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Why Don't People Use Nepali Language Software?

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Outline

Nepali

Issues

Issue 1: Why Antilocalization? When Not?

Issue 2: What would make localized software popular?

Issue 3: What to Do?

Nepali

Language	Native Speakers (million)
Thai	46
Kurdish	16
Nepali	16
Greek	15
Hungarian	15
Shona	15
Hebrew	9
Icelandic	0.3

Nepali ranks ≈ 56 in world by native speakers, out of about 6K.
Spoken mainly in Nepal and India.

Nepali

Script: Devanagari (Nepali version).

-कृष्ण ढुंगाना-



कीर्तिपुर र विश्वविद्यालय (पार्कलाई समेत) लाई सञ्जीव आफ्नो जीवनको अभिन्न पक्ष ठान्दा रहेछन् । 'कीर्तिपुरको समग्र आरोह-अवरोह बाहेक मैले जीवनमा केही गरेजस्तै लाग्दैन ।' हुन पनि सन् १९८६ हिउँदमा युनिभर्सिटीको पार्कतिर भेटिने सञ्जीवले जीवन साथीलाई पनि त्यहीँ भेटेका रहेछन् । अनि एमए सक्नासाथ उनको अध्यापन

Complexities: abugida, consonant conjuncts, etc.

Nepali

Official Language of Nepal.

Native to 11M of 27M population in Nepal.

20-29% of Nepal literate, 8-10% know English.

 नेपाल सरकार प्रधानमन्त्री तथा मन्त्रिपरिषद्को कार्यालय 				
गृह पृष्ठ	संगठन तालिका	मन्त्रिपरिषद्	सम्पर्क	English Version
मन्त्रिपरिषद्	सि.नं.	नाम	पद	टेलिफोन, कार्यालय
प्रधानमन्त्री	१.	श्री दिपेन्द्र विक्रम श्यामा	सचिव, प्र.म.तथा म.प.को कार्यालय	९७७-१-४२११०२५
प्रधानमन्त्रीका सल्लाहकारहरू	२.	श्री माधव पीडेल	सचिव, प्र.म.तथा म.प.को कार्यालय	९७७-१-४२११०७२
मुख्य सचिव	३.	श्री ताना गौतम	सचिव, प्र.म.तथा म.प.को कार्यालय	९७७-१-४२१११०९
सचिवहरू	४.	श्री विन्सा हाहा भट्टराई	सचिव, प्र.म.तथा म.प.को कार्यालय	९७७-१-४२११५२९
कार्यालय				
संगठन तालिका				
प्रधानमन्त्री द्विी प्रकोप उद्धार फोप [१५५]				

Issues

Topic for Hall et al.: end-user software only, not developer tools, not content.

Content in Nepali is popular, software less so. Issue 1: Why?

Issue 2: What would make Nepali software popular?

Issue 3: What should we do?

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Issue 1: Why Localized SW Less Popular?

1. Legacy incompatibilities (publishers still pre-Unicode).
2. Normative signals (identity branding, language prestige).
3. Incomplete localization (alien keyboards, Unicode fonts missing).
4. Bad localization (Sanskritized vocabulary, poor fonts).
5. Unavailable localization (Internet cafés).
6. Sunk learning costs.
7. Network externalities (inefficiency of split-version groups).
8. Standardization leadership failures.

Issue 1: When Localized SW Popular?

1. When user does not know English (i.e. vast majority).
2. When user is rural.
3. When the user has no prior computer experience.
4. When the user's whole group uses local software.
5. When localized software is available and high-quality.
6. When decisionmakers fear cultural (e.g., literary) death.

Issue 1: Voices from Elsewhere

Anti	<p>Localizations “in nearly all cases” are “broken” (mistranslated).</p> <p>Localized error messages hard to find in Web searches.</p> <p>Localized keyboard shortcuts change.</p> <p>Learning non-localized software is easy: “less than 100 terms”.</p>
Pro	<p>The general public demands it.</p> <p>It’s worked even among high-tech users in Japan.</p> <p>Even where translation isn’t demanded, localized formats (time, date, currency, ...) are.</p>
Maybe	<p>If only some software is localized, I need to learn 2 vocabularies.</p>

Source: <http://www.haloscan.com/comments/ericsinksoftware/1640/>

Issue 2: What Would Make Localized Software Popular?

1. Everybody: Upgrade to Unicode.
2. Localize branding (and make localism cool).
3. Localize thoroughly.
4. Localize well.
5. Make localized software available.
6. Market software to the masses.
7. Localize entire groups.
8. Government: Adopt, enforce, and obey localization standards.

But: Is even all this enough? Semantic UI, IR, and QA, too?

Issue 3: What Should We Do?

Hall et al.: Localization is good and high-quality, standardized localization succeeds, so localize well and coercively.

Biolinguistic diversity movement: Preventing linguistic and cultural extinction requires localization, so localize.

Democracy movement: Eradication of extreme poverty and inequality (including between sexes [cf. Huyer]) requires localization, so localize.

Incremental profit maximizers: Some buyers demand localization, others don't, so localize only where profitable.

Globalization movement: Making the world a single polity and economy requires a universal language, so don't localize.