



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

Language Group: Nepali
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Nepali

नेपाली

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(Gang, C. H., <http://www.flickr.com/photos/changhg/100412648/>, 2003)

Nepali :

- *Spoken in:* Nepal, India, Bhutan, Myanmar
- *Official language in:* Nepal, Sikkim(India), West Bengal(India)
- *Region:* South Asia
- *Total speakers:* 14 million
- *Language family:* Indo-European
- *major dialects:* Eastern, central, and western

Writing system of Nepali: Devanagari script

- *Nepali is written in the Devanagari script.*
- *The same script is used for Hindi, Marathi and Sanskrit.*
- *The script is being phonetic in nature, and hence the pronunciation closely resembles the writing system.*
- *The script is written from left to right with no provision of capital and small letters in the script.*

१	२	३	४	५	६	७	८	९	१०
एक	दुई	तीन	चार	पाँच	छ	सात	आठ	नौ	दश
ek	dui	tīn	cār	pāñc	cha	sāt	āṭh	nav	daś
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Phonology

- 11 distinctive vowels, including 6 oral vowels and 5 nasal vowels
- 36 consonants
- All vowel sounds also have nasal forms
- A diphthong is a combination of two sounds in a single syllable
- Aspirated, retroflex and dental consonants are existing

Morphology

Nepali nouns that denote male and female beings are sometimes distinguished by suffixation or through pairs of lexically differing terms

Noun

Adjectives may be divided into **declinable** and **indeclinable** categories.

Adjective

Postpositions

There are a number of one-word primary postpositions, which parallel English's prepositions.

Pronouns

Nepali has personal pronouns for the first and second persons, while third person forms are of demonstrative origin, and can be categorized deictically as proximate and distal.

Verbs

Verbs in Nepali are quite highly inflected, agreeing with the subject in number, gender, status and person. They also inflect for tense, mood, and aspect.

Syntax



- ❑ Subject + object + verb order
- ❑ Left-branching
- ❑ Grammatical function is marked by postpositions
- ❑ Particularly rich in particles
- ❑ Using long participial phrases in preference to embedded clauses
- ❑ Constructing passive meaning with impersonal intransitive verbs

Non-verbal communication

Personal space

People in Nepal tend to stand much closer to you, 3 feet is considered a appropriate distance.

Touch

Touching like hugging and holding arms and hands is considered offensive and may never happen cross sexes.

Eye contact

Too much eye contact would be considered aggressive behaviors, and may never happen when facing elderly or respected ones.

Using feet to point to other persons is considered rude and impolite.

Passing or accepting food with left hand is considered to be impolite.

When speaking English, native Nepali speakers may have trouble with....

Phonology:

- ✓ Nepali speakers may appear to substituting the voiced stops /b/, /d/, /g/ for the voiceless aspirated stops /p/, /t/, and /k/.
- ✓ Nepali speakers tend to use /dʒ/ sound instead of /z/ sound when it comes up as the initial sound of words. i.e.:
zoo- / dʒu/
- ✓ The alveolar , voiced sound /l/ tends to be hardly indentified in Nepali speakers' talking. i.e.: school- / sku /
- ✓ Nepali speakers tend to substitute a heavily aspirated /t/ for /θ/ in the word like 'thin', and a /d/ for /ð/ in words like 'then'.

Morphology and syntax:

- Having difficulties in choosing correct preposition words in English.
- Lacking awareness of using third person singular when needed.
- Having trouble to use long participial phrases in preference to embedded clauses.

When you talk to Nepalese...

- ❖ Family is a good topic to start off.
- ❖ Questions around work and education are also safe.
- ❖ Food is the favorite topic.
People often start their conversation with the question: “ Bhaat khayo?” (Have you eaten rice?)

Topics to avoid initially include:

a. Politics

b. Religion

c. Caste/community differences

d. Sex



Nepali & Hindi



RESOURCES

Books/ Journal Articles

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Images

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कन्या

बाद

köszönöm ! תודה dĕkuji

mahalo 고맙습니다

thank you

merci 谢谢 *danke*

Eυχαριστώ شكرا

どうもありがとう *gracias*

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