RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

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

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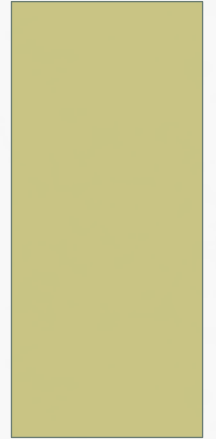In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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Language Group
Specific Informational
Report
TESL 539
Professor Nancy Cloud
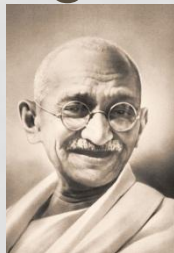Spring 2011

GUJARATI

ગુજરાતી

THE BASICS

- Indo-Aryan
- 46.5 million speakers in the world, primarily in India.
- In India, spoken in the state of Gujarat.
- Writing system: Gujarati script. Written left to write, includes both consonants and vowels. (Swan and Smith, 2001)
- First language of Mohandas Gandhi.

India-Pakistan Trade Unit. (2008). Retrieved from http://www.iptu.co.uk/content/india_map.asp
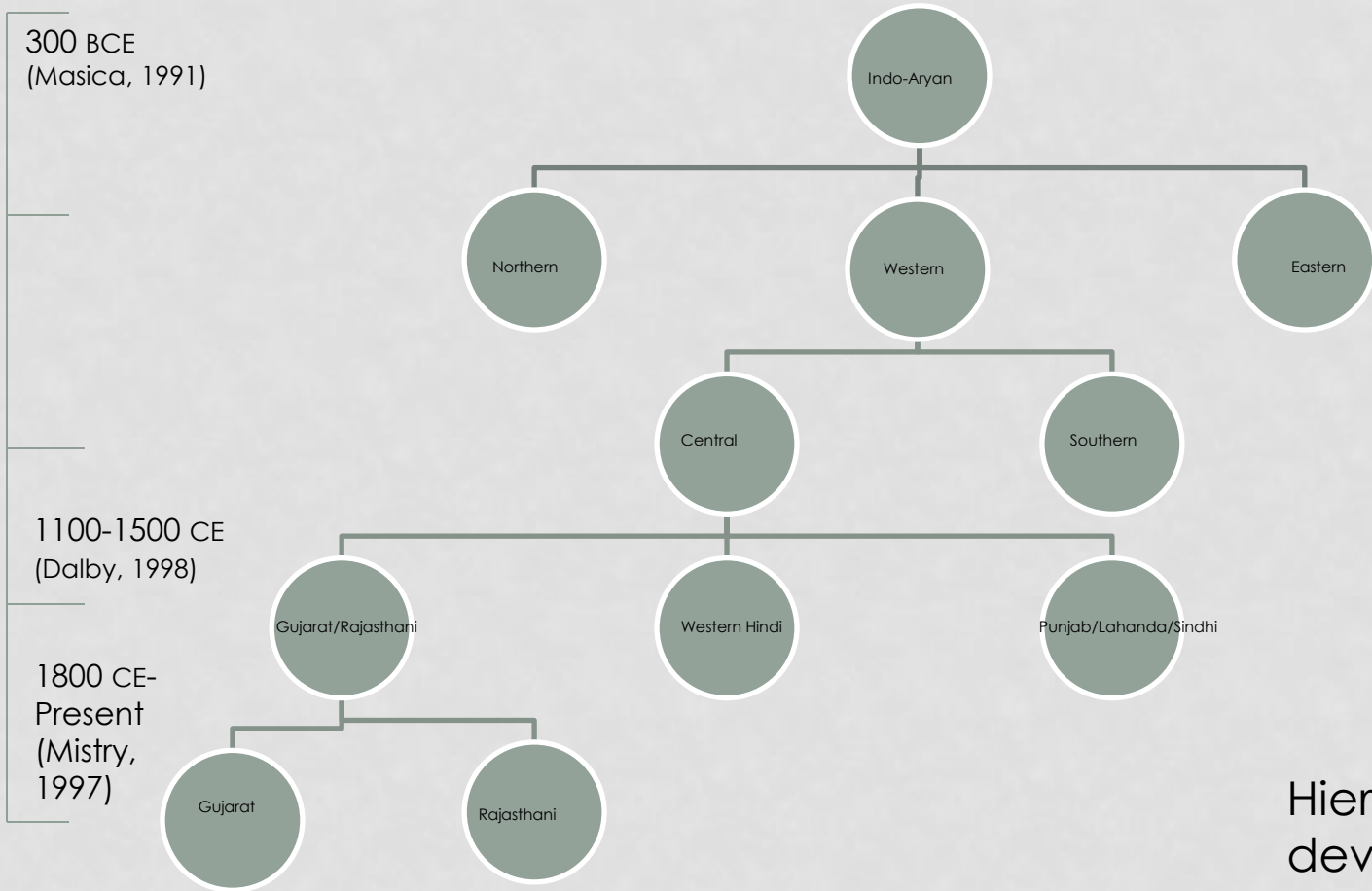
UCLA Language Materials Project, 2010.

Gandhi, 1945. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from: http://worldmostamazingrecords.blogspot.com/2010/06/students-dress-as-mahatma-gandhi-set.html

DEVELOPMENT OF GUJARATI

300 BCE
(Masica, 1991)

1100-1500 CE
(Dalby, 1998)

1800 CE-
Present
(Mistry,
1997)

Indo-Aryan

Northern

Western

Eastern

Central

Southern

Gujarat/Rajasthani

Western Hindi

Punjab/Lahanda/Sindhi

Gujarat

Rajasthani

Hierarchy developed by Mistry, 2003.

REGIONAL VARIETIES

- 4 Major Dialects
  - Patani
  - Standard Gujarati
  - Kathiawari
  - Surati

UCLA Language Materials Project, 2010.

Travel Made Easy, 2011.

ENGLISH FOR GUJARATI SPEAKERS

- "…problems encountered by learners [of English] are likely to be mainly determined by their educational rather than by their particular language background."

  (Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 228)

VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

	Vowel Sounds	Consonants
Gujarati	10	30
English	22	24

Potential problems with vowels:
- /e/ and /æ/ are often confused. Ex: "said" for "sad" and vice versa.
- The pronunciation progression from /a/ to /o/ can be difficult. For example, the words *lorry*, *law*, and *laugh* may all be pronounced identically.
- Diphthong /ei/ is confused for monophthong /ei/. For example, /meid/ might be said for "made."
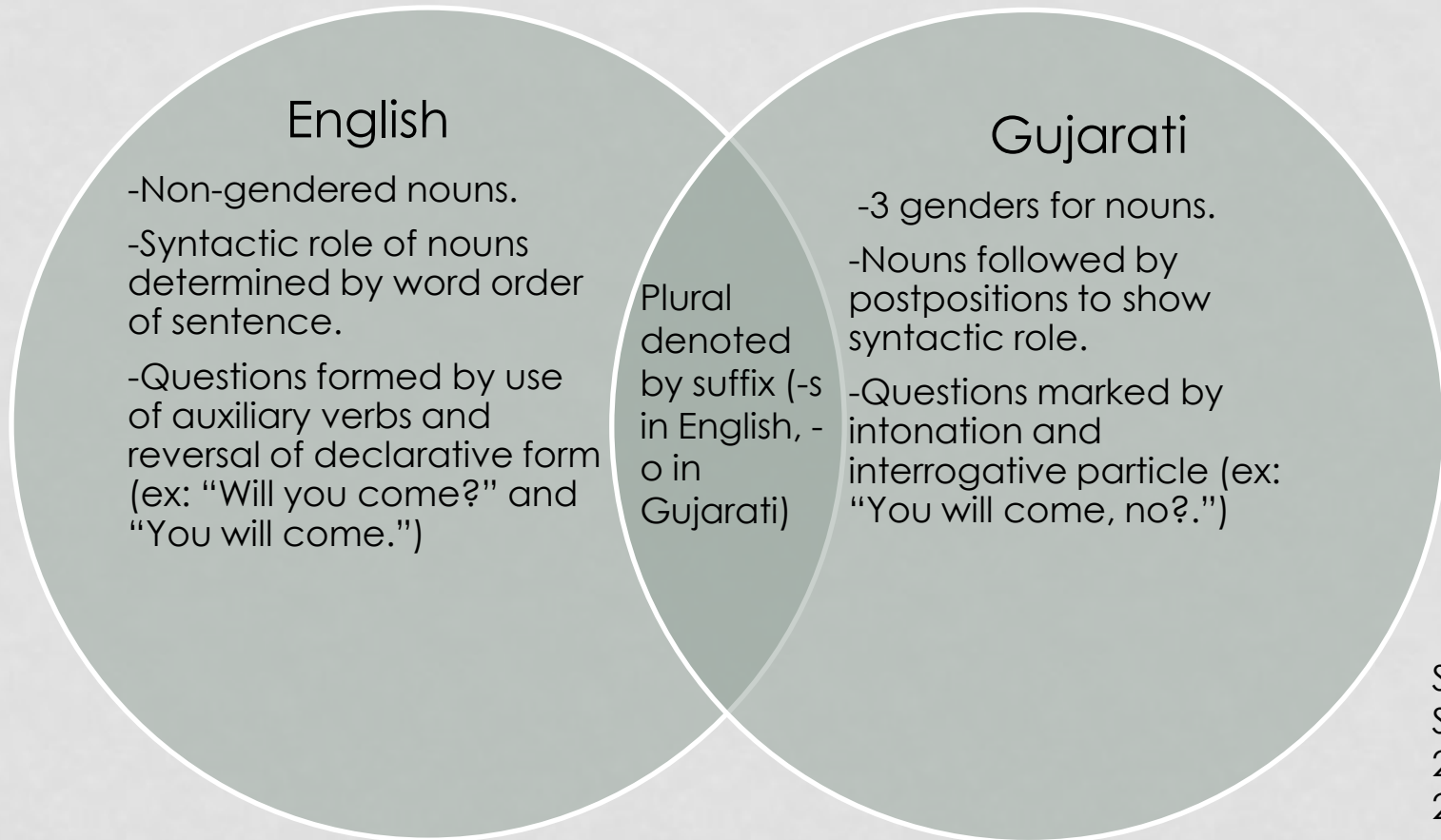
Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 228-229.

VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

- Voiceless consonants /p/, /t/, and /k/ never have aspirations in Gujarati. Conversely, in English, they sometimes do and sometimes do not. Therefore, a Gujarati speaker may pronounce the /p/ in *pit* the same as she would pronounce the /p/ in *spit*.

- Fricative consonant θ is replaced by /d/. For example, /dem/ for *them*.

Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 230

ENGLISH AND GUJARATI GRAMMARS

English

-Non-gendered nouns.

-Syntactic role of nouns determined by word order of sentence.

-Questions formed by use of auxiliary verbs and reversal of declarative form (ex: "Will you come?" and "You will come.")

Plural denoted by suffix (-s in English, -o in Gujarati)

Gujarati

-3 genders for nouns.

-Nouns followed by postpositions to show syntactic role.

-Questions marked by intonation and interrogative particle (ex: "You will come, no?.")

Smith and Swan, 2001, p. 238-239.

• One major difficulty for Gujarati speakers is the overgeneralization of the English singular possessive, 's. In complex forms, English will reverse the word order and use the preposition "of," a distinction often overlooked by the Gujarati speaker.

COMMUNICATION STYLE
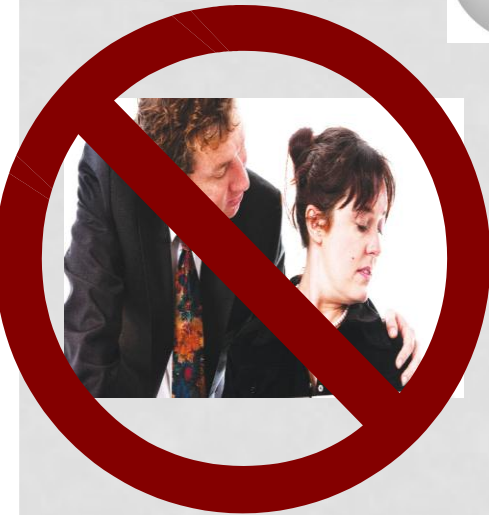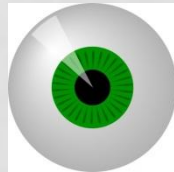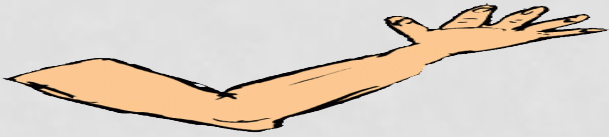
- Arms length between speakers.
- Direct eye contact. One exception may be a conservative woman who may speak from behind the veil of her sari.
- Physical contact should be avoided unless you are very close with the other person.
- Social gatherings:
  - Large: men and women tend not to mix together.
  - Small/family: men and women freely mix.
- Finger pointing is rude. To get someone's attention, direct eye contact is better, or a non-pointing gesture, such as extending the right arm with the palm facing downward, moving your fingers toward yourself.

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2009.

HALL'S HIGH CONTEXT (HC) AND LOW CONTEXT (LC) CULTURES

- Edward T. Hall developed a theory that categorizes cultures "into high context versus low context cultures in order to understand their basic differences in communication style and cultural issues." (Nishimura, 2007)

HC

- Style determined by closeness of human relationships, social hierarchy, and behavioral norms.
- Internal meaning embedded deep in information.
- Listener must "read between the lines."

LC

- Meaning explicitly stated through language.
- When something remains unclear, explanation expected.
- Direct and linear communication.
- Constant use of words.

INDIA AND GUJARAT WITHIN HALL'S FRAMEWORK

- Gujarat and India in general, are traditionally considered a high context society, but certain changes are indicating that they may be becoming a low context society.
  - Such a transition may be attributed to recent changes in technology, trade, travel, and television (Chella, 2007).
  - A study comparing Caucasian students studying in the US and Indian students studying in India found that the Indian students used more dramatic communication than would be expected if they were a true HC culture. However, the Indian sample still demonstrated more indirect communication and "positive perception of conversational silence" than the American sample did (Nishimura, 2007) These characteristics are more typical of an HC society.

Nishimura, 2007

VIDEO OF GUJARATI

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQIiWpic8o0

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Images

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