

Nepali transcript:

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुरको शुभ नाम?

राधा: राधा।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि हजुर काठमाडौं शहरकै हो?

राधा: हो काठमाडौं, पाटनको।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर। अनि, हजुरको बच्चाबेलाको अलि अनुभवहरु अलि भन्दिनुस्न।

राधा: बच्चाहरुको अनुभव के...पढ्न जाने हामीहरु school भन्छ आज भोलि जस्तो होइन।
होइन? बिहान पढ्न जान्छु, चार बजे आउँछु। त्यो bag आफैले बोकेर हिँड्छु, होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: अनि त्यसो गरेर हामी पढ्न जान्छु। धेरै पढेको छैन।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: कति सम्म पढ्ने...?

राधा: पढेको त खोइ... कति class पर्यो... थाहा पनि भएन।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर। अनि त्यो बेला schoolमा अंग्रेजी पनि सिकाउँ थियो कि नेपाली मात्र?

राधा: होइन, म चाहिँ नेपाली मात्र यहाँ सिकाउने ठाउँमा म पढ्न गएको, होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: अनि पछि चाहिँ म Calcutta गएको बेलामा त्यहाँ चाहिँ हिन्दी पनि सिकायो, English पनि अलि अलि सिकाएर मात्र त्यो अलि अलि थाहा भएको मैले। नत्र त...

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर। अनि त्यो बेला त बच्चामै घरमा पनि धेरै सहयोग गर्नु पथ्र्यो होला...

राधा: पछै। हाम्रो... म चाहिँ ठुलो छोरी होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: हाम्रो मा-बाको पहिला ठुलो छोरी। मेरो बाजे छ, बजेहरु हुँदैन्...छैन। सबै आफैले हेर्नुपछै। आफैले बच्चा देखि...

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि बच्चादेखि खाना-साना पकाउनुपछै?

राधा: होइन। खाना-साना¹ पकाउनलाई मान्छे छ पहिला।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए, हजुर।

राधा: म आफै पकाउन सक्दैन्। हेर्न मात्र हेर्ने। मदत पनि छ काम गर्ने पनि छ। धेरै आज जस्तो होइन। काम गर्ने पनि धेरै छ। हाम्रो माइतीमा पनि family धेरै छ, होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: छुटेर मात्र हामी, मा, बा, हाम्रो सात जना दिदि-बहिनी छ, भाइ एकजना छ।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए, हजुर।

राधा: हाम्रो फुफुहरु छैन।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: हाम्रो पहिलाको family त्यति।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर। अनि अब खाली समयमा रमाइलोलाई के गर्नु हुन्थ्यो बच्चा बेलामा?

राधा: हामी के गर्नु हुन्छ भनेको? हामी भर्छु, sweater बुन्छु, बच्चा बेलामा, होइन?

¹ When trying to express many things that are similar, Nepalis have a habit of rhyming that word with a 's' sound in front. In this case, the interviewee said 'खाना-साना/ khana-sana' as a way to describe food and other similar things. For example, if you wanted to say there were a lot of musical instruments such as drums in a place, you would probably say 'drums-srums'. The second word usually isn't actually a word. However, in this case, 'साना/ sana' means small, but this meaning is arbitrary; it has nothing to do with the context.

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: त्यो तकियाहरुमा आफै हातले भर्छु। सारीहरु भर्छु। त्यस्तो गर्छु।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि बच्चा बेला, त्यो बेला, यहाँ महिला मान्छेहरुले कस्तो लुगा लगाउँथ्यो? सारी र कुर्ता नै लगाउँथ्यो कि...

राधा: होइन पहिला-पहिला अर्कै लुगा लगाउँछ। हामी सानोबेलामा त अब अर्कै दौरासुरुवाल भन्छ होइन? आज भोलि त्यो भक्तपुरमा छ नि ज्यपुनीहरुले लाउने है? त्यस्तै लुगा लाउँछु हामी।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर।

राधा: बहिनीहरुको मात्र frock लगायो अनि कुर्ता लगायो, हामीले चाहिँ त्यस्तो लाउन पाएको छैन। त्यहि भोटोसुरुवाल भन्छ, त्यस्तो लाउने हामी।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर। ए अनि हजुरको बिहा कति वर्षमा भयो?

राधा: मेरो बिहा १७ लागेर १८ वर्षमा भएको। लाग्या छैन १७ वर्ष पुरा भएको बेलामा।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर। अनि हजुरको पनि love marriage भएको कि कसरी?

राधा: होइन! बाले मलाई देख्नु भएको छैन मैले बालाई देख्नु भएको छैन। कसरी love marriage हुन्छ?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: अनि कसरी भयो एकचोटी...

राधा: Arranged marriage गर्यो नि। अब आफ्नो बा र यहाँ सासु -ससुराहरुले मिलाएर। त्यो मिलाएर गरेको नि।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर। अनि त्यस्तो सानो उमेरमा बिहा भयो कसरी सबै सम्हल्नु भयो? गारो भयो कि भएन?

राधा: गारो त किन हुँदैन? गारो त भइहाल्छ नि।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: अब १७ वर्षमा होइन? त्यो उमेरमा त्यो दिएको ठाउँम पनि family धेरै छ होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: Family धेरै छ अब सासु-ससुराहरू छ, जेठा सासु-ससुराहरू छ, नन्दहरू छ, आमा छ, जेठाजु छ, त्यो देवरहरू छ, सबै जना छ।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: सबैजना धेरैलाई रिजाउनु² पर्छ। भात नै धेरै धेरै पकाउनुपर्छ। यहाँ त पकाउनु पर्छ। माइतीमा मात्र पकाउनु पर्दैन, होइन?

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: हजुर।

राधा: यहाँ त सबै पकाउनुपर्छ गर्नुपर्छ। बिहान सात बाजे देखि दाउरा बालेर भात, चुलोमा भात पकाएर। दुई बजे, दुई बजे मात्र सिद्धिन्छ हाम्रो काम।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर। अनि त्यसपछि, अब, हजुरको पहिला बच्चा चाहिँ कति...हजुर बिहा गरेको कतिमा...

राधा: १८ मा पाएको।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: १८ वर्ष मै? अनि त्यो बेला अस्पतालमै जानु भयो कि...

राधा: होइन, होइन। म अस्पतालमा जाने होइन। त्यो बेला घरैमा पाएको।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: घरैमा...

राधा: अँ चार दिन बिरामी भएर पाएको।

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर। अनि...

राधा: मेरो कान्छो छोरा मात्र अस्पतालमा।

² It is not clear what the person is trying to say here, so this sentence will not be translated. But the speaker is probably trying to say she had to keep everyone happy.

अंतरवार्ताकर्ता: ए हजुर।

राधा: चारजना छोरा छ होइन? अनि एकजना छोरी छ। सबै घरैमा पाएको हो। सानो छोरा मात्र अस्पतालमा पाएको।

English translation:

Interviewer: What is your *shubha*³ name?

Radha: Radha.

Interviewer: And are you from Kathmandu?

Radha: Yes, I am from Kathmandu, Patan.

Interviewer: *Hajur*⁴. And, please tell me a little bit about your childhood experiences.

Radha: Childhood experiences... Going to, what you nowadays call school, it wasn't the same. *Hoina*⁵? I went to study in the mornings and returned at four in the afternoon. I used to carry my own bag too. *Hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: And like that we used to go study. I haven't studied a lot.

Interviewer: Till which grade...

Radha: Studied till *khoi*⁶... Till which class... I don't even know.

³ The direct translation of '*shubha*' is 'auspicious' or 'good'; when people formally ask each other's name they say this as a sign of respect. It may also be related to the fact that name choosing ceremonies in Nepal are very auspicious occasions in Nepal.

⁴ '*Hajur*', in this context, is used to acknowledge what the interviewee is saying in a respectful way and also shows that the interviewer is listening and following whatever she is saying. It may also be used as a response to someone's question, to acknowledge that a speaker is right, and may also be used to address someone older than you. It can also be used to ask a speaker to repeat something they just said in a formal way.

⁵ The direct translation of '*hoina*' is 'np.' In this context, it is to make sure that the person is following the story and to confirm something. For example, in English, the word 'Right?' is used to confirm something.

⁶ '*Khoi*' is a colloquial term that is a sign of saying 'I don't know'.

Interviewer: *Hajur*. And in those days, did they teach English in school or did they only teach Nepali?

Radha: No, here I went to a place where only Nepali was taught, *hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: But later when I went to Calcutta, I was taught Hindi and a little bit of English. That is why I know a little bit. Otherwise...

Interviewer: *Hajur*. And in those days you must have had to help around the house even when you were small...

Radha: We had to. We... I am the oldest daughter, *hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: Our mother and father's eldest daughter. I had my grandfather, but I didn't have my grandmother. I had to look after myself and everyone. Since I was small...

Interviewer: And did you even have to cook food when you were little?

Radha: No. We had people who cooked our food.

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: I couldn't cook by myself. I only used to look after everyone. We had help, we had helpers to. I had a large family.

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: In my immediate family only, I had my mother, father, and then us seven sisters and one brother.

Interviewer: *Ae*⁷, *Hajur*.

Radha: We didn't have any aunts.

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: Our family was that much.

Interviewer: *Hajur*. And what did you do in your free time when you were a child?

⁷ 'Ae' is like an interjection. It can be used in ways similar to that of the word 'Oh' in English.

Radha: You're asking what we did? We did embroidery; we knitted sweaters, when I was small, *hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: We used to hand-embroider pillows. We did those kinds of things.

Interviewer: And in your childhood, in those days, what kind of clothes did women wear? Did they wear *saree*⁸ and *kurta*⁹ or...

Radha: No. In those days we used to wear something different. When I was small we had *daura-suruwal*¹⁰, *hoina*? And you know the clothing¹¹ that *jyapuni*¹²'s in Bhaktapur wear even nowadays, right? We used to wear the same.

Interviewer: *Hajur*.

Radha: Only my smaller sisters got wear frocks and *kurta*, I never got to wear them. I wore things like *bhoto-suruwal*¹³.

Interviewer: *Ae, Hajur*. And at what age did you get married?

⁸A '*saree*' is a type of clothing mainly worn by women, mainly in South Asia. It is a 4-9 yards long, unstitched piece of cloth that can be draped in various ways to cover the body. It is worn with a blouse that covers the upper half of a woman's body.

(Sari. (n.d). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved May 4, 2012, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sari>)

⁹ A '*kurta*' is a type of clothing worn by both men and women in South Asia. For men it is a loose shirt falling below or just above the knee, usually paired with loose-fitting trousers or tight-fitting trousers. The concept of this is the same for women too, however, there are a lot more designs and it is traditionally fitted to a woman's body. Nowadays it is also paired with jeans.

(Kurta. (n.d). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved May 4, 2012, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurta>)

¹⁰ A '*daura-suruwal*' is a costume worn by men in Nepal, mainly Newari men. It is considered to be the national costume of Nepal. It consists of a shirt that falls slightly above the knee, which closes with the help of four strings rather than buttons or zippers. It is combined with the '*suruwal*' which is a trouser that fits loosely at the hips but tapers down to fit the ankles. Here, the speaker is not saying that she used to wear *daura-suruwal*, but rather that it was worn by most men in general.

¹¹ Here the 'clothing' that the speaker is referring to is the '*Haku-Potasi*' commonly worn by Newari women. The use of this clothing has fairly died down, as people opt for the more comfortable option of Western wear. The *Haku-Potasi* is almost like a *saree*, in that it is a long piece of unstitched cloth that is draped around the lower half of the body, and is combined with a blouse. What makes it different is the color of the clothing. The cloth is usually always black with a red border, and the blouse is usually black or red in color. A white cloth is wrapped around the waist to keep the cloth in place.

¹² *Jyapuni* is a colloquial term used to refer to lower-caste Newari women. Nowadays, some might consider it to be a derogatory term.

¹³ '*Bhoto-suruwal*' is another type of clothing that is similar to *daura-suruwal* but it is made out of thicker material, and worn mainly by children to keep them from getting cold.

Radha: I got married when I was seven years complete and turning eighteen. No, wait, I wasn't turning eighteen, I was still just on seventeen.

Interviewer: *Ae, Hajur.* And did you have a love marriage or what happened?

Radha: No! He hasn't seen me, I haven't seen him. How could it have been a love marriage?

Interviewer: So how did you get married?

Radha: We did arranged marriage! My father and my in-laws talk and agreed upon it and fixed my marriage.

Interviewer: *Hajur.* And you got married at such a small age, how did you manage everything? Was it difficult or not?

Radha: Why wouldn't it be difficult? Of course it would be difficult.

Interviewer: *Hajur.*

Radha: Now, I was seventeen years old, *hoina*? And the place they gave me to, they had a huge family too, *hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur.*

Radha: We had to cook a lot of rice. We need to cook a lot here. In my own house¹⁴ we didn't have to cook as much, *hoina*?

Interviewer: *Hajur.*

Radha: Here¹⁵ you need to cook everything, do everything. I used to wake up at seven in the morning, light the firewood, and cook the rice. And my work finished only at around two.

Interviewer: *Ae, Hajur.* And when was your first baby...? How long after your marriage...?

Radha: He was born when I was eighteen.

Interviewer: At eighteen years? And in that time did you go the hospital or...?

¹⁴ Referring to her home, before she got married.

¹⁵ Referring to her husband's home. After marriage a woman is expected to live with her husband's family in Nepali society.

Radha: No, no. I didn't go to the hospital. That time I gave birth at home.

Interviewer: In your house...

Radha: *An*¹⁶. I was sick for four days and then I gave birth to him.

Interviewer: *Ae, Hajur*. And...

Radha: My youngest son is the only [one] born in a hospital.

Interviewer: *Ae, Hajur*.

Radha: I have four sons, *hoina*? And one daughter. All of them were born in the house. Only the youngest son was born in the hospital.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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¹⁶ '*An*[ँ]' is a colloquial word that is pronounced with a nasal tone. It is just used to agree to something, almost like saying 'yes'.