

English to *Hinglish*: An Odyssey of Metamorphosis for the Indians

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Abstract: The world is moving and changing in a rapid pace. English Language which is the backbone of all knowledge transfer is seeing a metamorphosis of need, usage and adaptability among its multicultural users. English which started as the language of expression, Renaissance has finally melted down to the language of day to day interaction and scientific vigour and temper. It has become more pragmatic, handy and crisp in the dynamic cultural arena and has suffused its presence in all countries. This paper traces and analyses the diachronic journey of this language from Chaucerean times to the modern times and how it has been modified and accepted in India as “Hinglish”. It studies and gives interesting examples and statistics regarding the typical idiosyncrasies of the language as used in India and also provides some suggestions for improvement in the Indian context, as it has become the language of not only academia but also science and technology in the form of EST for all engineering and technical graduates. Many often we need to minimise this influence on our students and technocrats so that they fair quite well and make them understood and distinguished in the world outside.

Index Terms: English; *Hinglish*; Code switching;;Code mixing;;Indian English; EST.

1. INTRODUCTION

“English”, The Lingua Franca, the language of the elite, the powerful, the influential, the Renaissance, the zeitgeist, milieu, and the nature has been dominating and serving as the link language since the Age of “Chaucer” in the entire world. It has penetrated its tentacles into every domain of life and has undergone tremendous metamorphosis since its inception. It began its journey as the language of scholastic learning then paving its way through metaphysics, naturalism, humanism, expressionism, surrealism, feminism and finally has melted down to the language of everyday colloquial usage and practice.

The earlier authors were not only students of literature and society, but prophets of the future, the monitors and the propagandists, the preachers the didactic moralists. The author was a surgeon on a merchant ship, who used to undertake journey’s to imaginary countries. Renaissance literature was a rediscovery of thinking of others. It has a non- recognition of boundaries of all kinds- in life, cultural boundaries and hierarchies which ensure discipline. It is undergoing hybridisation: mixing up old available ones to new. Today’s English is highly technical and communicative and serves as an integral part of all technical and engineering branches, in the form of English for Science and technology.

2. CONCEPT OF HINGLISH

English has the beauty of borrowing the skeleton heavily from others and giving its own blood and flesh to it. Indians are also contributing tremendously

mankind, a period of great illumination in life of humanity. It was a revival of the cult of beauty: the beauty of woman, beauty of nature, beauty of art and literature. But today’s English is an all round realism, which dissociates itself from the romantic extravagances, grotesquery and a wanton disregard of unravished actuality. It’s a dispassionate, pragmatic and rational enquiry and experimentation and not a simple adherence to sane principles and rules. It keeps aside the cow beds of scholastic philosophy and is a dangerous departure from artistic standards and aesthetic pleasure.

The paradigm shifted from author oriented, to text oriented and finally reader or listener oriented and finally melted today into crisp English, capsulated and in the form of number of suggestive or disturbing ideas often compressed into a single phrase, that fertilises the

to this endeavour. Indian English, popularly called as *Hinglish* has helped a lot in the evolution of English. In the words of Jeremy Butterfield, “Already, we probably can’t get through the day without using several words derived from Indian languages. In the long run we can expect *Hinglish* to influence English in many fields, in the same way that Latin and French have over several centuries.”

Hinglish has left its impression and reflection in the latest edition of OED, considered as the world’s favourite word store. The new collection of linguistic twisters for western people include “bindaas(cool) ,tamasha(create a scene), mehndi (colour),

desi(local),filmi(dramatic), aunty-ji, uncle-ji, yaar(friend), roti(bread), gora(white)" etc. Many words of daily use in English are of Indian Origin including words like "shampoo, bangle, bunglalow, jungle, mantra, pundit and cot". Collins took the process further other words include "badmaash (bad person), change (fine), machi chips etc. The steady growth of Indian English which finds expression in linguistic variety with its own grammatical, lexical phonological features. In adapting to local cultural norm, Indian English has developed its own varietal characteristics; through the interaction of Indian

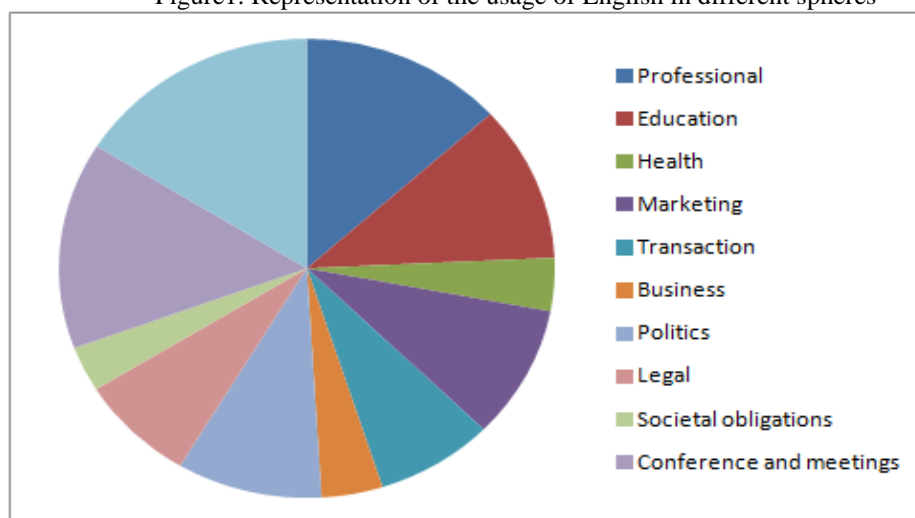
Languages, and social behaviours with those of English. This essentially involves the one hand adaptations of existing features of British and on the other, the use of transferred Mother Tongue items where British lack the scope to express a particular concept or is deficient.

A Survey was conducted to study the percentage of Usage of English for different Purposes among the various strata's of people in India:

Table 1.The Indian usage of English in different spheres.

Domain	% of Usage
Professional	75.3
Education	62.1
Health	21.1
Marketing	52.9
Transaction	43.7
Business	22.7
Politics	53.9
Legal	43.2
Societal obligations	18
Conference and meetings	82.2
Corporate life	91.2

Figure1. Representation of the usage of English in different spheres



3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

From the above table and representation it is showcased that English is widely used and adapted in almost all walks of life. The highest edge goes to the corporate sector with 91.2% denoting the popularity and necessity of the language for the Indian technocrats and managerial who work in a dynamic

multilingual and multicultural background. They have to interact globally, for which their speech and accent

shouldn't be much deviant from the standard British pronunciation. The language is used in 82.2% for inter and intra class, business and cultural meetings. It's used the minimal for societal obligation (18%), greetings, small talks etc because a lot of code

switching and mixing is inter related to it. But more or less it has disseminated its influence in all walks and spheres of life of Indians.

4. SOME TYPICAL ENGLISH USAGE OF INDIANS

4.1. Code switching and Code mixing:

A: Good Evening.

B: Very Good Evening.

A: "Kya khabar aur Haal hain jee?" (How are you and what's the news?)

B: I am good, "aap kaise hain"? (I am good, how are you?)

4.2. Inappropriate Tag Questions:

They did it, no?

He is here, isn't it?

She closed the door, did she?

4.3. Unnecessary politeness formula:

Kindly please advise me

I invite your kind attention.

4.4. Use of the word "ki" (Hindi) to mean , loosely that such as it " what I mean ki we should adopt this methodology"

4.5. Referring to elders, strangers or anyone meriting respect as "jee/ji(suffix) as in (please call a taxi for gupta-ji)

A newly arrived immigrant from India would try to speak "chaste English" with people he would meet. Ask their "good name" and how many "issues" they have. They cannot meet his "better half" because she is having "a head bath". He is not a busy body today because he is "oiling his boss"...

4.6. Pronunciation guided spellings ends up in statements like:

"Unauthorised cars will be toed (towed)

No Pats (pets) allowed in park.

Use of likar (liquor) prohibited.

Rool (Roll) and testy (tasty) chikan(chicken) available.

Frout (fruit) Juice available here.

Verity (variety) store.

4.7. Use of imaginary Rhyming words:

I would like to have some ice cream-vice cream.

He maintains a very hi-fi lifestyle.

4.8. Inappropriate and imaginary collocation:

Match+box= Mathchbox

Bombay+wallah= Bombay wallah

Lathi+Charge=Lathicharge

4.9. Progressive Tense in State verbs:

I am liking it very much.

I am understanding your point of view.

4.10. Use of Idioms:

What is your good name?

Instead of what is your name?

- Use of plurals ladies for a single lady or woman of respect as in "There was a ladies at the phone"
- Use of "I can able to cook" instead of "I can cook" (grammatical error in Andhra Pradesh).
- Many speakers do not differentiate between the vowel sounds/e/ (as in dress) and /æ/(as in trap), therefore "bad" is pronounced as "bed", as "tax" as "tex".
- The diphthong /ei/ and /au/is pronounced as /e/, ans/o/ respectively for example/ keik/ is pronounced as /kek/, and /naut/ is pronounced as /note/.
- "Van" is pronounced as "bhan", "fan" as "phan".
- "V" and "w" in BRP are both pronounced somewhat similar to "w". E.g. "vine"; "wine" pronounced similar to "wine", where as "vet", "wet", and "bet" are all pronounced as "bet".

5. REASONS FOR INDIAN VARIETIES OF ENGLISH (IVE)

5.1. Social/ Cultural: Most of the words and usage of Indian words accounts for the typical socio cultural ways and features of Indian life, which does not have relevance in English speaking countries.

Example: "He's so angry with them he's threatening to have them shoe beaten". The significance of shoe-beaten would be entirely lost on most BS speakers.

5.2. Register: A technical term in linguistics refers to specialised language in particular professions, jobs or areas of human activity.

Example: "cover" is a special will in BS, it is widely used to mean envelope in IVE

5.3. Idiom: these items describe differences between the two varieties in respect of idioms, set phrases and figurative expressions.

Example: IVE-"He's always had a soft corner for her"

BS-"He's always had a soft spot for her"

5.4. Neologism: Indian users of English have been very productive in creating new English words which are generally unknown to BS.

Example: batch-mate, delink.

5.5. Loan Words: Hundred of words from Indian Languages especially Hindi/Urdu are used by IVE

Example: *lathi, bandh, lakh, roti.*

5.6. Collocation: A term which refers to the way in which certain words tend to be found in company of the others.

Example: In IVE- it was alleged that the Police has been awarded bribe by the gamblers- the collocation of verb- “award” and noun “bribe” would be unlikely in British.

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

In a scenario where Indian technocrats, academicians are contributing their every bit for up gradation, some measures can be of use to them where they don't find themselves in a subservient position in worldly affairs.

- Proper and correct learning of the Language
- Proper pronunciation and stressing of the language
- Voice and accent training
- Encouraging all students to interact in English in real life situations
- Meaning and sense to be given paramount importance and not grammar
- Proper usage of diction
- Rigorous drill at school level
- Appropriate code switching and code mixing.
- Erroneous learning to be unlearned and reinforce proper learning.

7. CONCLUSION

Keeping aside all these idiosyncrasies, peculiarities, problems and difficulties, it could be claimed that the peculiarities of usage do not prevent English to be used by a number of Indians from attaining a high degree of effectiveness and accuracy. Indeed it may be said that of all the foreigners who have learnt English, Indians have turned the corner are most successful. The best sellers such as “God of Small things”, “A suitable Boy”, “Five point someone”, The White Tiger, “Two States”, “Train to Pakistan”, “The Namesake” are the brain creation of these Indians.

A living Language is like an organism, it experiences abolition and assimilation of elements that constitute it. A dynamic language like English grows, evolves and changes more rapidly like a language that is in a more torpid situation. Therefore if one thinks about outsourcing work to India, one need not have to be scared about “Indian English”, in the world of Competitive market and quality writing, it does not exist...

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