Himalayan Linguistics

Nepali attention marker ni

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ABSTRACT
This article is the first in-depth study of the Nepali discourse particle ni. The first part summarizes how ni has been treated in previous works on Nepali and shows how Östman’s (1981) analysis of the often-used English translation equivalent of ni, ‘you know’, gives a hint about the semantics of ni. Then, deriving data mainly from Narayan Wagle’s novel Palpasa café, which includes colloquial dialogues, but also from other sources, the paper illustrates the declarative, interrogative and imperative uses of ni. The common denominator between the various uses of ni is shown to be that the speaker brings something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention. The last section compares the concept of attention to the related concepts contrastive focus and mirative.

KEYWORDS
discourse particles, pragmatics, discourse analysis
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1 Introduction

Nepali discourse particles have received only cursory attention in linguistic publications. The present paper addresses this lack by shedding light on the function of the particle ni, an addressee-oriented attention marker by which the speaker brings something to the forefront of the addressee's attention.¹

I first summarize how ni has been treated in some earlier works on Nepali (§2). This is followed by a short discussion on the English expression you know, which has often been employed in translating sentences with the Nepali ni (§3). Then, after describing the data sources for the present study (§4), I illustrate the declarative, interrogative, imperative, optative and exclamative uses of ni (§5). The last section discusses the similarity of the concept of attention, as described here, to the related concepts of contrastive focus and mirativity (§6).

2 Background

Turner's (1931: 342) dictionary describes ni as an “interrogative particle placed at the end of the sentence”, sometimes having “additional force”. Turner does not comment on the declarative, imperative, optative and exclamative uses of the particle. In the same vein, the lexicon annexed to Acharya’s Nepali grammar (1991: 371) describes ni as a “nuance word”, and in the body of the grammar ni is classed as a “question statement nuance particle” (Acharya 1991: 144). Acharya limits his discussion to interrogative uses probably because declarative uses of ni do not occur in the folk-story which he uses as his corpus. Similarly to Turner, Acharya’s (1991) reader is left with the impression that ni occurs only in questions.

Manders (2007: 190), on the other hand, defines ni as “slight emphasis in answers” and gives two examples of ni, one a declarative and the other an interrogative. However, his definition overlooks the other uses and the fact that a declarative ni may be used without a preceding question.

According to Matthews (1998: 46), whose treatment of ni observes both declarative and interrogative uses, ni in declarative sentences “implies that the information given is common knowledge and may be translated ‘you know’” and “[i]n short interrogative phrases, it may be translated ‘what about...’”. However, the definition of ni as marking “common knowledge”, perhaps

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¹ I would like to thank Michael Hutt and John Peterson for giving comments on a draft of this paper. I take full responsibility of the remaining errors and inadequacies.

¹ “Forefront of attention” is preferable to mere “attention”, because attention is a continuum (Talmy 2007: 266).
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inspired by the lexico-semantic meaning of the English gloss ‘you know’, is problematic in that some of Matthews’ own examples seem to contradict this characterization. Consider, for instance, exchange (1) below, taken from Matthews (1998: 57):

(1)

A: tapāi kabā-ko humubuncanba?
you.HGH where-GEN COP.HGH
‘Where are you from?’

B: ma āngrej bū. mero deś belāyat bo ni.
I English COP.EQ.NPST.1SG my country Britain COP.EQ.NPST.3SG AT
‘I’m English. My country is Britain (you know).’

tara hijāja ma nepāl-mā chū.
but nowadays I Nepal-LOC COP.EX.NPST.1SG
‘But nowadays I stay in Nepal.’

In (1), the information marked by ni cannot be “common knowledge” for A and B, because A’s ignorance is revealed by his question. Actually the opposite is true. By using ni, the speaker is marking the information as something that the addressee did not know.

Hutt and Subedi (1999: 291) include plenty of both declarative and interrogative instances of ni in their example dialogues. They do not offer a descriptive statement on ni, but use various English expressions to convey the nuances of ni in various contexts. In the book’s glossary ni is given two basic translations, (declarative) ‘you know’ and (interrogative) ‘what about’.

Clark (1989: 4) gives, in addition to the declarative and interrogative uses, examples of ni in the imperative mood “spoken with a peremptory tone”, e.g. basa ni ‘Sit down, I tell you’. Uses in optative and exclamative clauses, however, are not addressed. A few examples of Clark’s imperative uses of ni are given later in 5.3. According to Clark (1989: 5) “ni is an emphatic particle which when used with an imperative adds to the command the suggestion of a threat”. Clark uses more prose than other writers to describe the uses of ni but unfortunately his lone example sentences rarely provide enough context for deeper contextual analysis. In a comment to one of his context-less declarative examples, Clark (1989: 11) claims that ni “here implies confirmation or strong reaffirmation of a fact presumed to have been already known by the hearer.” In another example (Clark 1989: 48), however, ni appears not to mark the speaker’s and the addressee’s mutual knowledge, because “ni suggests that the interlocutor should have known such a well-known fact” but, in fact, did not know.

Perhaps Matthews’ and Clark’s description of ni as marking (at least sometimes) information that is already known by the addressee has been affected by the literal reading of the English expression you know, which they often use as a translation equivalent of ni. A closer inspection of the uses of you know, however, shows that the pragmatic meaning of the expression is quite contrary to the simple literal reading.
3 English you know

A literal reading of you know in English suggests that by this expression the speaker refers to information that the addressee already knows, i.e. that you know would be a marker of knowledge which is mutual between the speaker and the addressee. However, Östman’s (1981) functional study of the uses of you know in American English shows that the expression, in fact, often marks information that is new to the addressee. According to Östman (1981: 17) “a speaker will use you know when the addressee does NOT know what the speaker talks about. That is, the fact that the speaker uses you know is as such evidence that it is not at all clear that the ‘You’ knows.”

Östman (1981) illustrates his claim by referring to a study by Newsome (cited in Östman 1981: 18), where a storyteller used the expression you know several times when telling a story to an audience for the first time. In the second telling to the same audience, however, there was only one instance of you know, because the speaker knew that the audience already knew the story. The storyteller used the expression you know when the audience, in fact, did not know what the storyteller would be saying.

Östman (1981: 18) further notes that by choosing to use you know “the speaker is more likely to receive the addressee’s full attention”. It appears that instead of taking you know at its face-value, the expression rather needs to be interpreted as conveying something in the order of “let it be known to you, pay attention to this”. The act of bringing something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention is, as will be seen, central to the definition of Nepali ni as an attention marker. Therefore, it is no wonder that you know is often used in translations of ni-sentences.

4 Data

The Nepali data for this article has been mainly collected from the Nepali novel Palpasa café by Narayan Wagle (2005) and supplemented by imperative examples from Clark (1989), optative and exclamative examples from an anonymous reviewer, and one example based on my own observation on the use of Nepali in Sikkim. What makes Wagle’s novel a particularly interesting object of research is that it presents dialogues in colloquial Nepali and has been translated into English by Bikash Sangruala (2008). The English translations often give insights into the meaning of ni in each context. I found altogether 75 instances of ni in Palpasa café. These instances with context are given in the appendix in the devenagari script with the English translation from the English version of the novel. Because Sangruala’s translations are not very literal, I have in several places included my own translations and clarifications in square bracket, see (2). Occasionally, I give both my own more literal and Sangruala’s freer translation, see (4). Page references to the Nepali and English versions of Palpasa café (PC) respectively are given after the glossing in examples.

5 Summary of the Uses of ni

The Nepali particle ni is a clause-final attention marker which occurs in declarative, interrogative, imperative, optative and exclamative sentences. All the uses of ni may be described in terms of attention, or attention-worthiness, which is more precisely defined as “bringing something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention”. The particle ni has clausal scope and in the present data
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is always followed by a pause. Clausal scope and pause differentiate ni from other, more typically focus-like emphatic markers cahi, ta and nai, which direct the addressee’s attention to one clausal constituent and thus have phrasal scope. Mari–Sisko Khadgi (p.c.), however, noted that ni in Kathmandu has acquired a use very similar to pani ‘also’, as in mo ni āu-chu [I at come-npst.1sg] (cf. mo pani āu-chu) ‘I too will come.’ This suggests that currently ni is extending its scope from the clausal level to the phrasal level.

The pause following ni may be seen as reflecting the increased level of attention (above the usual level in the discourse) and thus also mental effort and processing time that the speaker expects from the addressee, hence the expression forefront of attention given above. The adjectives attention-worthy and newsworthy are here used as short adjectival descriptions of the attention phenomenon.

The contexts in which an increased level of the addressee’s attention may be called for are various. In declarative uses, by using ni the speaker may either indicate a switch in the topic of the conversation or present a proposition as particularly attention-worthy. A speaker may present a proposition as particularly attention-worthy, for instance, when the proposition is newsworthy, counterexpectational, a counter-claim, a solution to a problem, a piece of witty language requiring extra processing effort, an emphatic agreement with someone, or even simply an answer to a question. The interrogative uses of ni, on the other hand, are always topic-switching questions, where, by using ni, the speaker directs the addressee’s attention to a new discourse topic. In imperatives, the increased attention may be interpreted as “peremptory tone” or “a threat” (Clark 1989: 4-5).

Although ni has been described as a question particle (Turner 1931, Acharya 1991), 57 of the 75 occurrences of ni in Palpasa café are declarative and only 18 interrogative. There were no instances of ni being used in imperative, optative or exclamative sentences in Palpasa café. Therefore, examples are provided below from Clark (1989) for imperative and from an anonymous reviewer for optative and exclamative clauses.

Further research is needed to determine whether the present data accord with examples of ni in the Nepali National Corpus. Based on a cursory look at some of the 5,403 listed instances of ni in the Nepali National Corpus, two observations can be made: 1) The particle ni is quite frequently followed by an exclamation mark, suggesting that ni is associated with an increased level of attention. 2) Occasionally, but quite rarely, some dislocated elements, which would in writing and more careful speech occur earlier in the clause, come after ni, making it unlikely that ni in those instances would be followed by a pause.

The following sections describe the declarative (5.1), interrogative (5.2), imperative (5.3), optative and exclamative (5.4) uses of ni respectively.

5.1 Declarative Uses

In declarative uses, ni occurs both following the verb at the end of the sentence (5.1.1) and verblessly (5.1.2).

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2 While I have not carried out a detailed study on intonation patterns in ni-setences, a few remarks are in order. The interrogative ni at the end of the sentence is pronounced by higher pitch than non-interrogative ones. When another morpheme follows ni in an interrogative sentence, as in example 41 in the Appendix, the rise of intonation is on the last syllable, not on ni.

3 However, the particle ta sometimes occurs in clause-final uses.

4 Some instances, however, are problematic in relation to the declarative vs. interrogative division.
5.1.1 Declarative Post-Verbal Uses

In post-verbal uses, ni occurs after the verb usually as the clause-final element but sometimes followed by the contrastive particle ta. In (2) and (3), the clause with ni is preceded by the rhetorical question tim-lā thā' cha? ‘do you know?’, revealing that the next sentence, in the speaker’s view, is something that the addressee does not know and is contextually newsworthy to the addressee. For easier finding, instances of ni in the example sentences here and henceforth are always given in bold.

(2)

’tapāi āphai dewi-jastai bunuhuncha,’ maile bhan-ē ‘kina ḍar
you.HGH self goddess-like COP.HGH LERG say-PST.1SG why fear mānnuhuncha?
accept.HGH.NPST

‘But you yourself are like a goddess [dewi], so what are you afraid of?’ I insisted.’

‘tim-lā thā’ cha?’ un-le bhan-in ‘mero nām
you-DAT knowledge COP.EX.NPST.3SG 3SG-ERG say-3SG.FEM.PST.MGH my name dewi bo ni!’
goddess COP.EX.NPST.3SG AT

‘Do you know something?’ [she said] ‘My name is actually ‘Devi.’’ (PC 55, 55)

(3)

‘tim-lā thā’ cha?’ us-le bhan-i ma
you-DAT knowledge COP.EX.NPST.3SG 3SG-ERG say-PST.3SG.FEM I ājai janm-e-ko6 ni.’
today.EMPH be.born-PFV-NMLZ AT

‘Do you know what?’ she said. ‘I was born today.’’ (PC 147, 148)

The newsworthiness of the second speaker’s proposition marked by ni in (2) is triggered by the other speaker first accidentally speaking better than he knew, using the word dewi ‘goddess’ with reference to the second speaker of (2), whose name happens to be Devi. Example (3), on the other hand, is a comment by a child to an adult. Unlike in (2), there is nothing obvious in the context of (3) triggering the use of ni. The speaker just wants to direct the addressee’s attention to a new piece of information that functions as a new discourse topic and is thus worthy of the addressee’s increased attention.

In (4-9), the newsworthiness arises from the fact that the speaker presents some type of a counter-claim to what the addressee has said or done earlier. In (4), the speaker points out an inconsistency in the addressee’s words and behavior and hence marks the proposition as attention-worthy by ni. The interrogativity marked by the question mark is here considered to arise from contextual semantics whereas syntactically the clause is a declarative.

5 The particle ta occurs both as a clause-medial, phrasal-level operator (without following pause), and a clause-final marker. At the end of the sentence, ta and ni may be ordered either ni ta or ta ni. Currently, I do not know what the semantic difference between these uses is.

6 The sequence -eko may also be analyzed as a past participle. The analysis here, separating the perfective marker -e and the nominalizer -ko, follows Peterson 2000.
In (4), the speaker points out that the addressee’s claim of not wishing to be introduced to people is contradicted by him having introduced himself to the speaker. The contrastive particle \textit{ta} (in the same clause as \textit{ni}) underlines the fact that the addressee’s treatment of the speaker contrasts with his treatment of others.

In (5), another example of a counter-claim, the sentence with \textit{ni} is presented by the English translator as something having been "argued" (although a literal translation would be "said"), i.e. presenting disagreement with what the addressee said previously.
"Anyone can have those things if they become rich," the old man argued [lit. ‘said’]. “It's only because we’re poor that we don’t have [anything].” (PC 91, 89)

In (6), the counter-claim implied by ni is in favour of the addressee. The speaker relieves the addressee’s guilt by disagreeing with her claim that she needs to ask for forgiveness. Interestingly, the English translation of the novel includes a whole sentence ‘no need to be sorry’ to convey what the Nepali original does with the particles ni and ta.

(6)

\[
\text{mai-le hijo rāti timro} \ \text{ṭ} \ \text{eliphon tip-} \ \text{e-na-} \ \text{chu,} \ \text{maile}
\]

I.ERG yesterday at.night your phone pick.up-PFV-NEG-NPST.1SG LERG
\[
\text{bhan-} \ \text{e}.
\]

say-PST.1SG

“I forgot to take your phone number yesterday.” [I said]’

\[
\text{‘ma} \ \text{kasti} \ \text{hussu}! \ \text{us-le} \ \text{bhan-} \ \text{i} \ \text{‘sari} \ \text{hai}!\]
\]

I what.kind.FEM fool 3SG-ERG say-PST.3SG.FEM sorry eh

[“What a fool I am,” she said, “Sorry!”]

\[
\text{‘mai-le} \ \text{pani ta} \ \text{māg-inā} \ \text{ni.’}
\]

LERG too CEMPH ask.for-PST.3SG.FEM AT

“No need to be sorry. I didn’t ask for it” [lit. “But I also didn’t ask for it, you know.”] (PC 11, 12)

In (7), ni is used in a context where the speaker counteracts the addressee’s action.

(7)

\[
\text{phulan-} \ \text{le} \ \text{snyāks milau-} \ \text{na} \ \text{lāg-} \ \text{e-ki} \ \text{thii,} \ \text{us-lāi}
\]

Phoolan-ERG snacks arrange-INF begin-PFV-NMLZ.FEM COP.PST.3SG.FEM 3SG-DAT
\[
\text{saghāu-} \ \text{na} \ \text{ma} \ \text{ga-} \ \text{e}. \ \text{‘par-} \ \text{daina} \ \text{par-} \ \text{daina’} \ \text{us-le}
\]

help-INF I go.PST.1SG require- NPST.NEG.3SG require-NPST.NEG.3SG 3SG-ERG
\[
\text{nakbarā} \ \text{par-} \ \text{i} \ \text{‘ma} \ \text{āpāh-ā} \ \text{sarbha} \ \text{gar-} \ \text{i-hāl-} \ \text{chu} \ \text{ni.’}
\]

flirting make-PST.3G.FEM 1SG self-EMPH all do-0-put-NPST.1SG AT

‘I helped Phoolan put snacks on a few trays, though she kept insisting, “No, no. I can manage.”’ (PC 66, 66)

Counteracting what the addressee has said or is assumed to believe by using ni often happens in a context where the speaker feels like having to give an apology of their behavior. This is the case in (8) and (9)
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(8) ‘khai mero ta citra banaunubhaena kyare,’ us-le twakkha
ECLAM my CEMPH picture make.PST.NEG.HGH DUB 3SG-ERG unexpectedly
bhān-i-bāl-yo.
shoot-0-put-PST.3SG
[“‘Hey, you didn’t draw my picture,’’ he said unexpectedly.’]

’sadarmukām pug-na bbyāu-dinā ni ta.’
Sadarmukaam reach-INF make.in.time-NPST.NEG.1SG AT CEMPH
‘If I did, I wouldn’t be able to reach the district headquarters before dark.’ [lit. ‘I cannot make it
to Sadarmukaam in time, you know.’]

(9) ‘yo dhamilo cha,’ maile bhan-ē.
this blurry COP.EX.NPST.3SG LERG say-PST.1SG
“That’s too blurry,” I said.’

‘tapāi-ko citra saphā ta hūdaina ni.’
you.HGH-GEN picture clear CEMPH COP.HAB.NPST.NEG.3SG AT
‘He said, “Your sketches aren’t any cleaner.”’ (PC 175, 176)

In (4-9) above, the use of ni implied a counter-claim. In the next three examples (10-12),
quite the opposite is true. The attention marker ni postposed to the copula ho signifies that the
speaker emphatically concurs with the addressee’s previous statement. In (10) and (11), the addressee
has just understood or suspected something and the speaker uses ni to confirm that the
understanding/suspicion is correct. In (12), speaker B draws the addressee’s attention to the fact that
what the addressee feels like is indeed the case.

(10) ‘e, maile bhanē ‘tapāi-lāi sāntwanā bhayo.’
o LERG say.PST.1SG you.HGH-DAT comfort become.PST.3SG
“That must make you happy?’

‘ho ni,’ un-le bhan-in
COP.EQ.NPST.3SG AT 3SG-ERG say-3SG.FEM.PST.MGH
“Of course,” she said.’

(11) A: tā padh-nu na-par-ne bha-e-ra jā-na
you.LGH read-INF NEG-require-INF.PTCP become-CPTCP go-INF
lāg-e-ki ho ra?
begin-PFV-NMLZ.FEM COP.EQ.NPST.3SG RQ
‘Is that why you’re going, because you don’t have to study?’
B: *holā ni,* u *bban-che*
   COP.DUB.3SG AT 3.SG say-PST.3SG.FEM
   “‘Maybe [,’ she said.]’

(12)
A: ‘āi em byappi tudे,’ un-le *bban-e* ‘āphn-ai *choro*
   I am happy today 3GS-ERG say-PST.3SG.MGH own-EMPH son
   *phark-e-jasto lāg-yo.*
   return-PFV-like feel-PST.3SG
   “That makes me happy[,” he said.] “It’s like my own son has come back.”

B: ‘bo *ni ta,’* maile *bban-ē*
   COP.EQ.NPST.3SG AT CEMPH LERG said-PST.1SG
   “I’m like your son” [ I said].’ (PC 112, 112)

In Palpasa café, the attention marker *ni* is many times also used in witty remarks of playful language where by using *ni* the speaker is inviting the addressee to pay closer attention than usual to the proposition. In (13), speaker B produces a creative and somewhat mysterious answer to a question and therefore marks his proposition as worthy of increased attention by *ni*, inviting the addressee to make more mental effort than usual in deciphering the message.

(13)
A: ‘*pāp say-ko albam bo*?’
   pop song-GEN album COP.EQ.NPST.3SG
   ‘Is it an album of pop songs?’

B: ‘*tātal-bātai thāhā buncha ni,’* maile *bban-ē*
   title-from.EMPH knowledge COP.HAB.3SG AT LERG say-PST.1SG
   “The title says it all,” I said.’ (PC 66, 66)

In the same vein, example (14) is a competition of witty remarks where the speakers are challenging each other’s choice of words. The force of the declarative *ni* is in the English translation expressed with the question ‘remember?’, an expression underlining the increased level of attention needed in the act of remembering.

(14)
‘*maile tbān-e-ko thiē,’* maile *bban-ē* ‘*aba hāmro bhet*
   LERG think-PFV-NMLZ COP.PST.1SG LERG say-PST.1SG now our meeting
   būdāina.’
   COP.HAB.NPST.NEG.3SG
   “I thought we’d never meet again,” I said.’
   ‘*prthwī sāno cha.*’
   earth small COP.EX.NPST.3SG
   ‘It’s a small world.’
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“golo cha,”
maile bhanē 'baru bāṭā-mā kunai din
round COP.EX.NPST.3SG LERG say-PST.1SG rather road-LOC some day

bbet buna sak-čha.’

meeting COP.EQ.INF be.able.to-NPST.3SG

[“It’s a round one,” I said, “We may meet on the road one day.”]

‘bāṭā-mā kina?’ us-le bhan-i ‘ma ta tapāi-ko
road-LOC why 3SG-ERG say-PST.3SG,FEM I CEMPH you.HGH-GEN
hoṭal-ai āe ni.’
hotel-EMPH come.PST.1SG AT

[“Why on the road?”] she asked. “I came to your hotel, remember?” (PC 33, 32)

Another frequent context for ni is when the speaker provides an answer/solution to a question/problem the addressee seems to have. In (15), a child has asked the narrator of the novel to come for a night to her friend’s house. The fact that the narrator feels embarrassed to go to a stranger’s house is a problem that the child attempts to solve by the clause with ni: she is going to personally speak about him to her friend’s father.

(15)

‘arkā-ko ghar-mā...,’ maile gābro mān-dai bhan-è.
another-GEN house-LOC I.ERG difficult accept-PROG say-PST.1SG
[“In a stranger’s house?” I asked grudgingly.]

‘ma mitbā-sanga bhan-chu ni,’ us-le bhan-i.
I friend’sfather-with say-NPST.1SG AT 3SG-ERG say.PST.3SG,FEM
“I’ll ask my MiitBa,” she said.’ (PC 148, 149)

Palpasa café also has a few instances of the idiom botta ni, which appears to be formed from the copula bo and the particles ta and ni.7 Examples (16) and (17) illustrate this use.

(16)

'rāmro nām rahe-cha.'
beautiful name seem-NPST.3SG

“That’s a pretty name,” I said.’

’nām pani kāi rāmro huncha?’ us-le pheri
name too where beautiful COP.HAB.NPST.3SG 3SG-ERG again

bhan-i 'kasto je pā-yo tyai”?
say-PST.3SG,FEM what.kind that.which receive-PST.3SG that.EMPH

[“How on earth can names be pretty?” she said again. “Where did you get that nonsense?”]

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7 The same elements, bo, ta and ni, were used in a difference order in (12), bo ni ta.
In (16) *botta ni* signifies that the speaker changes his mind. The exclamation *e* at the beginning of the clause underlines the fact that something catches the speaker’s attention. It is somewhat unclear whether the use of *ni* in (16) should be seen as speaker-oriented, expressing the speaker’s newly found belief, or as addressee-oriented, signaling to the addressee that the speaker has changed his mind.

In (17), the use of *ni* is associated with the speaker’s act of remembering, which is suggested in the English translation by the word “remembered”. The speaker is as if talking to himself. When talking to oneself, the speaker and the addressee are the same person. Therefore the addressee-oriented attention marker *ni* is here able to mark a situation where something newsworthy comes to the speaker’s attention.

Example (18) has two instances of *ni* occurring in adjacent sentences. In the first one, (18a), the use of attention-worthiness marked by *ni* resembles many of the earlier examples of counter-claim. In this case, the counter-claim amounts to the speaker rebuking the addressee for what the speaker considers a stupid comment (the speaker disagrees with addressee). The second use is the only example of *ni* in *Palpasa café* where the speaker and the addressee are not characters within the novel. The speaker in (18b) is the main character of the novel who writes the story in the first person and the addressees, whose attention the writer is awakening, are his readers. In (18b), the writer directs the readers’ attention from the novel-internal conversation to his meta-comment on one of the characters.

(18a)

‘*tyas keṭi-le* timi-lāi prabhāwīt gar-era ṭḥikai ta gar-i,*

that girl-ERG you-DAT impressed do-CPTCP allright CEMPHE do-PST.FEM.3SG

rupak jān-ne topali-e ḡyālari āja ark-ai

Rupak know-INF.PTCP gush-PST.3SG.MGH gallery today different.EMPH

**bba-e-ko cba. ma-lāi pani lāg-cba, yi peṇṭin-le**

become-PFV-NMLZ COP.EX.NPST.3SG I-DAT too feel-NPST.3SG these painting-ERG
“She’s been a good influence on you,” Rupak gushed knowingly. “The gallery is different today. I too think that the paintings have been done justice.”

“Can walls do justice to art?” Kishore asked [a mature question].

Of all people, Tshering, a photographer, should have understood the relationship between a painting and the wall it’s hung on!’ [lit. ‘He is a photographer, you know. Others cannot grasp the significance of canvases and walls like him.’] (PC 69, 69)

In the examples above, it was the propositional content of the clauses that was marked as newsworthy with ni. In (19), however, it is not so much the propositional content of the clause that the speaker recommends to the addressee’s attention. The speaker rather uses ni, combined with the semantically vacuous existential verb, as a deictic marker, i.e. pointer which directs the addressee’s attention to one referent from among other people, who then becomes the topic of the discussion.

(19) ‘bimmatilā rabe-chān tapāi-ko gorā-baru,’ maile bhān-ē
brave seem-NPST.3PL you.HGH-GEN white.face-PL I.ERG say-PST.1SG
‘agādi būd-i-rāb-e-ki jun kēti cha ni...’
before walk-0-remain-PFY-NMLZ.FEM which girl COP.EX.NPST.3SG AT
“Your friends are brave,” I said to the environmentalist. “The girl who’s leading us…”

‘dres lagāu-ne?’ us-le sodh-yo.
uniform put.on-INF.PTCP 3SG-ERG ask-PST.3SG
“The one in uniform?” he asked.”

‘ho, tyo khāki-dhāri kēti mero gāū-ki euṭi bahini
COP.EQ.NPST.3SG that khaki-wearing girl my village-GEN.FEM one.FEM little.sister
par-ne-ki sāthi ho,’ maile bhan-ē.

This use of ni in (19) bears great resemblance to the verbless uses, in which the main function of ni is to direct the addressee’s attention to a new discourse topic.

5.1.2 Declarative Verbless Uses

In function, verbless declarative uses are very similar to the post-verbal use in (19) where ni is used as a deictic marker and accompanied by a semantically relatively vacuous verb (existential copula). In Palpasa café, I found no examples of verbless, declarative uses of ni apart from the idiomatic expression cāinjo kyare ni, see (21). Example (20) is a comment I heard spoken in a shop by a customer who, after waiting for his turn for some time, wanted to draw the shop assistant’s attention from the previous customer to himself by using ni. The utterance was followed by a long pause after which the speaker went on to tell what kind of assistance he required. Here the attention-worthiness implied by ni consists of the speaker directing the addressee’s attention to a new discourse topic (and new partner in conversation).

(20)

mero ni…

‘When it comes to my (business)…’

The novel Palpasa café uses a couple of times the verbless idiom cāinjo kyare ni, see (21). The attention marker in (21) just appears to draw the addressee’s attention to the exclamation.

(21)

The novel Palpasa café uses a couple of times the verbless idiom cāinjo kyare ni, see (21). The attention marker in (21) just appears to draw the addressee’s attention to the exclamation.
As shown in (20) above, *ni* is occasionally used in the declarative mood as a purely attention-shifting, topic-switching sense. The topic switching uses of *ni*, however, are more typical of interrogative clauses.

### 5.2 Interrogative Uses

The particle *ni* itself is not a question marker (contra Turner 1931: 342 and Acharya 1991: 144). The basic function of *ni* is rather to bring something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention. This function of *ni* applies, in addition to interrogative clauses, also to declarative, imperative, optative and exclamative clauses. An interrogative sentence with *ni* is marked as interrogative either by the presence of a question word or, in the absence of a question word, by higher intonation. Sometimes interrogativity arises from purely contextual factors, as in (4) above. In these cases, the line between declarative and interrogative becomes segmentally indistinguishable. The difference between the declarative example (20), *mero ni* 'when it comes to my (business)', and the analogous interrogative example (26), *tapā ni?* 'and what about you?', is made through intonation, which rises towards the end of the interrogative. More research needs to be done on the role of intonation in distinguishing declarative vs. interrogative uses of *ni*.

In interrogative uses, *ni* may occur either in a fully formed sentence following the verb or in a partly elided clause following a non-verbal element. In partly elided clauses, some of the propositional content is retrievable from the context. I will first describe the post-verbal (5.2.1) and then the verbless interrogative uses of *ni* (5.2.2).

#### 5.2.1 Interrogative Post-Verbal Uses

In (22), the proposition with *ni* shifts the addressee’s attention from the previous discourse topic, tea, to a new one, the number of his children.

(22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker A</th>
<th>Dialogue Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: ‘guliyo dherai bba-era bolā.’</td>
<td>sweet a.lot become-CPTCP COP.DUB.3SG. ‘You like it [i.e. tea] because it's sweet.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: ‘thikka cha.’</td>
<td>alright COP.EX.NPST.3SG. ‘It’s perfect.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: ‘timrā bālbaccā kati chan ni?’</td>
<td>your children how.many COP.EX.NPST.3PL AT. ‘How many children do you have.’ (PC 52, 52)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In (23), there is again a shift of attention as the topic of the discussion switches from *Guinness Book of Records* to what the addressee saw from the top of Mount Everest.

(23)‘timi-le kahil  yai pāḍhe-kì chìchì au ebharesṭ-mā yak
you-ERG ever read-PFV-NMLZ.FEM COP.EX.NPST.2.FEM Everest-LOC yak
cadb-e-ko ra yāk-mātbi māńche cadb-era āṭkha pug-e-ko?’
climb-PFV-NMLZ and yak-on human climb-CPTCP top reach-PFV-NMLZ
maile ketì–tīra praśna phāl–ē.
I.EGR girl-direction question throw-PST.1SG
‘I asked the teenager, “Have you ever read of a yak climbing Everest with a man on its back?”’

’aǐai sun-dāi chu,’  us-le bhan–i ’ginij
still listen-PROG COP.EX.NPST.1SG 3SG-ERG say-PST.3SG.FEM Guinness
buk-mā rekdāl ta gar-daīnau?’
book-LOC record CEMPH do-NEG.NPST.2SG
“‘It’s the first time I’ve heard such a thing,’”[lit. “I’m still listening”] she wrote back. “Shouldn’t it go in the Guinness Book of Records?’”

’soc-dāi chu.’
think-PROG COP.EX.NPST.1SG
‘I’m thinking about it.’

‘ani timi–le sansār–ko ṭoppa–bāṭa ke dekh–yau ni?’
and you-ERG world-GEN top-from what see-PST.2SG AT
‘And what did you see from the top of the world?’ (PC 40, 40)

In (24), the interrogativity arises as a pragmatic function from the context and the tag question. By using *ni*, the speaker directs the addressee’s attention to a new element about the identity of the female person they are discussing.

(24)‘pakkai pani tyo sujbāw–dāṭā hissi par–e–ki, lāmo
surely.EMPH too that suggestion-giver attractive occur-PFV-NMLZ.FEM long
kapāl pharaphaṛā–dai bīd–ne, inteltient, pyāśiṇet, cārmin
hair flap–PROG walk-INF.PTCP intelligent passionate charming
 hônu–par–cha,’ un–le yaso pani bhan–era mero khisī
COP.INF-must.be-3SG 3SG-ERG like this too say-CPTCP my teasing
gar–e.
DO-PST.3SG.MGH
[‘He also teased me by saying like this: “Surely the one who gave you the suggestion must be an attractive girl, one who walks with her long hair flapping, intelligent, passionate, charming.”’]

‘e ḍīya!’ chiriṇ jān–ne bhayo pheri ’timi–le
bey Drishya Tshering know-INF.PTCP become.PST.3SG again you-ERG
In (25), the speaker directs the addressee’s attention to a particular topic and the proposition is interpreted as a question (as shown by the addressee’s response and the question mark in the Nepali version).

(25)

\[
\text{ma p} \text{heri h} \text{āsō th} \text{ām-na sak-dinā.}
\]

\[
\text{I again laughter stop-INF be.able.to-NPST.NEG.1SG ‘I burst into laughter again.’}
\]

\[
\text{‘āja ta timi b} \text{eskari nai bās-e-kā chau ni?’}
\]

\[
\text{today CEMPH you excessively EMPH laugh-PFV-NMLZ COP.EX.NPST.2SG AT lāhure ā-i-pug-e-ko cha.}
\]

\[
\text{soldier come-0-PFV-NMLZ COP.EX.NPST.3SG ‘The man [lit. soldier] I’d met on the train from Goa caught up with me a little later. “You’re laughing a lot today,” he said.’}
\]

\[
\text{‘tyassai, tyassai bundali-rah-e-ko cha,’}
\]

\[
\text{like.that.EMPH like.that.EMPH be.stirred-remain-PFV-NMLZ COP.NPST.3SG ma bhan-chu.}
\]

\[
\text{I say-NPST.1SG ‘The man [lit. soldier] I’d met on the train from Goa caught up with me a little later. “You’re laughing a lot today,” he said.’}
\]

\[
\text{‘tyassai, tyassai bundali-rah-e-ko cha,’}
\]

\[
\text{like.that.EMPH like.that.EMPH be.stirred-remain-PFV-NMLZ COP.NPST.3SG ma bhan-chu.}
\]

\[
\text{I say-NPST.1SG “Sorry,” I said. [lit. “I was stirred just like that, randomly,” I said’] (PC 157, 157)
\]

In addition to the post-verbal interrogative uses described above, \textit{ni} is also used in verbless interrogation.

\textbf{5.2.2 Interrogative Verbless Uses}

The verbless interrogative uses of \textit{ni} occur in partly elided clauses where some of the propositional content is retrievable from the previous context. By using \textit{ni}, the speaker redirects the addressee’s attention to a new discourse topic. Often \textit{ni} is used to shift attention from one person to
another, as in (26) and (27), but by using *ni* the speaker may also direct the addressee’s attention to a certain word in the previous context, as in (28).

(26) 

`kati din bas-chyau goā?’

*how many day stay-NPST.2SG.FEM.MGH Goa*

“How long are you staying in Goa?” I asked.

`aba kehi din, us-le bhan-i ‘tapāi ni?’`

*now some day 3SG-ERG say-PST.3SG.FEM you.HGH AT*

“A few more days,” she said. “And you?” (PC 20, 20)

(27) 

`hāmro ta skul-ai banda chha,’ us-le

*our CEMP school-EMPH closed COP.EX.NPST.3SG 3SG-ERG*

*bhan-i ‘timro ni?’

*say-PST.3SG.FEM yours AT*

[“Our school’s closed,” she said. “What about yours?”] (PC 147, 148)

(28) 

`timi merai plet-bāta khān-thyau?’

*you my.EMPH plate-from eat-PST.HAB.2SG*

‘Would you have preferred to eat from my plate?’

`āphnai kātā-le khewāuna saknuhunthena tapāi?’

*own.EMPH fork-ERG feed.INF be able to.PST.HIGH.HAB.NEG. you.HIGH*

[‘Couldn’t you have fed me with your own fork?’]

`’yaso gar-dā maile batār gar-e-ko hunthyo.

*like.that do-IPFV I.ERG hurry do-PIFV-NMLZ COP.PST.HAB.3SG*

[‘Had I done that, I would have been in a hurry.’]

`’ke-ko batār ni?’

*what-GEN hurry AT*

[‘In a hurry for what?’] (PC 58, 58)

The examples above discussed the declarative and interrogative uses of *ni*. The next subsection briefly describes the imperative uses.

### 5.3 Imperative Uses

The only documented imperative uses of *ni* I found are from Clark (1989), from which examples (29–31) are taken. When used with imperatives, *ni* “adds to the command a suggestion of a threat” (Clark 1989: 5). Clark (1989: 4) also describes *ni* in imperatives as “spoken with peremptory tone” (Clark 1989: 4). The uses of *ni* in (29–31), however, have been questioned by some Nepali
speakers in both Kathmandu and Sikkim, hence the question marks in the examples. One speaker from Sikkim considered (29) as infelicitous but said that (32), a more polite request formed with the infinitive suffix, could be used. There is probably some diachronic and regional variation especially in the imperative uses of *ni*.

(29)  
\[ ?bas-a \; ni \]
\[ \text{sit-IMP.MGH} \; AT \]
‘Sit down, I tell you.’ (Clark 1989: 3)

(30)  
\[ ?na-bas-a \; ni \]
\[ \text{NEG-sit-IMP.MGH} \; AT \]
‘Do not sit down, I tell you.’ (Clark 1989: 3)

(31)  
\[ ?mās\, bāna \; ni \]
\[ \text{meat make.IMP.MGH} \; AT \]
‘Mind you do the meat.’ (Clark 1989: 6)

(32)  
\[ bas-nu \; ni \]
\[ \text{sit-INF} \; AT \]
‘Sit down.’

The Nepali particle *ni* has been described above as an attention marker which brings a proposition or a new discourse topic (which may be a person to whom the clause with *ni* is addressed) to the forefront of the addressee’s attention. In declarative sentences, *ni* most frequently marks the propositional content of the sentence as attention-worthy for one reason or another (e.g. newsworthiness, counter-claim, emphatic agreement) but may also function deictically, as in (19). In interrogative sentences, the speaker uses *ni* to bring a new discourse topic to the forefront of the addressee’s attention. In imperative sentences, although Clark’s examples are contested, the added attention implied by *ni*, is interpreted as “peremptory tone” or as a “threat” (Clark 1989, 4, 5).

5.4 Optative and Exclamative Uses

In addition to the aforementioned declarative, interrogative and imperative uses, an anonymous referee of this article noted that *ni* may also occur in the following clauses, which may be termed optative (33) and exclamative (34):

(33)  
\[ \text{parsi} \; \text{samma-mā} \; \text{mero} \; \text{kām} \; \text{saki-yos} \; \text{ni!} \]
\[ \text{the.day.after.tomorrow} \; \text{until-LOC} \; \text{my} \; \text{work} \; \text{be.finished-3SG.OPT} \; \text{AT} \]
‘May my work be finished by the day after tomorrow!’

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Although the anonymous reviewer did not provide a context for (33) or (34), it is probably safe to assume that the use of \textit{ni} in (33) adds urgency to the wish, which may even be an indirect command. The two uses of \textit{ni} in (34), on the other hand, are exclamatives, which naturally call for an increased level of attention, underlining the association of \textit{ni} with attention.

6 Attention, Contrastive Focus and Mirativity

The description of \textit{ni} in this paper bears similarity to the concepts of contrastive focus and mirativity, which are briefly discussed here. Gundel and Fretheim (2004: 182) describe contrastive focus as the “speaker/writer’s intention to affect the addressee’s attention state”. This definition includes two essential characteristics that apply to \textit{ni}, attention and addressee-orientation. In Gundel and Fretheim’s (2004: 182) framework, however, (contrastive) focus is limited to call “attention to a constituent” within a clause. Nepali \textit{ni}, however, may also bring the whole clause/proposition, not just one constituent, to the forefront of the addressee’s attention.

Another concept used for describing phenomena similar to the uses of \textit{ni} is mirativity, a concept which DeLancey (1997) brought to the linguistic discussion table and which has been since been questioned (Lazard and Hill 2012) and redefined by various authors (e.g. Aikhenvald 2012, Hengeveld and Olbertz 2012). Whereas DeLancey defined mirativity as “information that is new or surprising to the speaker”, Aikhenvald (2012) and Hengeveld and Olbertz (2012) have extended the definition to include addressee-oriented mirativity in addition to speaker-oriented mirativity. According to Hengeveld and Olbertz (2012: 480), a mirative marker “characterizes a proposition as newsworthy, unexpected, or surprising” either to the speaker or to the hearer. Following Hengeveld and Olbertz’s modified definition, the exclusively addressee-oriented morpheme \textit{ni} could perhaps fall within the boundaries of mirativity. Most discussions on mirativity, however, have centered on speaker-oriented uses. Aikhenvald (2012: 439), for instance, although acknowledging both speaker and addressee-oriented (and also third person oriented) mirativity, gives examples only of speaker-oriented morphemes.

Nichols (2011: 280-282), however, labels the addressee-oriented Ingush morphemes \textit{hwuona}, postposed to declarative verbs, and \textit{hwaaat}, postposed to imperative verbs, as “second person mirative”, “second person” corresponding to “addressee-orientation” here. Example (35) reproduces one of Nichols’ (2011: 280) examples of the declarative second person mirative \textit{hwuona}.

\begin{verbatim}(35) Yz sou hwalxa jy hwuona. 3SG too early J.be.PRS 2SG/MIR ‘That’s too early!’ (Speaker knows this better than hearer does. Or e.g. hearer is in a position of authority and has announced an early meeting; speaker argues against the proposed time.) (Nichols 2011: 280)
\end{verbatim}

\footnote{The particle \textit{na}, which is difficult to name, is here simply called a particle.}
The contexts given for (32) after the gloss are very similar to contexts where the Nepali \textit{ni} could be used. Given the modified definition of mirativity and a precedent in Ingush (and perhaps in some other languages), there would seem to be a case for calling \textit{ni} an addressee-oriented mirative, alongside the Nepali speaker-oriented marker \textit{rahe-} (copula)/\textit{-echa} (other verbs), which has variously been called “mirative” (T. Peterson 2013: 10), “mediative” (Lazard 2001: 363), “mirative/result-inference” (Peterson 2000: 16) and “inferential” (Michailovsky 1996).

In my view, however, the term attention-worthiness, defined as “bringing something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention”, is descriptively a more useful term than mirativity for describing the Nepali \textit{ni}. The main reason is that mirativity is usually defined in terms of “overall knowledge structure” (DeLancey 1997: 33). This definition, however, does not work well for declarative examples such as (19) and (20) where the use of \textit{ni} is better seen as triggered by the speaker’s desire to direct the addressee’s attention to a certain individual rather than by the speaker considering his proposition as bringing some unexpected information to the addressee’s overall knowledge structure. For interrogative, topic-switching examples, an attention-centered definition is even more obviously better than the one based on the notion of overall knowledge structure. Other factors that recommend calling \textit{ni} something else than a mirative are that “mirative” as a term is opaque, and the literature so far has associated mirativity mainly with speaker-oriented uses.

While not lending itself to the existing definitions of mirativity, the Nepali attention marker \textit{ni} highlights the common ground between (contrastive) focus-like and mirative-like phenomena. Whereas attention is an integral part of defining focus, the concept of focus has been less often applied on the sentence-level. Mirativity, on the other hand, has been seen as a clause-level phenomenon but has not been associated with attention. Thus, the concept of “bringing something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention”, as illustrated by \textit{ni}, may prove helpful in understanding morphemes that have both contrastive focus-like uses and mirative-like uses. Examples of such morphemes in other languages are \textit{=qo} in Denjongke (Yliniemi 2016), \textit{-ka} in Tamang (Mazaudon 2003: 150) and \textit{mo} in Bih (Nguyen 2013: 147, 233).

7 Conclusion

This paper has shown that previous attempts at describing the Nepali particle \textit{ni} have been inadequate because they have not covered the full range of the uses of \textit{ni} or made adequate generalizations about these uses. Data from Narayan Wagle’s (2005) novel \textit{Palpasa café} and other sources show that \textit{ni} occurs in declarative, interrogative, imperative, optative and exclamative uses and that all these uses can be characterized as essentially “bringing something to the forefront of the addressee’s attention”. As shown in §6, the concept of attention may prove helpful in understanding the similarity between mirative-like and contrastive focus-like phenomena also in other languages.

\footnote{Japanese addressee-oriented marker \textit{yo} (see Davis 2011) is another marker bearing great resemblance to Nepali \textit{ni}.}

\footnote{Hengeveld and Olbertz (2012) seem to acquiesce with this part of DeLancey’s definition, because they do not touch it in their modified definition.}

\footnote{Mazaudon’s (2003) treatment of Tamang \textit{-ka} is an exception. According to Mazaudon (2003: 149–150), the “strong focus” marker \textit{-ka} functions both as a typical focus marker postponed to NPs and also as a post-verbal marker suggesting “that the assertion is globally contrary to expectancy, or to the wish of the speaker or the hearer”.}
ABBREVIATIONS

0 linker IMP imperative
1 first person INF infinitive
2 second person IPFV imperfactive
3 third person J gender agreement marker
AT attention marker LGH low grade honorific
CAUS causative LOC locative
CEMPH contrastive emphatic MGH middle grade honorific
CPTCP conjunctive participle MIR mirative
COMPL completive NEG negative
COP copula NEW newsworthiness
DAT dative NMLZ nominalizer
DUB dubitative NPST non-past
EMPH emphatic OPT optative
EQ equative PART particle
ERG ergative PFV perfactive
EX existential PL plural
EXCLAM exclamation PST past
FEM feminine PROG progressive
GEN genitive PRS present
HAB habitual RQ rhetorical question
HGH high grade honorific SG singular

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APPENDIX: THE OCCURRENCE OF ni IN PALPASA CAFÉ

This appendix list all the instances of ni (with context) in Palpasa café in the writer’s original Devanagari script followed by Bikash Sangruala’s free English translations from the English version of the novel. Some sentences with ni also have a more literal translation in square brackets. The examples appear in the order of occurrence in the book, with page references given to the Nepali and English versions respectively. As discussed 5.2 above, categorizing declarative and interrogative uses is not always straightforward. For the purposes of the appendix, the clauses marked with a question mark in original Nepali are categorized as interrogatives.

1. Declarative (11, 12)
   ‘मैले हिजो राति तिसो टेलिफोन डिपेनछु,’ मैले भनेँ।
   ‘I forgot to take your phone number yesterday.’

   ‘म कस्ती हुस् सु !’ उसले भनी- ‘सरी है !’
   ‘I’m a fool. I forgot to give it to you. I’m sorry.’

   ‘मैले पनि त मागिने नि ’
   ‘No need to be sorry. I didn’t ask for it.’

2. Declarative (17, 17)
   ‘म तपाईंलाई मेरो साथीहरुसँग परिचय गराउँछु,’ ऊ उिभन आँटी ।
   ‘I’d like to introduce you to my friends,’ she said, starting to get up.

   ‘कृपया, म यहाँ अरुसँग परिचत हुन चाहैँ।’
   ‘No,’ I said, ‘please don’t introduce me to anyone.’

   ‘मलाई त आफैँ निचनाउनुभयो नि ?’ उसले फेरि टुसुक्क बसदै भनी ।
   ‘But you just introduced yourself to me,’ she said.

3. Declarative (19, 19)
   ‘तपाईंका पेठिङ्गट म प्रभावित छु।’
   ‘I really like your paintings,’ she said.

   ‘मेरो पेठिङ्गटमा त्यस्तो के छ र ?’ मैले फेरि सोझिएँलेँ।
   ‘What do you see in them?’ I asked.

   ‘त्यसमा घरैँ कुरा छ, विप्लवक, पृष्ठभूमि र पात्रका आकारहरुलाई अभिव्यक्त गरेका र रहस्यमा मीठो ध्वनि छ,’
   ‘The dreams and desires of the people you paint.’

   ‘उसले भनी- ‘पात्रहारु कसरी मीठो ध्वनि बा खोश नुहुँदै?’
   ‘How do you choose your subjects?’

   ‘ई अहिले निर्देशीलाई नभेड़ नि ’
   ‘Just the way I met you.’

4. Interrogative (20, 20)
5. Declarative (20, 20)

'कित िदन बस् छ् यौ गोआ ?'

'How long are you staying in Goa?' I asked.

'अब स्वतन् तर् हूँ नै, तपाईं िन ?'

'A few more days,' she said. 'And you?'

'I leave for Kerala tomorrow.'

'ओह,' उसले आँखा सकार्ई- 'िचतर्कार-लेखकहरुलाई यही स् वतन् तर् िदन ।'

'Oh.' She raised her eyebrows. 'Artists must lead such free lives.'

'आफू स् वतन् तर् नहुनेले के स् वतन् ताको अभिव्यक्ति दिने घैरः'

'You have to be free to express yourself freely,' I said.

6. Declarative (33, 32)

7. Declarative (33, 33)

'मैले ठानेको िथएँ,' मैले भनें- 'अब हामर्ो भेट हुँदैन ।'

'I thought we'd never meet again,' I said.

'पृथ् वी सानो छ ।'

'It's a small world.'

'यो छ,' मैले भनें- 'बरू बाटामा कु नै दिन भेट हुन सकैँ ।'

'And round,' I joked, 'Our paths might’ve crossed some day.'

'बाटामा फिन ?' उसले भने- 'तपाईं िन, स्वतन् ताहरुलाई आएँ नी निर्माैस ।'

'Why do you put it so abstractly?' she asked. 'I came to your hotel, remember?'

'बाटो बिरेर ?'

'Maybe you just took the wrong path?'

'खोज् दै,' उसले भने।

'No, it was the way I chose to go,' she said.

'म छाक छु ।'

'I'm surprised.'

'अिन ?'

'Why?'

'तिनीलाई केले होनायो ?'

'Well, what brought you here today?'

'पुस् तकको साइनले।'

'The book.'

'भन्नाले ?'

'What do you mean?'

'अब भेट होनालाईनाला,' उसले भने- 'यो पुस् तकमा त तपाईंको सिग्नेचर चाहनु ।'

'I wasn't sure if we'd meet again and I wanted you to sign it.'
She put the book on the table in front of her.

‘त् यसो भए मेरो हस्ताक्षर लिन आएकी?’
I stared at her incredulously. ‘You mean you came to see me just for an autograph?’

‘कस्तो लाग् यो?’
‘What did you think?’

‘अिघ नै भनेको भए हुन् थ् यो िन।’
‘Why didn’t you tell me earlier?’ I snapped.

I asked the teenager, ‘Have you ever read of a yak climbing Everest with a man on its back?’

‘आजै सुन्दै छु,’ उसले भनी- ‘िगिनज बुकमा रेकडर् त गदᱺनौ।’

It’s the first time I’ve heard such a thing,’ she wrote back. ‘Shouldn’t it go in The Guinness Book of Records?’

‘िोल्दै छु।’

‘I’m thinking about it.’

‘आिन ितमीले संसारको टुप्पबाट के  देख्यौ िन?’

‘And what did you see from the top of the world?’

‘मीठो छ।’

‘It’s good.’

‘मनको सन्तोष हो सबै।’

‘You are just saying that to please me.’

‘िचया कस्तो रैछ?’

‘How’s the tea?’

‘२४००० मीटरको उचाईवाट के देख्यौ िन?’

‘And what did you see from the top of the world?’

‘मीठो छ।’

‘It’s perfect.’

‘निल्लो वातकल्ला कति छन् नि?’

‘How many children do you have?’

‘ए।’

‘Oh?’
‘तपाईंको निः?’
‘And you?’ I asked.

11. Interrogative (53, 53)
12. Declarative (53, 53)
एकपल्ट मैले वसारी बती कालको बिनेके टेलिभिजनमा देखाइकी थियो।
‘Once she filmed me and I saw myself on television.’
प्, तपाईलाई टेलिभिजनमा पनि देखाउँयो?
‘You were on television?’
‘हो, यस्रो जान्नै भन्नुहो। आफै बिचने छौँ, चुसाउँदै क्याँ!’
‘No, no. It’s something you put into something and a picture appears.’
मैले बुझ्नुै।
‘I understand.’
’यहाँ, उनले भन्नुः ‘बूढ्मान्छ, गन्नमा मात्र आईँदै।’
‘Carry on reading,’ she said. ‘I’m just prattling on.’
‘एकपल्ट राख्नुरू गरिदै दुर्भाग्य हजुरअमा, जिनलाई लाग्दै।’
‘On the contrary,’ I said, ‘what you say is interesting. I’m enjoying our conversation.’
‘जनलै निः’
She smiled. You’re just being polite.

13. Declarative (53, 54)
14. Interrogative (53, 54)
म उमेदमा ऊजसै थ्यो जस्तै लाग्दै।’
‘I think she’s like me when I was young.’
प्रत्येकमा देखिनुै।’
‘Well, she’s your granddaughter.’
‘बालीबेहोरा पनि खालीलाई वाग्रौ।’
‘It’s more than just her physical appearance. She even behaves the way I did.’
ए, मैले भन्नै- तपाईलाई सान्त्र भयो।
‘That must make you happy?’
‘हो निः’ उनले भनिनुः ‘बाउआमालाई आफिला फाँकी कि फाँकी भन्नु, र यै बन्द्रै भनेन अहिंसकी छौ।’
‘Of course,’ she said. ‘Her parents keep pressuring her to go back to America [sic] but she’s determined to stay here.’
‘पत्नी मायालु हजुरअमालाई कमरी छाढ़ेर जानै निः?’
‘How could she leave a grandmother like you?’

15. Declarative (55, 55)
‘तपाईं आफै वोरिंस्कने दुर्भाग्य, मैले भन्नै- किन दर मानुषहरू? ’
I insisted. ‘But you yourself are like a goddess, so what are you afraid of?’
'तिम्लाई था' छ ? 'उनले भनिन्- 'मेरो नाम देवी हो नि !' 'Do you know something? My name is actually 'Devi'.'

16. Declarative (57, 58)
'हजुरआमा तपाईंको फ्यान हुनुभएछ,' उसले भनी।
'My grandma's one of your admirers,' she said.
'मेरो चित्र देख्नुभयो र ?'
'Why? Has she seen my paintings?'
'नचाइदनुभयो न।'
'No. Because you made her dance.'

17. Declarative (57, 58)
'आज ब्रत हो ?'
'Are you fasting today?' I asked.
'कसरी खाने हो भनेर तपाईंलाई हेिररहेकी।
'I'm watching you in order to learn how to eat.'
'चित्रो भयो न।'
'The food's getting cold.'

18. Interrogative (58, 58)
'तिमी मेरे घ्याएने खान्यौ ?'
'Would you have preferred to eat from my plate?'
'आफैँ काँटाले खुवाउन सक्नुहुने तपाईं र ?'
'Would you have dared to feed me with your fork.'
'व्यस्तो गर्दा मैने हुतार गरेको हयो।'
'It's a bit early for that, isn't it.'
'के को हतार न।'
'Early for what?'

19. Declarative (65, 65)
'अनि तिमी प्रेमिका कहैं बसेर गाउँछैं त ?'
'Where would your girlfriend sit to sing?' I asked.
'कृ निजना आउँिदन, उसको फोटो मात्र आउँछ। यो बुढा मह होइन न।' उसले भन् 'सोलो हो।'
'She won't be in it. We're just going to use her photo. It's a solo, after all, not a duet.'

20. Declarative (66, 66)
'फ्लुलाई स्नातक मिल्नु लागेकी थिं, उसलाई महाँन म गए। 'पदौल, पदौल,' उसले नखरा पारी- 'म आफि सभर गरिप्तान्द्र न।'
'I helped Phoolan put snacks on a few trays, though she kept insisting, 'No, no, I can manage.'
21. Declarative (66, 66)
"पप सङको अल्बम हो?
'Is it an album of pop songs?'
टाइटलबाटै थाहा हुनछ नि,' मैले भनौ।
'The title says it all,' I said.

22. Declarative (69, 69)

23. Declarative (69, 69)
'यस के टीले निमलाई पर्भाइवत गरेर ठीकै गरी,' रूपक जानुन् टोपिलए- 'ग्यालरी आज अक्षर भएको छ। मलाई पनि लाग्छ, नी पेटिङ्गले न्याय पाएका छन्।'
'She's been a good influence on you,' Rupak said. 'There's a new atmosphere in the gallery. The walls do justice to your paintings at last.'

24. Interrogative (70, 70)
'पेिन्टङलाई िभᱫाले पनि न्याय िदन्छ ?' बुझर्ुक पर्श् न गयः।
'Can walls do justice to art?' Kishore asked.

25. Interrogative (80, 79)
'अचेल इमेल गनुर्भएको छैन नि?' भनेर उनले मलाई घोच्न खोजे। म किᱫ न उनलाई इमेल गिररहनुजस्तो!
'You are not e-mailing anymore,' he said, as though I'd been so close to him that we exchanged e-mails every day.

26. Declarative (91, 89)
'धनीमानी, ठुलाठालु, शोषक-सामन्ती, बुजुर्वाहारूलाई के छैन? 'उसले भन्यो- 'कास्तो उपचार, कास्तो िशक्षा, कस्तो मनोरᱫन, कस्तो गाडी, कस्तो सुिवधा चाहियो यहा जुटाउन सक्छन् तर भीरमौरी जस्तो भीरपहराको दाजुभाइलाई के छ?
'The rich, the powerful, the exploiters and the bourgeoisie have everything,' Siddhartha continued. 'They can afford any health treatment they choose, all the education they want and any entertainment they like. They drive expensive cars and indulge themselves in luxury. But what do we have?'
'Anyone can have those things if they become rich,' the old man argued. 'It's only because we're poor that we don't have them.'

27. Interrogative (92, 90)
28. Interrogative (92, 90)
‘तँ जान्छेस् त िददी ?’ भाइ पल्लो बोटबाट सोध्छ ।
I heard the girl’s brother ask, 'Will you go, Didi?'
‘बै, बा के महुएलछ ?’ ऊ जवाब दिन्छे ।
'T'll do whatever Ba says,' she replied.
‘कहिए आउँछेस् नि ?
'If you did go, when would you come back?'
मलाई के था ?'
'How should I know?'
‘दमकित्याचमा त बिदा देला नि ?
'Do they give holidays for Dashain and Tihar?'

29. Declarative (93, 91)
‘ल पहिलु नयनं भार जान लाग्नको हो र ?
'Is that why you're going, because you don’t have to study?'
ौला नि,' ऊ भन्छे ।
'May be.'

30. Declarative (95, 93)
’पुल्ला बेन्रू मै जाउँला भोिल,’ बुढाले भने- 'तँ िहँड्नेलाई किन सास्ती ?
Her father said, 'Leave them. Don't go to the market today. I'll sell the oranges tomorrow.'
बेल्नास्तम परकिउँला नि,' उल्लेन भन्यो ।
'But I can sell them and be back by evening,' she said.

31. Interrogative (108, 107)
32. Interrogative (108, 107)
‘किवता कस्तो लाग्यो ?’ मैले सोधेँ ।
'I asked, 'Do you like the poem?''
‘रामर्ो छ,’ उल्लेन भने- 'तापि लाई जसको कापीबाट सानुर्भा’को नि ?'
'It's good. Which book did you copy it from?' he asked.
'आफैलै लेख्यो छ।'
'I wrote it myself.'
'कस्को किन्ना नि ?'
He looked at me quizzically. 'But who gave you the ideas to put in it?'
As I approached, I saw that the left lens was cracked. I remembered that his left eye had been injured when a leopard had attacked him.

He even developed his own style of story-telling. His Malaya story invariably began: ‘I got into position with my rifle.’ And his story about the leopard always started: ‘The bastard was hiding in a bush.’

‘That makes me happy. It’s like my own son has come back.’

‘Your son’s an intelligent boy,’ Kaakaa said to my father. ‘Send him to a good school, at least to the Aanp Peebal School in Gorkha or the Gandaki Boarding School in Pokhara.’

‘He’ll study in the village,’ my father said. ‘If he works hard, he’ll do well anywhere.’

‘Are you going already?’ I asked.

‘We’re taking shelter in the next village tonight,’ she said, ‘I hope we’ll meet again, Dai.’

‘Your friends are brave,’ I said to the environmentalist. ‘The girl who’s leading us…’

‘The one in uniform?’ he asked.

‘Yes, she’s a friend of a girl from my village.’
40. Interrogative (123, 123)

‘यहाँ गाजसका मान्छे आएका छन्,’ उनले भने- ‘गाउँ जनसरकार भनेको बुझ्नुभयो होला ति?’

Some representatives of the People’s Government have turned up. You do understand what the People’s Government is, don’t you?’

41. Interrogative (126, 127)

42. Declarative (126, 127)

‘ियनका बुढा इन्डया गा’छन । एक्लै भएर पिन िनन्याउिरएकी हुन् ।’

‘Her husband’s in India. She’s got no one to turn to.’

43. Declarative (127, 127)

44. Declarative (127, 127)

45. Declarative (127, 128)

46. Declarative (127, 128)

‘साँझ पानुर्अिघ सदरमुकाम पुग्ने हो भने,’ उसले भन्यो- ‘अिल लम्कनुपलार् तपाईं ।’

‘If you want to reach the district headquarters before dark, you’ll have to hurry,’ he said.

‘एक लाख?’

‘A hundred thousand rupees?’

‘If not that much, then whatever she can afford.’

‘मेरो बूढा कमाउन गा’को ियनैको भुँडी भनर् हो ?’

‘If I did, I wouldn’t be able to reach the district headquarters before dark.’

I thanked him.

‘बूढा आए’िस ितनᱷ भाका गर भनेका छन् ,' उसले भन्यो ।

‘What do her neighbours advise her to do?’ I asked him.

‘बूढा आए’िस ितनᱷ भाका गर भनेका छन् ,' उसले भन्यो ।

‘They’ve told her to promise to pay the money when her husband gets back.’

‘एउटा छोरा त जािगरे छँदै छ िन,’ िक्षोरले भन्यो ।

At this, the woman thundered, ‘Did my husband go to work in India just to feed these greedy pigs?’

‘एउटा छोरा त जािगरे छँदै छ िन,’ िक्षोरले भन्यो ।

The boy tried to reason with her. ‘You also have a son who’s earning money.’

‘यतै बसे भैहाल्छ िन,’ उसाले भन्यो ।

‘You could stay here tonight.’

‘हुन्छ भाइ, धन्यवाद,’ मैले भनेँ ।

‘Hey, you didn’t draw me,’ he said.

If I did, I wouldn’t be able to reach the district headquarters before dark.’

‘पत्र बने मेराहल्द नि,’ उसले भन्यो ।

‘You could stay here tonight.’

‘यतै बसे भैहाल्छ िन,’ उसाले भन्यो ।

‘You could stay here tonight.’

‘राति म सुनेको नयनो दोकामा कलेके एउटा जुना राखिदियो भने ?’ मैले भनेँ- ‘मै जहान्न पसूयाल्छ ।’

‘But what if someone puts a shoe in front of the house where I stay?’ I asked
'Visitors don’t have to go,' he said. 'The worst that could happen would be that someone would steal your shoes.'

'And?'

'One or two shoes?'

'Which shoes?' he asked. 'Would delivering mail to two houses be a problem?'

'Why only one? The thief would need both.'

'Yes, yes. One shoe,' he said, 'but what happened to the other shoe?'

'So that he can deliver messages to two houses?' We parted ways.

47. Declarative (135, 138)

'These shoes remind me of my son,' Miit Ba said, turning away from me… (description of situation)

'Miit Ba,' I said. 'I’m your son too.'

48. Interrogative (138, 140)

'I asked if he could make dinner for me, hoping I could stay there for the night. '

'No, thanks.'

'Yoghurt?'

'I didn’t have a spare bed,' he said.

49. Interrogative (138, 140)

'He asked, ‘Do you want some bananas?’

‘No, thanks.’

‘Yoghurt?’

‘No.’

‘You loved bananas and Yoghurt as a boy,’ he said. ‘You used to eat lots of it at Resham’s house. Do you remember how we used to tease you?’

50. Interrogative (139, 141)

51. Interrogative (138, 141)

‘I’m sure you have to pay tax?’ I asked.
'टैकस लिन्छन् ,' उनले भने- 'यो के भन्छ िन...जनसकार्र उठाउँदै आउँछ ।'

'Yes. The people of... what do you call it? The People's Government. They collect taxes.'

52. Declarative idiom होᱫ िन (144, 146)
53 Interrogative (144, 146)
कस्ती रै'छु त ?'

'What do I look like?'

‘s्याउजस्तन्ती '

‘An apple.’

‘मान्चे पनि कैँ’ िन्जस्तो हुन्छ त बुझा !' उसले भनी।

‘Can a person look like an apple, uncle?’

‘त्यस्तै रामर्ो भनेको क्या ।'

‘I just mean you're cute.’

‘s्याउ पनि कैँ’ िन्जस्तो हुन्छ त ? ' उसले भनी- 'जे पायो स्याउजस्ति।'

‘Nonsense,’ she said, ‘Apples aren’t cute.’

म ससह्य भर्रै, ‘जो पायो न्तृही’ सुनेर। पल्पसालाई सेम्झिएर, उसके शेपो। कस्तो खराम्ब्रै उसले भाकामा यस फुझीले मलाई पल्पसा सम्जाउँदै। म झन् रोमािᲱत भररै।

I was taken aback for a moment. Hearing the word 'nonsense' made me think of Palpasa. It cheered me up.

‘ए होᱫ िन, हिग ?' मैले भनेँ- स्याउ त मीठो पो हुन्छ ।'

‘You are right,’ I said. ‘Apples can be tasty but not cute.’

‘मेरो नाकबाट िसँगान आउँछ,' उसले भनी। म झरीमरी होँसी तर मनमान। उसलाई चिन्छोल्नु भए। मानो धीविनी चराजस्ती वासीका प्रजाबाट कोँडा लिन्छु खोजिरहेकी ह र मलाई अवस्थापनहरैकी ह। म उसलो प्रक सुम्ब्रि छान्छु, उसका अीला चुलचुल-चुलचुल गढ़।

The little girl had a runny nose. The snot was running down to her upper lip. She tried to sniff it back up, still intent on picking the burrs out of her dress.

‘कोँडा कसरी लाग्यो िन ?'

‘How did your dress get so many thorns?' I asked.

54. Declarative idiom होᱫ िन (144, 146)
तिमो नाम के हो ?' मैले सोयें।

‘What’s your name?’ I asked.

‘नानू,' उसले भनी तर मेरो नाम मािचिन।

‘Nanu,’ she said.

‘रामो नाम रहेछ।' उसले भनी।

‘That's a pretty name,' I said.

‘नाम पनि कैँ रामो हुन्छ ?' उसले फेरेर भनी- ‘कस्तो जे पायो स्याउजस्ति।'

‘Nonsense. Names can't be pretty,’ she said.

‘ए, होᱫ िन, हिग ?' मैले भनेन- ‘फूल पो रामो हुन्छ।'

‘I'm sorry. You're right. Flowers can be pretty, not names.’
Yliniemi: Nepali attention marker निः

55. Declarative (145, 147)
56. Declarative (145, 147)

"काँडा कस्तो नजाती,' मैले भने- 'यस्तो के टाके टीलाई पिन लाग्ने !'

Once again, I burst into laughter. 'Such naughty burrs,' I said, 'troubling a little girl!'

'Burr don't have eyes,' she said. 'They don't know whose clothes they're sticking to.'

मान्छेको त हुन्छ िन,' मैले भने- 'हेनुर्पदᱺन ?'

'But people have eyes,' I said. 'Why didn't you use your eyes when you went into the bushes?'

मेरो आँखा सानो छ नि न।'

'My eyes are too small.'

57. Declarative (146, 147)
58. Declarative idiom होेट नि (147, 147)
59. Declarative (147, 148)
60. Interrogative (147, 148)
61. Declarative (147, 148)

तिमी बाल्को ?

'Would you like one?'

'नाई, म त दिनको एक कोसो मात्र बानान्,' उसले भनी-'बिहानै आफ्नो भाग खाइसकेँ।'

'I eat only one banana a day,' she said, 'and I ate one this morning.'

'आज एउटा थप खाऊ न त,' मैले भने र सम्यक तिन्का लागाम।

'Why don't you have one more today?' I said, opening my rucksack.

'फेरि तिमी पति मेरो केरा बाढियने हो कि ?' उसले सो_धी।

[no translation in the novel]

म माउँदै,' मैले भने- 'तिमी मितनीलाई चािहिन्न नि, ह्रमि ?'

'And here's one for your miitini as well.'

मैले एउटा निकाजि दिनु। उसले बोका निकाजि अनि कप्पा खाईँ।

I gave her two bananas. She peeled one and ate it.

'गुलियो रहेछ,' उसले भनीँ।

'It's sweet,' she said.

'तिमी हालको छ।'

'That's because I put sugar in it.'

'हुन्छ तुडा।' उसले मनाउँ हुक्काइँ-'जे पायो ल्यो।'

'You are silly.'

'अनि करमि गुलियो हुन्छ न ?'

'How else could it taste so sweet?'

'ए होेट नि ह्रमि ?' उ दो_ब्राइन ई।

'Oh,' she said confused.
‘घारीिभतर्ै िचनी िफटेर हाल्छ क्या !’
‘They sprinkle sugar on the banana fields. Don’t you know that?’
‘हुन्छ, बुढा !’
She smiled. ‘I don’t believe you.’
‘होइन, होइन, ितमीलाई त्यस्तै भिनिदएको,’ मैले कान समात्दै भनेँ ।
‘You are right. I’m only kidding,’ I said.
‘अिन गुिलयो कसरी पस्छ त ?’ उसले मलाई लपेटी ।
‘But why do bananas taste sweet?’ she asked, growing serious.
‘तिमी खुल जानुपछर्, पढौपछर्, घेरे दुरा थाहा हुन्छ,’ मैले भने ।
‘Go to school. You’ll learn things like that.’
‘तिम्नै पहेली ?’ उसले मलाई लपेटी ।
‘Did you go to school?’
‘पढौ।’
‘Yes.’
‘भब संकेती लि त !’ उसले मलाई लपेटी ।
‘But you don’t know the answer to that question.’
‘कु नै फल गुिलयो, कु नै अथिनानु, कु नै टरी, कु नै बेस्त्राको हुन्छ, हिग ?’ मैले भनेअनेक पनि अनेक परी हुन्छ। यो सबै बुझ्न पढौपछर् क्या !’
‘Some fruits are sweet, some are sour and others don’t have much taste,’ I said. ‘And even the sweet ones have different flavours. If you go to school, you’ll learn lots of different things.’
‘हामर्ो त स्कु लै बन्द छ,’ उसले भनी- ‘ितमर्ो नौ ?’
‘Our school’s closed,’ she said. ‘Is yours open?’
हामी हिङ्गिरेकामा भिमा। उ मेरो औँकह समालै मम्मा भिङ्गिरेकामा हिङ्गिरेकामा भिमा। अको हाम व उसले कें टा दुकाएकी थिइ।
We started walking together. She took my hand. In the other, she held the banana for her miitini.
‘Do you know what?’ she said. ‘I was born today.’

62. Declarative (148, 149)
63. Declarative (148, 149)
64. Declarative (148, 149)

‘म त एक्लै िहँडेको !’
‘They are not my friends.’ [lit. ‘I’m travelling alone.’]
‘ए मज्जा भो,’ उसले भनी- ‘िव्यमो भए मेरी मितिनीको घर जाने है न?’
‘Good,’ she said. ‘Then you can come with me to my miitini’s house.
‘टाढा छ कि ?’
[no translation in the novel, ‘Is it far away?’]
‘आज नी जब्रे नि !’ उसले भनी ।
‘You can stay there tonight.’
I was surprised by her invitation.

‘करोको परमा...’, मले गाहरौ मान्दै भनें।

‘Stay in a stranger’s house?’ I asked.

‘म मीटबासँग भन्छु मन्दौ,’ उसले भनी। मलाई सन्तुलन बिहि गयो।

‘I’ll ask my MiitBa,’ she said.

के मन्छ्यौ?

_Thorn pierced my heart._ ‘What will you tell him,’ I asked.

‘तिमी पति मस्त काको भनेर।’

‘That you’ve come with me.’

‘म को हो भनेर मीटबाले सोध्यो भने?’

‘What if he asks you who I am?’

‘बाटोमा मेंटेको मन्दौ।’

‘I’ll tell him I met you on the way.’

‘मासुभएन भने?’

‘Well, what if he says no?’

‘तिमीसँग बेटा छ भन्न,’ उसले भनी- ‘लै वेडौ न।’

‘We’ll give him the rest of your bananas.’

65. Declarative (157, 157)

म फे ऽ ढो सिक्दनँ।

_I burst into laughter again._

‘आज त तिमी बेस्करी नै हाँसेका छौ मन्छ्यौ?’ लाहुरे आइपुगेको छ।

_The man I’d met on the train from Goa caught up with me a little later. You’re laughing a lot today,’ he said._

‘त्यस्सै, त्यस्सै हुँदैन भने।’

‘Sorry,’ I said.

66. Declarative (175, 176)

Maoists want the artist, who is the narrator of the story, to draw a picture of the Chairman Mao. They pull out the chairman’s picture and show it to the artist.

‘यो धिमलो छ,’ मैले भन्न।

‘That’s too blurry,’ I said.

‘तपाईंको छिन सफा त हुँदैन भन्न।’

_He said, ‘Your sketches aren’t any cleaner.’_

67. Declarative (176, 176-177)

मैले त्यो कागज उनलाई िदएँ। ितनले हेिरन् र मस्त हाँसन्।

_I gave the woman the drawing. She looked at it and laughed._
'The nose is twisted!' she said. 'It looks like him but the nose is twisted.'

I overheard a discussion between two young men in a corner and worried they were talking about Siddhartha. My heart pounded.

'Where are you headed?' I asked one of them.

'I came like a flower in the spring,' she said, 'and the next season, you were gone.'

And in the next season, I came back,' I said.

'Why should anyone tell me whom I should or shouldn’t talk to?'

'My advice to you is to answer their questions with a smile. Tell them you don’t want to stay in America, that you like Nepal. Say, for you, Nepal’s just as good as America and, besides, you have to come back here to work.'

'That’s what I told them, in my interview for a Schengen visa,' He said.
73. Declarative (210, 209)

‘तिरो शब्दले मलाई बेलुन बनाए, म उड्दै छु।’

[no translation in the English novel ’Your words have made me fly like a balloon.’]

‘के मेरो शब्द हावा हुन्?’

’Soo, are my words air?’

‘मैले त्यसो भन?‘

’Did I say so?’

‘बेलुन उडाउन त हावा भनुर्पछर्नु पर्दै?’

’But I’m not flattering you,’ I said. [lit. ’Well, in order to fly a balloon needs to be filled with air.’]

74. Declarative (228, 224)

‘उनीहरूले माछुर् त भनेक तथएनन्, नभनेको कु रा गर्दु हुँदैन बात्, बुहारीले बिराडो, उनले फैसला सम्बन्ध भनेर पुकारा पनि गरिः’ उनले भिनन् - ‘तर म आफिस परवाह गर्ने नहुँदै, डर त लाग्ने भनिएर पिन गरी बैसर्।’

‘At least they didn’t sentence me to death! I won’t lie to you, my son. My daughter-in-law realized she’d been wrong and asked them to change the verdict. But, finally, I left my own volition. I was too scared to stay. Who isn’t scared of them?’

75. Declarative (237, 231)

The narrator of the novel wants to include details of his friend's love life in the novel that he is planning to write. The friend is reluctant and responds:

‘मेरो लभ सावर्जिनक भयो भने अरू के टी छेवै नपलार्नु पर्दै!’

’If you make my love life public, no woman will ever come near me.’