

Hinglishisation of English: Hinglish, The Language of 21st Century

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Sociolinguistics is one of the central branches of modern linguistics which deals with the place of language in human societies and used to describe the connection between social behavior and the language. It examines the interplay of language and society, with language as the starting point. It is the descriptive study of the effect of all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used. Variation is the key concept, applied to language itself and to its use. It studies how language varieties differ between groups separated by certain social variables, e.g., ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, etc. The basic premise of sociolinguistics is that language is variable and changing. As a result, language is not homogeneous. It studies language in its social context, and analyses the actual language use by different speakers in order to explain language variation and language change. Contact is an important concept in sociolinguistics - social contact and language contact. Domination of one language is not a thing of today. All languages have developed through contact and mixing with other languages. Hindi and English are themselves examples of languages that have grown out of massive admixture through contact. Language change spreads through networks of people who talk with one another. Contact between languages brings about variation and change. Situations of language contact are usually socially complex, making them of interest to sociolinguists. Bilingualism or multilingualism is another response to language contact. Sociolinguistics investigates language attitudes on different levels of interpersonal communication: local and global. Language use and language variation affects every language user in a unique way. In the present communication-based society, no natural language seems to have been left untouched by the trends of code-mixing. For different communicative purposes, a language uses linguistic codes from other languages. This gives rise to a mixed language which is

neither totally the host language nor the foreign language. If we don't add the *tadka* (seasoning) of our own linguistic mix, the curry wouldn't be spicy enough. Here linguistic purity is not very much considered. While reviewing the book Balwinder Kaur says, 'all present-day languages have evolved from old ones and all languages are born and thrive on hybridisation'. (The Tribune, 2011) G.J.V Prasad cites his own childhood in Delhi as an example where the rainbow of Indian languages blended beautifully and communication took priority over lingual purity. Shannon Anderson-Finch believes that Hindi-English mixing is a linguistic resource and bilingual speakers use it to express themselves strategically and creatively. Equally intriguing is the concept of the multilingual mind by Tej K. Bhatia, which involves both language separation and integration termed "code mixing" and "code switching". Also examined by Devyani Sharma is the infiltration of Indian languages into British English and how this cross-cultural exchange has led to "mixed code" and "hybrid identity". (2011)

The term "code-mixing" is used to describe mixing of elements from different languages within a sentence whereas the term "code-switching" describes mixing of elements from different languages at the clause level in a discourse. Mixing of languages is not just inevitable but natural. All languages have developed through contact and mixing with other languages. Hindi and English are themselves examples of languages that have grown out of massive admixture through contact. Hinglish acts as the bridge between two cultures. The mixing between Hindi and English vocabulary has occurred ever since colonial times. Only in the last few years, however, Hinglish has been matured and found its place in India as an effective communication tool. Daya Kishan Thussu attributes development of Hinglish to globalisation and industry, which enabled them to gain ground in the highly profitable market of South Asia. English had its limitations, catering only to a small market base which led to the Indianisation and then further localisation of advertising. (The Tribune, 2011) Code-mixing of Hindi and English where Hindi is the host language, is a common phenomenon in day-to-day language usage in India. The scenario is so common that people have started considering this a different variety altogether and calling it by the name Hinglish. It was consequently only a matter of time before Hinglish was born, much like Chinglish in China and Singlish in Singapore. If we go by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Hinglish is a language which is a mixture of English and Hindi, especially a type of English that includes many Hindi words. Here, the last few words need to be read through magnifying glass: English that includes many Hindi words, i.e. not Hindi that includes many English

words. However, in a book *Chutnefying English: The Phenomenon of Hinglish* (edited by Rita Kothari & Rupert Snell), Prof. Rita Kothari writes: "The debate on Hinglish could be on either end, Hindi mein English or English in Hindi, the two are not mutually exclusive. The *Chutneyfication* of English i.e. the Indianisation of English is perceived at several levels like, domains, topics, role-relationship, turn takings, choice of address terms, greetings and language of self humbling. Indianness is essentially an important criterion for writing in English because it gives the Indian writing an identity of its own. Words like, *huzur, sahib, sarkar, maharaj, ahimsa, karma, dharma, swami, namaste, jai Hind, bindi, sari, chapatti, biryani, ghee, bhangra, bapujee, lalajee, panditjee, pitajee* etc. are not found in British English but have free pass to Indian English. The first use of Hinglish can be found in Ayodhya Prasad Khatri (1857-1905), a prominent Hindi poet. He wrote a gazal, spewing out rage against British government, sprinkling some English words:

Rent Law ka gham karen ya Bill of Income Tax ka?

Kya karen apan nahiin hai sense right now-a-days.

Darkness chhaaya hua hai Hind men chaaro taraf

Naam ki bhi hai nahiin baaqi na light now-a-days.

This could be the first example of Hinglish where writer used English words in Hindi poem. Here; the writer is writing in Hindi, and Hindi is his primary language of expression, and he resorted to English words to strengthen the impact that gives the poetry a satirical tone. But the use of Hinglish we are talking here is different, rather an absolute antipode of the example written above. According to Prof Harish Trivedi, Shobha De was first among other leading lights of this genre of writing, and she introduced this style in her gossip column *Nita's Natter* in *Stardust* in 1960s. However, other sources like Wikipedia claim that Devyani Chaubal was the first writer to use Hinglish in her English works. Shobha De then began to use Hinglish elements in her novels. Among other writers, who popularized this style of writing in their literary works, are Salman Rushdie and Upamanyu Chatterjee, two distinguished fiction writers in Indian English literature. Slowly and gradually, the use of Hinglish has stepped into popular culture like Hindi cinema, media and advertising too. And it received tremendous cheer by people from all walks of society, especially from young generation. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* has often been seen as being written in an English modified to South Indian conditions that reflects Kannad speech rhythms. The similar can be observed as Malayalam flow in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. However, Salman Rushdie can be regarded as the father of creating Chutneyfied English.

Yeh Dil Maange More, I have hazaar things to do, this is a pukka filmi idea, Money hai toh honey hai is the latest lingua franca of India's young generation, so to speak. Totally different from the Queen's English or grammatical English taught as a subject in schools, yet increasingly getting popular by the day. No one wants to lag behind, instead all of us like to show trendiness in this modern pompous era where everyone wants to stick with their peculiar style and for this communication skills play a vital role to depict the individual personality. In order to show their trendiness in their verbalism, people look towards Hinglish, which has emerged as a blending lingua franca (language used for convenience). The word Hinglish refers to a combination of English and Hindi and becoming increasingly common in India and Indian communities throughout the world. It is 'Estuary English' for the common man i.e. the language, which is essentially English with a Hindi take. In the words of Harish Trivedi: 'It has become a cultish dialect with enough practitioners for us to notice it and debate it.' English, the lingua franca and preferred medium of communication for at least one-billion people around the world, is rapidly adding to its cache of regionally - recognisable words and phrases and the dictionary industry is under pressure to reflect that linguistic diversity. Hinglish is a buzz word now. In order to show their trendiness in their verbalism, people look towards Hinglish, which has emerged as a blending lingua franca. Television channels and radio stations in the country now move freely between the two languages, as do music and movies. This, combined with cheaper televisions and greater access to the internet, means the influence of Hinglish is no longer confined to the bright lights of the cities. It is spreading to rural areas as well. The impact of Hinglish is therefore finding its way into other areas of everyday Indian life, making it the language of the home, work and business. The birthplace of Hinglish was the college campus, where students find funny abbreviations for long Hindi words like G-jams for *Gulab Jamun*. Hinglish really took off when Indians became self-confident enough to give the language their own shape without aspiring to speak perfect British English, with a British accent. Hinglish as a new phenomenon mostly dominates in the movies, on TV especially on the musical and entertainment channels, mass media as well as among the modern youths. It is also associated with the popularity of MTV and Channel V after the two hit Indian cable TV. These two languages, widely spoken across India, need to be understood anew through their 'hybridization' into Hinglish. This is more commonly seen in urban and semi-urban centers of India, but is slowly spreading its root into rural and remote areas via television and word of mouth and also achieving vernacular status. David Crystal, an honorary professor of

linguistics at Wales University states that the growing popularity of the Indian culture worldwide including the Bollywood films implies that Hinglish will be a spoken language beyond the continent. According to him; “The certain phrases of Hinglish are to be global, since most Indians are engaged in the sphere of information technologies, use the Internet and send e-mails. This is still the language of the government, elite and mass media”. Professor David Crystal estimates that 350 million Indians speak Hinglish as a second language, more than the number of native English speakers in Britain and the US. Crystal argues that increasing interest around the world in Asian culture, e.g. Bollywood movies (the Indian popular film industry), and growing Indian expertise in IT, have caused Hinglish to become more widely spoken outside the subcontinent, fostering a mutual influence of English on Hindi and Hindi on English. Hinglish has grown in popularity to such an extent that it now encompasses not just the code-switching phenomena illustrated in the examples above, but the evolution of a whole new vocabulary. Language is the road map of a culture. A linguistic influence once driven by colonialism is today linked to popular Asian culture, promoting new uses of both Hindi and English.

How both languages function:

Hindi: Not a fixed number of characters, each character in written Hindi can be made from a combination of 1 - 4 of 33 consonants, 12 vowels, completely phonetic, no silent words, no exceptions to rules, more sounds than English, harder to use online etc.

English: It has fixed 26 characters, 21 consonants, 5 vowels, not phonetic, silent words, many rules and more exceptions and easy to use online.

Technology for Hinglish: Facebook and Orkut social networking sites both allow for the use of Hindi and Indic languages. It is not popular, more convenient to write Hinglish with English letters, with English keyboards and online platforms easier to use English.

T9 dictionary for Hinglish for Mobile phones and PDAs by Nuance Communications: There is alphabetic input text prediction in Hinglish, users can quickly type in the youth language, easy to make up words and add to dictionary. People already know English being the first language and this allows for easy substitution, combination and inclusion of Hindi words also easy to use online.

Use and Audience: Hindi can be used by Designers in India and Abroad and for Hinglish speakers across the world it directly serves as a communication tool, makes an emotional and cultural connection, identifies with their traditions and heritage and acknowledges and accepts their current use and fusion of two languages and two cultures. For English speakers,

it helps to create a cross-cultural, Indian look and feel, attract a foreign audience, gives them a glimpse of Indian culture and creates an appreciation of Indian aesthetics.

In June of 2005, the term Hinglish hit the headlines across the world when it was reported that more than 26 neologisms included in a new edition of the *Collins English Dictionary* were of Hindi origin. If new words are to be used widely enough, they are included in the dictionary and become English words. It is also the language of globalization. The economic boom in the country has not only blurred the boundaries of the caste system, it has given birth to Hinglish. If you're exporting your product or service to India, then Hinglish is something you must seriously consider. People are becoming more and more comfortable with mixing words from languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi with English. The advent and pervasive growth of cable television has seen the masses exposed to a wide variety of programming from across the world. Hinglish and Mumbaiya Hindi (which incorporates words and phrases from a number of other languages (including Marathi, Gujarati and Konkani) have recently become popular in Bollywood movies. There are more English-speakers in India than anywhere else in the world - and satellite television, movies and the internet mean that more and more people in the sub-continent are exposed to both English and Hinglish. No doubt, this blend of Hindi and English will become a globally accepted form of English in a few years. Growing popularity of Indian culture around the world, including Bollywood movies, means that Hinglish will soon become more widely spoken outside the continent. In addition, the Hindi blogosphere is providing a vibrant space to disseminate this *Hinglishisation* phenomena. The predictive text software, T9 has been translated into Hinglish which is spoken by around 350 million people in the Indian subcontinent. Specifically, the advanced T9 Text Input product offers enhanced Hinglish support, making it easier for users to use Hinglish words like chai, desi, jungli etc. while composing SMS messages. Here are some of the popular Hinglish expressions based on Hindi words:

Filmi: (adjective) dramatic, characteristic of Bollywood movies. This usage is based on a noun homograph which in an uncountable sense refers to the music of Bollywood movies, and in a countable sense refers to Bollywood film stars.

Change: (adjective) fine, great movies, listening to Hindi music, going to the temple/mosque etc.

Badmash:(adjective) naughty. Also used as a noun (plural Badmashes) to refer to a hooligan, an aggressive or violent person.

Jungli :(adjective) unruly, wild in behaviour

Machi chips: noun [U] fish and chips

Haramzada: noun [C] a despicable, obnoxious male. Haramzadi is a female form. Both terms can be used to refer to a man/woman born of unmarried parents.

Yaar: noun [C] friend, used as a familiar or affectionate form of address

Kutta: noun [C] dog. Kutti is the word for 'bitch'.

Freshie: noun [C] a new immigrant to the UK from the Indian subcontinent

Gora: noun [C] white person

Angrez: noun [C] English person

English in India is very different from the English language spoken around the world. There are a lot of Idioms and Phrases that have been formed in India and are used only in India. When we use these in our daily conversations we feel they are right. First-class - also pronounced fus-class or slurred together; indicates high-quality material. Sharma sir is not here - same as Sharma-jee is not here, a respectful address. No knighthood suffix. What is your good name?" to mean "What is your full name?" is a carryover from the Hindi expression Shubh-naam (literally meaning 'auspicious name') or the Urdu ism-e Sharif (meaning 'noble name').

For advertising to succeed in modern India, Hinglish has to be the language of choice. It is the language that the Indian customer is most receptive to, particularly the younger generation. The young urban youth regards Hinglish as a badge of cool. To this group of people the language is part of their identity. Today, advertising is like a spectrum of lights, which is reflected in every field of the society. English words are used so commonly in Hindi that it seems that this mixture of Hindi and English is India's real national language. Innovation is also required in the creative usage of the language, the apparent quality of advertising communication. What really matters is that the communication should drive home its point effortlessly in a way the audience can better appreciate. As a result a new trend called Hinglish is emerging as a language most suited for Indian advertising. It is one of the world's most potent Anglo-hybrids – and it is often described as the key to advertising success in India. For instance, *Thanda thanda cool cool*. Pepsi was the forerunner of Hinglish advertising in India. The tagline *Yeh hi hai right choice, baby* meaning 'You got the right one, baby' proved to be one of the most successful in the company's history. Before the campaign launched in 1990, however, there was a lot of snobbishness regarding the use of Hinglish in Indian society; people looked down on it, viewing it as a poor, almost dumb

variety of English. But Pepsi changed all that. India soon opened its doors to a world of choices and Hinglish gradually took hold. Multi-language and transliteration helps people from different regions to understand the linguistic aspects of the language used in the advertisements without many difficulties. It may lead to an impact on psyche of the human being and touches the emotional equilibrium. And finally the customers succumb in this magical spell of Hinglish. Thus Hinglish the new trend in advertisements, tries to exploit the customers psychologically too through the usage of words in both the languages and it finally aim at the consumers in different cultures. Indians have no doubt got their language embedded into English but in doing so they have also made their language (at least spoken one) 'corrupt'. The popularity of cable television is spreading it like anything. Another factor contributing to the spread of Hinglish is the popularity of Bollywood films. Recent Examples: *Chak De India* and *Jab we met!* Advertisements are also taking advantage of popularity of this language. Pepsi, for instance, has given its global "Ask for more" campaign a local Hinglish flavor: "*Yeh Dil Maange More*" (the heart wants more). Not to be outdone, Coke has its own Hinglish slogan: "*Life ho to aisi*" (Life should be like this). Domino's Pizza, which offers Indian curiosities such as the chicken tikka pizza, asks its customers *Hungry kya?* (Are you hungry?), and McDonald's current campaign spoofs the jumbled construction of Hinglish sentences with its campaign, "*What your bahana is?*" (*Bahana* means excuse, as in, "What's your excuse for eating McDonald's and not home-cooked food?") and other popular Hinglish slogans are like '*Pal banaye magical*' (Make every moment magical) – Lays, *Hum mein hai hero* (There's a hero in everyone) – Hero Motocorp, *Kya aap Close Up karte hain?* (Do you use Close-Up toothpaste?) – Close-Up, Come on girls, *waqt hai shine karne ka!* (Come on girls, it's time to shine!) – Sunsilk, *7UP try, Gorgeous, Hamesha* etc. And there is one common thread that binds these powerful lines - all these statements are written in Hinglish. To create a specific effect, some words are intentionally omitted from these lines. For example, when you read or listen to "*Hungry kya*", it is understood that the advertiser wants to convey "Are you hungry kya?" Same is the case with next one "*Gorgeous, Hamesha*" actually target audience knows it's "*You are Gorgeous, Hamesha*".

These simple statements have exerted tremendous impact on the target group, for which the communication is designed. Here, the strategy is to make the consumers remember the communication for a long period of time, and to obtain top of mind awareness when the consumer goes to shop the product at point of sale. In fact, the vast majority of multi-nationals in India now use Hinglish – and they are reaping the rewards because of this.

According to Ashok Chakravarty, the creative head of Publicis India, the translation approach doesn't work for the vast majority of Indians whose English is not always great. "You may be understood, but not vibed with," he says. "That's why all the multi-national corporations in India now speak Hinglish in their ads." India is a country still struggling to establish an identity. It is fair to say that Hinglish has a big role to play moving forward. People are not just mixing Hindi and English words anymore, they are creatively, actively and energetically reinventing them instead. Hinglish therefore looks likely to continue pushing the barriers of advertising in India. The media has also been adversely affected by this language change. All the advertisements are in English or in Hinglish, a hybrid of English and Hindi, formed as a result of the language convergence in 21st century India.

Hinglish has become a common household language and is used extensively, starting from texting to the titles of famous Bollywood movies. Here two Salmans would agree. The first, last name Rushdie (Salman Rushdie) once claimed it was his linguistic agenda and practice to '*Chutnefy English*.' The second name (Salman Khan), used the line, '*Tu kya mujhe henpecked samajhta hai?*' with much sincerity in a film titled, *Biwi No 1*. Most of the Bollywood movie titles are partly if not completely English titles (*Main Tera Hero*, *Gulabi Gang*, *Fugly* etc.). Even the songs and a great deal of the dialogues are now in Hinglish. Bollywood films: *Bhindi Baazaar*, *Always Kabhi Kabhi*, *Mere Brother Ki Dulhan* or *Short Term Shaadi*, *Once Upon A Time In Mumbaai 2 Me Mamu & 7*, *Kucch Luv Jaisaa*, *Bhindi Baazaar*, *Always Kabhi Kabhi*, *Bheja Fry*, *Double Dhamaal*, *Mujhse Fraaandship Karoge*, *Mere Brother Ki Dulhan*, *Desi Boyz*, *Ladies v/s Ricky Bahl*, *Virus Diwan*, *Gangs of Wasseypur*, *Dangerous Ishhq*, *Ek Tha Tiger*, *Son Of Sardaar*, *Tere Naal Love Ho Gaya*, *Kyaa Super Kool Hain Hum*, *Jodi Breakers*— over 30 films have been named in Hinglish in the year 2011-12. Other examples are *Race 2*, *Special Chabbis*, *Shootout At Wadala*, *ABCD – Any Body Can Dance*, *Jolly LLB*, *Go Goa Gone*, *Mere Dad Ki Maruti*, *Hum Hain Raahi Car Ke*, *Zindagi 50 : 50*, *Ishkq in Paris*, *Shortcut Romeo*, *B.A.Pass*, *Shor in the City*, *Love Aaj Kal*, *Singham Returns*, *Luv ka The End*, *Shaadi Ke Side Effects*, *Total Siyapaa*, *Grand Masti*, *Shuddh Desi Romance*, *Son Of Sardar*, *Saheb Biwi Aur Gangster Returns*, *Once Upon A Time In Mumbai Dobaara*, *Kill Dil*, *Ek Villain*, *Darr @ The Mall*, *Super Nani*, *Tanu Weds Manu*, *Jodi Breakers*, *The Shaukeens* etc. The Bollywood has been experimenting with unconventional titles is not a new concept. What makes the title game fascinating is the motto to lure the young into multiplexes. Today's youth is a lot more global in its outlook. They converse in a happy blend of English and Hindi. Atypical titles render a touch of freshness.

Hinglish titles are different from the usual film titles and the young audience is looking for somewhat novelty. Now, more and more of younger generation speaking English rather than their mother tongues. Then their English is getting influence from that language and the result is Hinglish. By giving such titles it adds up to the spice and twist in the movie that people are looking forward. This trend is a new gimmick to attract audiences and generate curiosity. Moreover, the trend reflects a change in the sensibilities of the audiences.

Languages evolve constantly, so there may be no real point in trying to understand whether or not Hinglish will thrive. As the poet Derek Walcott once mentioned, 'The English language is nobody's special property. It is the property of the imagination: it is the property of the language itself.' Any language that doesn't change according to the needs and demands of the people, will not develop. It is important for us to see whether this new language has the ability to be pan-Indian. Indian English represents not a failure to use English appropriately, but a natural consequence of the social notions and nuances in the environment in which Indian English, an umbrella term for a multilingual country like us. All languages are true and equal in status. No language is superior or inferior. All language is organic and must reflect the world in which it is being used to remain relevant. The beauty of a language lies in its ability to adapt. When a language becomes too dogmatic in its rules and strictures, it becomes extinct. Hinglish is also an elite language. Hinglish is not English badly spoken. Instead, it is a self-confident choice by a post-colonial generation, by people who are often fluent in both languages and know when to substitute an English word with a Hindi one. It is the language of opportunity and Indian can use it for effective communication. Hinglish is a choice of the nation. Hinglish is expected to bring new facets of it in its growing popularity among the youth and initiate research on the topic. Hinglish is already the medium for imparting education in many schools across the nation. What makes Hinglish so popular among the masses is the fact that literature reflects time and mood of society. Hinglish is a new language although it basically is a Masala of two languages - Hindi and English. The crosswordisation is happening because people can relate or connect with it. The reason why hybrid literature is emerging is perhaps due to a sense of urgency with the young generation today. Language also carries identity and culture. In a global setting, keys to culture lie in the language; so we should also try to relate to our languages while rejoicing in English. Like English, Hinglish is amazing. It is India's self-confident voice rising above the subservience that was once expressed in an English way. Language experts believe that Hinglish represents a new phase of borrowing for the English language. This is the second wave of words from

Indian languages to hit English, a lexical influence which in the twenty-first century derives from a collision of popular cultures rather than a by-product of colonialism. The arrival of Hinglish and the influence of Indian words on English are also a reflection of the rise of the Indian sub-continent as an economic power-house. This merging of language has added a *char chand* (four stars) in the style of colloquy and reader or listeners get a variety of taste in it. On the whole, Hinglish is all about the ascendant and emergent force in modern India. English will always be the language of opportunity, but Hinglish is the language of friendship. If language reflects national identity, the speed at which Hinglish is being adopted sends out very loud cultural and economic signals to the rest of the world. Hinglish in India is a living truth and it can be the language of future India, even of the sub-continent. Hinglish does not require a proper set of grammar patterns or rules. So people have been using it because of its convenience and getting more popular with increasing daily usage. As long as Hindi and English exist, Hinglish is here to stay. The phenomenon is gaining ground across all sections: Media, Entertainment, Marketing, Education, Government, Politics, Society and more. It has acquired the mass appeal and now it's hard to eliminate this trend, which has deeply affected our everyday communication.

A conclusion could be that Hinglish as a combination seems to be the easiest way to strike a balance between the two languages. Hinglish or the variety of English spoken in India, will soon become the most commonly spoken form of the language globally, a leading British language expert has predicted. According to Prof. David Crystal, 'Already, a third of Indians are speaking the language, a percentage expected to rise in coming years. With the Internet spreading English like no other tool ever, and Indians at the forefront of the IT revolution, Indian English will reach around the globe and take over from British and American forms,' *Chutnefying* English examines this new language as it evolves around us, spoken by millions. It is clear that the *Chutneyfied English: Hinglish* as one of the world's newest and most virile languages; is developing on the hoof. Its sheer vibrancy, together with the traditional linguistic inventiveness of the Indian people will certainly see Indian English i.e. *Hinglishness* assuming the same international significance as Standard English. Whether Hinglish a good thing or a bad thing is of no matter and the readers are left to reach their own conclusion. Finally, in spite of criticism, we realise that one way or another, we are all contributing to this linguistic revolution happening all around us.

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