fluency before even beginning their formal schooling, but also acculturate foreign customs and cultures, for instance. Such acculturation increasingly promotes celebrations such as Halloween and even Christmas without any knowledge about their origins and significances. In this regard, E7 presaged that “. . . simply mean[s] loss of our [Bhutanese] traditional practices and cultural values associated with it [Dzongkha]” despite an important role English plays in global trade, education and diplomacy for Bhutan.

As the participants’ main argument was Bhutan’s “Identity lies more in language than genes” (van Driem, 2013, p. 16), they appeal all stakeholders headed by the Dzongkha Development Commission to do something before the damages become irreparable. Their concerns echo the warnings of van Driem (1999) and Wangchuk (2020), which are exacerbated by unavailability of Dzongkha reading materials in school/college libraries and costliness of those available in book stores. These revelations corroborate the findings of Dorjee (2014) and Phurpa (2021). Again, going by the practice of writing all official correspondences, notifications and circulars (DDC, n.d.) and signboards (Wangchuk et al., 2013) in English, most Bhutanese are likely to shamefully face difficulties in communicating in Dzongkha (see BCSEA, 2016). As it will cost us dearly, the participants, therefore, call for some tangible measures at the governmental, educational, organizational, social and familial levels.

Respondents’ Ratings for Items of Academic Reading

Table 6 illustrates the ratings for items of academic reading. As the ratings of the first three items fell between the ranges of 3.26 to 4.00 as per Table 3, the respondents’ attitude was *very positive* towards them. This means students enjoyed reading Dzongkha stories in reading class, learning from a Dzongkha book, and using Dzongkha dictionary.

Table 6 Ratings for Items of Academic Reading

Items	n	Mean	SD
How do you feel about <i>Dzongkha</i> stories you read in reading class?	1129	3.37	0.763
How do you feel about learning from a <i>Dzongkha</i> book?	1129	3.35	0.769
How do you feel about using a <i>Dzongkha</i> dictionary?	1129	3.29	0.800
How do you feel about reading your <i>Dzongkha</i> college book?	1129	3.16	0.806
How do you feel about reading <i>Dzongkha</i> books in college?	1129	3.16	0.793

How do you feel when it is time for reading a <i>Dzongkha</i> book in class?	1129	3.16	0.851
How do you feel when you read out loud in <i>Dzongkha</i> class?	1129	3.11	0.874
How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read in <i>Dzongkha</i> ?	1129	3.05	0.859
How do you feel about taking a <i>Dzongkha</i> reading test?	1129	3.03	0.908
How do you feel reading <i>Dzongkha</i> workbook pages and worksheets?	1129	2.95	0.816
Total	1129	3.16	0.824

The averaged ratings for the remaining items, on the other hand, fell between 2.51 to 3.25. This suggests that the respondents' attitude was *positive* towards activities such as reading *Dzongkha* college book, *Dzongkha* books in college and class, and taking *Dzongkha* reading test, for instance.

Respondents' Ratings for Items of Recreational Reading

As shown in Table 7, ratings of all 10 items under respondents' attitude towards *Dzongkha* recreational reading was *positive* as they fell between the range of 2.51 to 3.25 as per interpretation of scale values given in Table 3.

Table 7 Ratings for Items of Recreational Reading

Items	n	Mean	SD
How do you feel about reading different kinds of <i>Dzongkha</i> books?	1129	3.25	0.800
How do you feel about reading a <i>Dzongkha</i> book for fun at home?	1129	3.17	0.822
How do you feel when you read a <i>Dzongkha</i> book in college during free time?	1129	3.15	0.783
How do you feel about getting a <i>Dzongkha</i> book for a present?	1129	3.12	0.908
How do you feel about starting a new book written in <i>Dzongkha</i> ?	1129	3.12	0.874
How do you feel when you read a <i>Dzongkha</i> book on a rainy Saturday?	1129	3.06	0.809
How do you feel about spending free time reading a <i>Dzongkha</i> book?	1129	3.06	0.809
How do you feel reading a <i>Dzongkha</i> book during summer vacation?	1129	3.03	0.838
How do you feel about buying a <i>Dzongkha</i> book from a bookstore?	1129	2.96	0.879
How do you feel about reading a <i>Dzongkha</i> book instead of playing?	1129	2.71	0.937
Total	1129	3.06	0.846

This means the college students were *little happy* doing recreational Dzongkha reading activities such as reading different kinds of Dzongkha books, buying Dzongkha books, and reading Dzongkha books instead of playing, for instance.

Conclusion

Adopting a mixed-method triangulation method, this study recruited students of four constituent colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan. The data gathered through survey, two open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews and essays were collated, merged and triangulated. Despite possessing positive attitude towards reading Dzongkha, the participants preferred English as the language for reading over Dzongkha, which generates serious concerns among participants regarding its implications on Bhutan. They fear that the linguistic acculturation is likely to contribute to losses in terms of Bhutanese values, beliefs, and cultures. Therefore, based on these findings, the researchers provide three recommendations.

Recommendations

As the respondents possessed *positive* attitude towards reading Dzongkha, there is a need to create environments that promote more Dzongkha-related academic pursuits. First could be introducing additional but relevant Dzongkha modules in those colleges that offer English-medium degrees so that students can acquire and strengthen their Dzongkha language skills. It may also popularize reading and using Dzongkha as a means of communication. Such practices may then ready them for Bhutan Civil Service Examinations (BCSE) and DSTS tests in future. Another could be mandating DSTS test result as a requirement for any in-country employment, promotion, training, and education or scholarship opportunities. These initiatives might then assist preservation and promotion of ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural aspects. Finally, to overcome the notion of “Dzongkha is a difficult subject”, the government may encourage establishment of private preschools that offer basic Dzongkha reading and writing programs for pre-school children. Unless someone begins reading, it will be difficult to acquire other language skills (see Harmer, 2001). In addition, the ministry may also assign teaching of primary school Dzongkha to trained Dzongkha teachers as children need subject specialists more during their formative years. Another could be reintroducing teaching of Bhutan history in Dzongkha and additional Dzongkha texts so that students get opportunities for rigorous reading.

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ཚོང་ཁ་གོང་འཕེལ་ལྷན་ཚོགས། (DDC) (n.d.) ཚོང་ཁའི་ལག་ལེན་ཞིབ་འཇུག་སྒྲུབ་འབྲུག་ཐེམ་པ། ཚོང་ཁ་གོང་འཕེལ་ལྷན་ཚོགས།

About the authors

Chencho Wangchuk is a lecturer at Gedu College of Business Studies, Royal University of Bhutan, and he teaches English and academic skills. Besides publishing several empirical studies in conference proceedings, and national and international journals, he has also peer-reviewed several papers for three international journals. His research interest is primarily in the teaching of English as a second language.

Kinley Namgay is a lecturer at Gedu College of Business Studies, and he teaches Dzongkha for business communication.

Nima Wangchuk is a lecturer at Gedu College of Business Studies, Royal University of Bhutan. He has been teaching language modules in the college for the last seven years. Prior to joining the Gedu fraternity, he served as a teacher in the then Ministry of Education (MoE) for 11 years. He is a passionate teacher and keen researcher. As a researcher, he has published a number of papers in international journals on education and teaching pedagogies. He is also one of the board members of an International Peer-Reviewed English Journal-*Literary Horizon*. As an educator, he strongly believes that students are distinctive with diverse abilities and learning styles and hence seeks to inspire them in all aspects of their lives by assisting them in discovering their true and innate potentials. Besides his regular teaching, he serves as a Programme Leader for Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA).