



# 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

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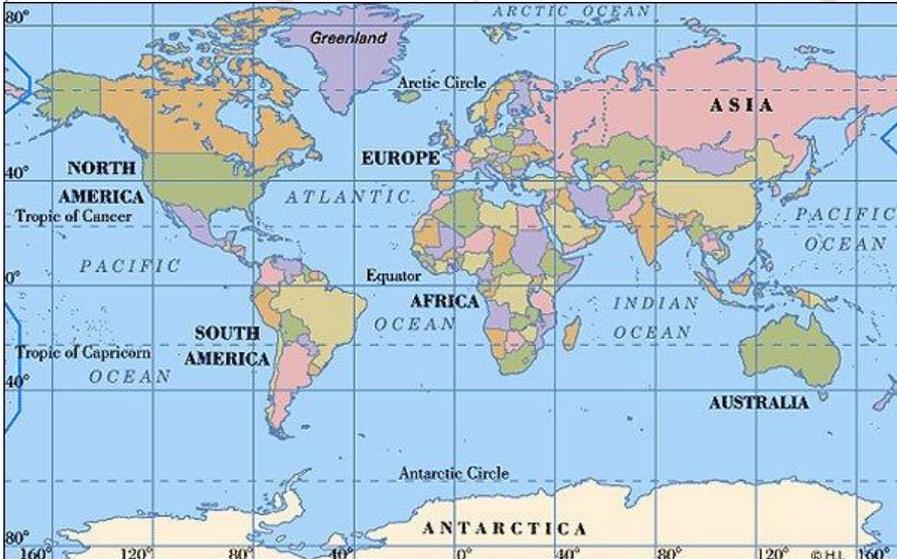
# తెలుగు

Telugu



Miriam Gamache  
TESL 539  
Fall 2011

There are about 75,000,000 Telugu speakers in the world, including second language users.



[www.worldpress.org](http://www.worldpress.org)

Telugu is considered to be a South Asian language.

Southern Asia



[www.lib.utexas.edu](http://www.lib.utexas.edu)

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pa pha ba bha ma pa pha ba bha ya ra la va la ya ra la va la sa sa ha sa ha ra

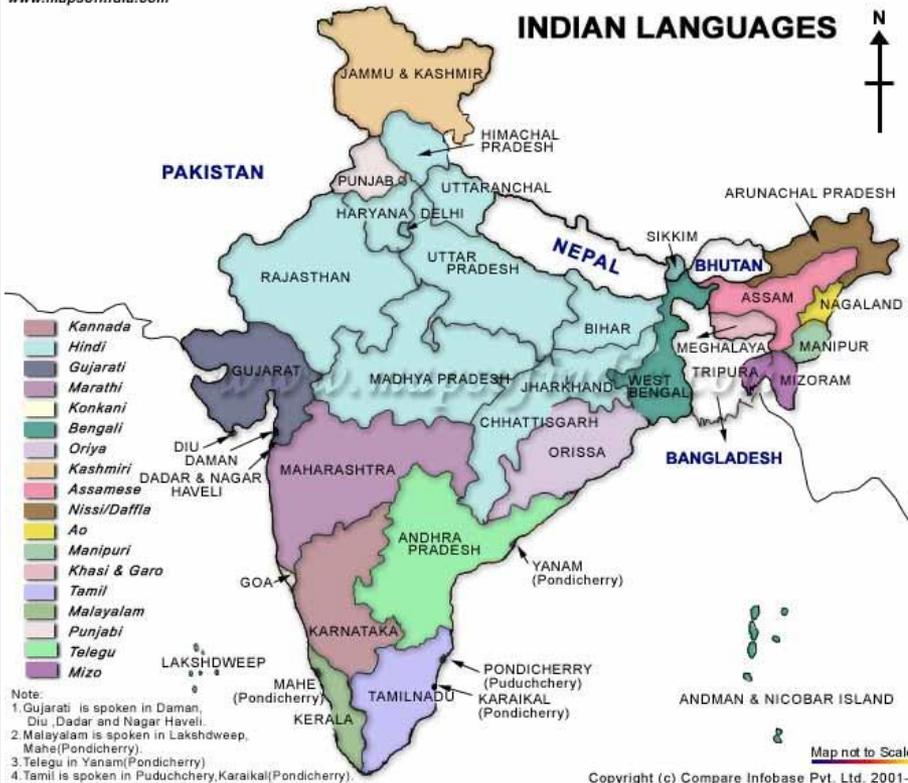
**There are at least 16 major languages in India. Telugu is spoken in South India.**



Telugu is derived from the Dravidian family of languages. It is one of four languages spoken in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Telugu itself has four separate dialects.

www.mapsofindia.com



ya	ra	la	va	la	ya	ra	la	va	la
శ	ష	స	హ	ల	శ	ష	స	హ	ల
śa	śa	śa	ha	ra	śa	śa	śa	ha	ra

# History and Background

- Telugu is the official state language. It has the third largest number of native speakers in India and is thirteenth in the Ethnologue list of most spoken languages worldwide.
- Diglossia is typical of Telugu dialect districts. The standard formal Telugu is most similar to the Central dialect.
- English is the main language spoken at the post graduate level.
- Telugu is descended from the Brahme script, which in turn is descendent of Aramaic, predating 300 A.D.
- Written Telugu differs greatly from colloquial Telugu.
- The language is written from left to right.
- There are eighteen vowels, thirty-six consonants, and three modifier symbols in the alphabet.



- Similar to most languages of India, Telugu is a syllabic language.
- Each symbol in Telugu script represents a complete syllable with the syllabic form created by the use of a set of basic symbols, a set of modifier symbols, and a number of modification rules.
- Telugu is also an agglutinative language. This means it has morphemes with fixed meanings that are fused together in one word. This may look to the English speaker like a sentence. For instance, the phrase “I have a terrible headache” would be a single word.
- All consonants have an inherent vowel.

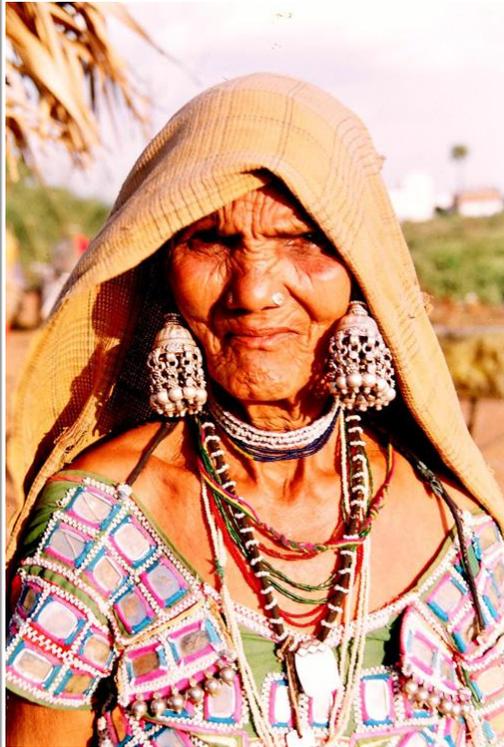
# Learner Issues

- Telugu speakers may have trouble with pronunciation of regular past tense “ed”, pronouncing it in all cases as it is written.
- Telugu speakers may have trouble with pronunciation of the plural “s”. They do not have “z” so they usually pronounce this as a soft “s”.
- Telugu words always end in a vowel so speakers learning English may add an “o” to the ends of words ending in consonants.

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- Telugu does not use articles. It is an inflected language. For example, Telugu nouns are inflected to denote number (singular, plural), gender, and case.
  - Telugu is a Subject-Object-Verb word order language. English is a Subject-Verb-Object language.
  - Telugu has three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. English does not use the neuter.

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- Dravidian languages have only a few diphthongs. Learners tend to pronounce each letter in the English diphthongs as two separate short vowels, such as *paint* as pe(y)int.
  - Because Telugu is an inflected language, learners have a hard time getting used to inverted word order and may add a negative marker at the end of a question, like “You are hungry, no?”
  - Telugu has a more complex system of tenses than English. For example, they use their future tense to express habit, supposition, and wishful thinking.

# Communication Style



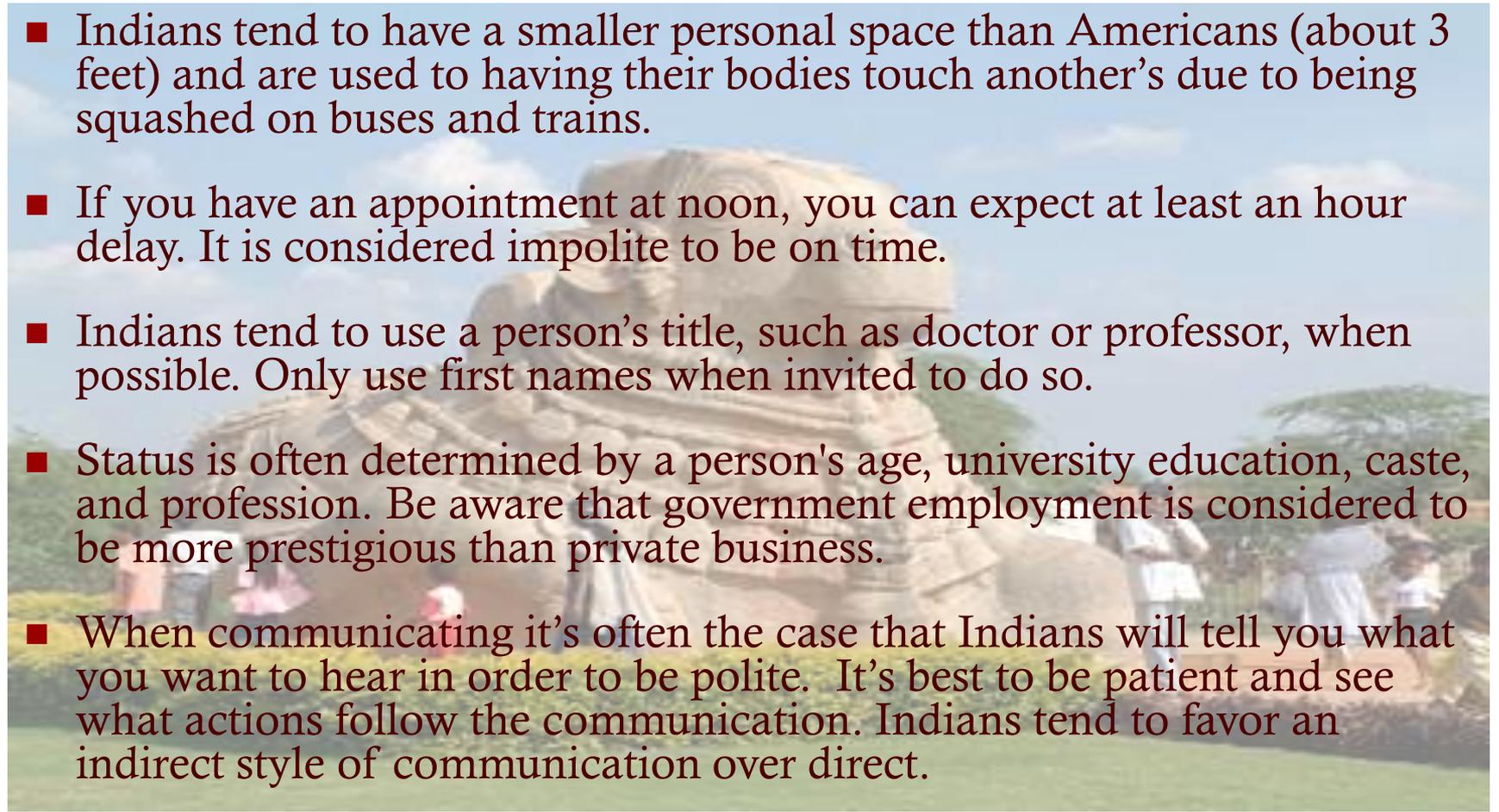
[www.indiashots.com](http://www.indiashots.com)

- Indians do not generally touch as part of communication. Hugs and kisses as a form of greeting are to be avoided.
- Indians avoid touching people or moving/passing objects with their shoes or feet. People usually remove their shoes when entering a building.
- It is usually best to let women initiate contact, if at all. Public displays of affection are frowned upon. Men and women, especially if they are not related, do not touch in public.



- Indians always eat with the right hand as the left hand is considered unclean because it is used exclusively for toileting.
- People beckon one another by extending an arm and making a scratching motion with their fingers, palm facing down.
- A head wobble is a very common Indian gesture and can mean "yes", not "no".
- Winking and whistling are avoided.
- Sustained eye contact is not generally the norm.



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- Indians tend to have a smaller personal space than Americans (about 3 feet) and are used to having their bodies touch another's due to being squashed on buses and trains.
  - If you have an appointment at noon, you can expect at least an hour delay. It is considered impolite to be on time.
  - Indians tend to use a person's title, such as doctor or professor, when possible. Only use first names when invited to do so.
  - Status is often determined by a person's age, university education, caste, and profession. Be aware that government employment is considered to be more prestigious than private business.
  - When communicating it's often the case that Indians will tell you what you want to hear in order to be polite. It's best to be patient and see what actions follow the communication. Indians tend to favor an indirect style of communication over direct.

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