INDIAN ENGLISH: INGLISH (IE)

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Abstract : With the growing need of English language in India the term 'English in India' turns to 'Indian English'. English language spoken in India is one of the most distinct varieties of World Englishes. The use and interference of English with Indian Languages makes it a different variety in the Indian context. Interference of English is not restricted to one level only. English is used in India for specific purposes in the Indian socio-cultural context. Its registers are different than those of the native varieties of English. English is continually changing. India is a multilingual nation where each language intermingles with the other language whether it is mother tongue, regional language, official language or foreign language. In case of English when it is used in the Indian context it emerges as a distinct variety with its own distinct features. It shares some features of local/native languages to suit the situation and for proper communication. The present paper is an attempt to review the features of the new variety of English language.

Keywords: Indian English, Multilingual, Variety, Second Language.

Introduction : Various scholars define the term 'Indian English' (IE). Nihalani et al. (1979) find the term 'Indian English' disputable and prefer to call it 'the Indian variant (s) of English' (IVE). Verma (1969) regards IE as 'an offspring' yielded by English and he defines it as 'a second language with a distinct Indian flavour' (p. 22). Hosali (1984) considers IE as a language which is composed of different varieties. Bansal and Harrison (1972) use the term GIE (General Indian English) to refer to the common core of IE. Agnihotri and Khanna (1997) and Yadurajan (2001) prefer the phrase 'English in India' rather than 'Indian English'. Kachru (1983b) uses the term 'South Asian English' (SAE) as a cover term for the educated variety of English used in the Indian subcontinent. Parasher (1999) uses the term 'Educated Standard Variety of IE'. Gokak (1978) discusses the concept of IE with reference to Indian writing in English.

Parasher defines Standard IE as 'that variety of English which is used by highly educated Indians, which is intelligible to speakers of other educated varieties of English and which conforms to the major syntactic rules of contemporary English' (Parasher S. , 1991, p. 201). The Indians and the Indian English language Press uses many words derived from Indian languages, especially from Hindi. Other than that, the Indian accent is sometimes difficult for non-Indians to understand. English is a compulsory language in most of the all-India level employment opportunities. It is the sole medium of instruction in Technical education and a majority offers it as a medium for higher education. Thus the new English varieties have evolved into varieties which serve a wide range of purposes, and at the same time, have also developed their own character. Officially it was given a status of an associate language and was supposed to terminate officially after 15 years of India's independence, but it still remains the important language of India. English has become an integral part of the Indian linguistic mosaic. Crystal's opinion truly shows the Indian language scenario, "Language, sooner or later, proves to be a thorn in the flesh of all who govern, whether at national or local level" (Crystal, 1997, p. 364).

Salient Structural Properties of IE : Indian English has definitely emerged as a variety on its own. Variability in linguistic and socio-cultural setting naturally differentiates Indian English from Standard British English and North American English. The main levels on which the differences are encountered are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary/idioms, and discourse styles. "Learning English as a second language in India is a process of learning 'meanings' in a new socio-cultural setting, it is a process of enculturation, of capturing, expanding, and refining a network of formal and socio-cultural systems in interaction. English in India is what it is because of its functions which are controlled by its socio-cultural setting and by its interaction with the major Indian languages. This socio-cultural approach to English in India is designed to show how the lexico-grammatical systems of a language get shaped and reshaped by its functions. There is, therefore, no feel that English in India is or will be less effective or

less efficient as a system of communication, but there is every reason (linguistic and/or socio-linguistic) to say that it has and will continue to have a marked Indian flavor" (Verma S. , 1988, p. 35). "The topic of discourse determines the choice of lexical items and therefore the more culture bound the topic is, the greater the possibility of IE differing from the other varieties of English" (Parasher S. V., 1999, p. 20). Nativization of English in India seems to develop new linguistic features at all linguistic levels.

Like any other variety of English, English spoken in India (IE) also has both regional and social variation. "English is used in certain ways in India; these uses have stabilized and play a part in characterizing the language. English has been Indianised by being borrowed, trans created, recreated, stretched, extended, contorted perhaps" (D'Souza, 2001, p. 150). The non-standard features of Indian English have developed as a result of nativization of the language and are not exhibited uniformly. There are several varieties of English in India among different region. First language transfer is considered a major factor influencing the syntactical features of Indian English. Language contact can have a variety of consequences. Thomason S.G., basically identifies three outcomes:

1. *Contact-induced language change* in cases where the influence of one language on the other is comparatively weak.

2. *Extreme language mixture* when the intensity of contact increases. Results of high-intensity contacts are pidgins, creoles and bilingual mixed languages. The history of European colonialism, where European languages met the languages of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, especially gave rise to a number of creoles whose vocabulary is based on European languages.

3. *Language death,* i.e. the complete disappearance of one language, in cases of extreme social pressure. (Thomason, 2001, p. 10) Verma rightly points out that "the nature of Indian English is closely related to the demands that we make on it, the functions it has to serve" (Verma S. , 1978, p. 1). There is debate among the scholars about the nature and structure of Indian English. Some argued that English used in India has its own distinguished features and it is labeled as Indian English and some argued that English used in India is not different from the British English. Apart from the debate on English in India, it is developed as a new variety with its deviations. Different regional languages are spoken in India, which share many characteristics with English such as grammatical structure and

vocabulary. According to Halliday et al, "speakers of non-native varieties of English in West Africa, West Indies, India and Pakistan speak English very differently from the way Englishmen speak it. Their grammar remains that of Standard English, with few important variations, their lexicon too, differs little from the normal usage; but the accent is noticeably and identifiably local" (Halliday, 1964, p. 294). English in India is varied from state to state and region to region. IE cannot be divorced from the socio- cultural setting in which it functions. "The dominant explanatory concepts with reference to the users of English in the outer circle are interference, which results in 'error' which, if institutionalized, becomes 'fossilization'. The teacher's goal and learners ideal is, of course to attain native like competence" (Kachru B. , 1996, p. 141).

Phonology : In spite of the research that has been done on the phonology of Indian English it is still not possible to form a set of rules regarding it. The regional languages impact on the phonology of English is most varied than its impact on the other features of Indian English. Bansal (1983) provides a useful account of the phonology of IE, based on the work of Gimson (1980), Aitken et al (1979) and Nihalani, Tongue and Hosali (1979). It is generally believed that Indian languages are syllable timed whereas English is a stress-timed language. This difference between English and Indian languages results in several distinct rhythms of IE. Parasher states that, "some of the major differences between IE and RP in accent and intonation in connected speech are:

1) IE speaker usually stress English words differently from the normal RP pattern,

2) Sometimes IE speakers do not divide their utterances into tone groups in the manner in which RP speakers normally divide them; and

3) Sometimes IE speakers do not put the nuclear accent on the syllable on which RP speakers would normally put it" (Parasher S. , 1991, p. 58).

"Differences between English and Indian languages result in distinct rhythms: in syllable-timed languages the rhythm is based on arranging long and short syllables, while in stress-timed languages it is based on the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables" (Kachru B. B., 1983, p. 76).

Grammar : According to Kachru the detailed grammatical description of educated Indian English is not yet available. Deviations in IE are labeled as features of IE. Kachru says, "A mistake may be defined as any 'deviation' which is rejected by a native speaker of

English as out of the linguistic code of the English language and which may not be justified in Indian English on formal and/or contextual grounds. A deviation, on the other hand, may involve differences from a norm, but such deviations may be explained in terms of the cultural and/or linguistic context in which a language functions" (Kachru B. B., 1983, p. 76).

Articles : Most Indian languages have no articles. Therefore, articles of Indian English are not used so strictly as those of native English. IE necessarily displays a consistently deviant pattern in the use of articles.

Nouns : Indian languages have no distinction between countable nouns and uncountable ones. In use of English it is natural that Indians do not distinguish countable nouns and Uncountable. In IE, plural nouns sometimes come after 'every' and 'each'. e.g. Furnitures, luggages. The use of compounds is very common in IE. The compounds cousin-brother and cousin-sister allow the Indian English speaker to designate whether their cousin is male or female. This is a function which is inherent in the terminology of most Indian languages. e.g. chalk-piece, key-bunch, meeting notice, and pin drop silence.

Reduplication : In IE reduplication is used for emphasis and to indicate continuation of a process. Indians often use reduplication as a way of emphasizing an action. e.g. small small children, Come come! Sit sit! Standard English does not prefer reduplication of adverbs. Reduplication is also a unique characteristic of Indian English. It may be defined "as a morphological process that allows speaker to form new word from old words by adjoining the latter in entirely (complete reduplication) or some recognizable and definable part of it to itself (partial reduplication)" (Singh, 2005: 263). Sridhar (1989) mentions two types of reduplication that have different functions in Indian languages and which are imported into the English of the character as well. According to him, "full reduplication emphasizes or intensifies the meaning or scope of the reduplicated element where as partial reduplication has a generalizing ("and so on and so forth") function" (Sridhar, 1989, p. 142).

Vocabulary : Impact of culture is always on the language. Vocabulary of Indian English is the product of Indian culture. New words are continuously added to the lexicon of English, while existing words may change or take on new meanings. There are some words in IE which are not the part of Standard English. Hybridisation, collocations, idiomatic usages help convey the culture of the people. Such techniques are useful in defining the 'Indianness' of IE. English has borrowed words from Indian languages in varying degrees and has assimilated these items.IE is full of loan words from regional languages, speaker does not find out the appropriate substitute for these words in Standard BE. *Lakh* and *crore* are acceptable lexical items in IE as are *roti, dosa, idli,* and *samosa. Lathi-charge* is IE as is prepone. Internationally these variations are yet to find acceptability.

Lok Sabha (Lower House of the central parliament), Rajya Sabha (Upper House of the central parliament), chamchagiri (flattering), rasta aur rel roko (stoppage of the traffic in a general strike), …wallah (person doing … as his/her occupation [e.g. rickshaw wallah (rickshaw driver), tonga wallah (tonga driver, driver of a two-wheeled horsedrawn vehicle), doodh wallah (milk seller)]), peon cf. chaprasi, bearer (office attendant, office messenger boy), ayah (child nurse, maid servant), mali (gardener), jawan (soldier), Akashvani (indigenous name of All India Radio), Doordarshan (television, usually used to mean India's national television), guru (teacher. Traditional spiritual master),.. ji [e.g. Verma ji, guru ji (equivalent to Mr/Ms. Used with familiarity), ... sahib (sahiba) Sri ..., Srimati ...(equivalent to Mr/Ms.), autorickshaw (auto- three-wheeled vehicle with an engine, usually used as a taxi or a lorry), hill station e.g. (seasonal holiday resort in the hill area), masala film (the most popular type of Indian film with fights, songs, dance, jokes and romance), Bollywood (Bombay + Hollywood, Bombay's film industry), good name (used when asking a name. Polite usage), bandh (stoppage of work), dal (lentil, lentil soup), roti (cf. dal-roti=bread and butter = bread), sabzi, sabji (vegetable, vegetable curry), paneer (cottage cheese), pandit, pundit (brahmin), paan (betal leaf. It is chewed with tobacco, lime, nuts and so on. Hotel: restaurant), mandi (wholesale vegetable market), bazaar (marketplace), mess (hostel dining hall. a system in a hostel where the residents arrange to have meals prepared), lakh (a hundred thousand), crore (ten million), dowry (wife's present to her husband when they get married), goonda (rowdy), SC (=Scheduled Caste cf. untouchable: non-twice-born Hindus who are considered out of caste and discriminated), Lathi-charge (v, for the police to use lathi [stave] to break up a mob), NRI (non-resident Indians, overseas Indians), divestment (withdrawal of investment cf. Divestment).

The process of 'nativisation' of English in second language contexts is not only due to 'transfer' from local languages, but also due to the pressures of a new cultural environment and fresh communicative needs.

Syntax : No comprehensive description of IE syntax is available yet. However, there have been studies on restricted topics of IE syntax. Most of these studies have attempted to isolate syntactic 'mistakes', 'deviations', 'irregularities' in IE. Some of the syntactic features of IE have thus come to be isolated: excessive use of complex sentences, use of certain non-progressive verbs in the progressive form, erratic use of the article system, reduplication, lack of NP-Aux inversion in question patterns, use of one question tag isn't it? In all syntactic environments, use of 'that' clause after infinitival verbs like want, use of yes with negative statement and no with positive statement in reply to yes/no questions, lack of tense concord in sequence of tense, erratic use of prepositions and so on. However, a lot of systematic work has to be done. A comprehensive description of IE syntax will have to be based on a large-scale survey of English usage in India. The use of English in several situations will have to be considered both in written and spoken forms.

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