



# Indian English : The Evolution and Modified Usage Over Time

By  
Sneha Jain

## Abstract

*Indian english and its role in the development of the socio - cultural landscape*

*Indian English is a unique form of English that has evolved over time. It emerged during the colonisation of the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century. Initially, it was influenced by the British English spoken by colonists. But over time, it has developed its own distinctive features influenced by Indian languages. This essay traces the historical development of Indian English and its influence on the language. The influence of Indian languages on Indian English reflects the linguistic diversity of India. This diversity was shaped by the linguistic diversity of India, which led to the inclusion of Indian languages, cultures and expressions into the English language.. Additionally, socio-political changes such as independence from British rule and the establishment of Indian identity further influenced the development of Indian English (Kachru, Braj B., 1983). As a result, Indian English has evolved into a dynamic and unique form of English that reflects the cultural, linguistic and historical contexts of India (Sumati Gaumat, 2022) Conclusion In conclusion, Indian English has clearly undergone significant modifications over time, reflecting the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape of India.. The influence of British colonisation, regional languages, and globalisation have contributed to the development of Indian English as a distinct variety. While some may argue that Indian English is a deviation from the norms of Standard English, it is important to recognise that it is a legitimate and vibrant form of expression that meets the linguistic and cultural needs of millions of Indians.. Furthermore, Indian English has been instrumental in bridging the gap and facilitating effective communication between the diverse linguistic communities in India. As India continues to assert its presence on the global stage, it is clear that Indian English will further evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of its speakers.. Therefore, understanding and appreciating the modified usage of Indian English is essential not only for effective communication within India but also for a better understanding of the cultural and linguistic richness of the country.*

## Introduction

Indian English is a unique form of English that has evolved over time. It emerged during the colonial era when the British East India Company established its presence in the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century. Initially, it was influenced by the British English spoken by the colonists, but over time, it underwent significant modifications as it assimilated various linguistic elements from the diverse languages spoken across India. The development of Indian English is a fascinating subject of study because it reflects the complex interplay of colonialism, language contact, and cultural identity. The purpose of this essay is to trace the historical development of Indian English and its modified usage over time, highlighting how it has become an integral part of the linguistic landscape of India.

## Historical Background of Indian

English Indian English has its roots in the colonisation of India by the British Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. The English language was introduced into India as a result of British colonial rule and became the language of administration, education and law (Nikam Suvarna Prashant, 2022). The early influence of British English on Indian English can be seen in the vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar, which were largely influenced by British norms and standards.

However, over time, Indian English developed its own distinctive features influenced by the indigenous languages and cultures of India (Crystal, David, 2003). This development can be attributed to various factors, including the influence of regional languages, the mixing of different linguistic traditions, and the impact of social and cultural changes in colonial India. Indian English has become a dynamic and growing language, reflecting the linguistic diversity and cultural richness of India.

### **Linguistic features of Indian English**

English as a distinct language variety has a number of unique linguistic features that distinguish it from other varieties of English spoken around the world. A major feature is the influence of Indian languages on the sound system of Indian English. For example, the pronunciation of some English sounds, such as the retroflex consonants /ʈ/ and /ɖ/, is influenced by the phonological inventory of languages such as Hindi and Bengali (Mathijs Gardenier, Fabio La Rocca, Daniela Pomarico, Vincenzo Susca, 2022). Additionally, Indian English has distinctive intonation patterns and rhythms, influenced by the prosody characteristics of Indian languages (Mathijs Gardenier, Fabio La Rocca, Daniela Pomarico, Vincenzo Susca, 2022). Another linguistic feature of Indian English is the use of "Indianism", which include vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and grammatical constructions specific to the Indian context.

These uses of Indianism reflect the cultural and linguistic amalgamation of Indian languages with English (Ha-Seok Jeong, 2021). Overall, the linguistic features of Indian English highlight its distinct identity and its development as a vibrant and dynamic language variety.

### **Influence of Indian languages on Indian English**

The influence of Indian languages on Indian English is an important aspect of its growth and development over time. As English became deeper rooted in India, it began to incorporate elements from various Indian languages, resulting in a unique version of English that reflects the linguistic diversity of the country. This influence can be seen in the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation of Indian English. For example, Hindi words, such as "chai" (tea) and "bazar" (market), have come to be commonly used in Indian English. Additionally, the syntax and sentence structure of Indian languages have influenced the way Indian English is spoken and written. This is evident from the use of prefixes in place of prepositions and the omission of articles in some contexts. The influence of Indian languages on Indian English is an ongoing process, with new words and expressions constantly being borrowed and assimilated into the language. (J. Jarstad, 2017, p. 1-2).

### **Development of Indian English Over Time**

The development of Indian English over time has been marked by various factors that have influenced its development and modified its usage. An important factor is the historical influence of British colonialism, which introduced English to the Indian subcontinent. This early stage, known as the "Raj English" period, was characterised by imitation of British English norms and standards. However, in the following decades a distinct variety of English emerged known as "Indian English". This diversity was shaped by the linguistic diversity of India, which led to the inclusion of Indian languages, cultures and expressions into the English language. Additionally, socio-political changes such as independence from British rule and the establishment of Indian identity further influenced the development of Indian English (Kachru, Braj B., 1983). As a result, Indian English has evolved into a dynamic and unique form of English that reflects the cultural, linguistic and historical contexts of India (Sumati Gaumat, 2022)

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Indian English has clearly undergone significant modifications over time, reflecting the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape of India. The influence of British colonisation, regional languages, and globalisation have contributed to the development of Indian English as a distinct variety. While some may argue that Indian English is a deviation from the norms of Standard English, it is important to recognise that it is a legitimate and vibrant form of expression that meets the linguistic and cultural needs of millions of Indians. Furthermore, Indian English has been instrumental in bridging the gap and facilitating effective communication between the diverse linguistic communities in India. As India continues to assert its presence on the global stage, it is clear that Indian English will further evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of its speakers. Therefore, understanding and appreciating the modified usage of Indian English is essential not only for effective communication within India but also for a better understanding of the cultural and linguistic richness of the country.

### **References**

- Nikam Suvarna Prashant. (2022). Analysis of English Language Training for Engineering Students in India Using Fuzzy TOPSIS Method
- Crystal, David. (2003). English as a Global Language. Cambridge University Press
- Matthijs Gardenier, Fabio La Rocca, Daniela Pomarico, Vincenzo Susca. (2022). Introduction
- Ha-Seok Jeong. (2021). COVID-19 and Speech Community
- Kachru, Braj B.. (1983). The Indianization of English: The English Language in India. Oxford University Press
- Sumati Gaumat. (2022). From Editor's Desk
- J. Jarstad. (2017). Surgery 2017: Pearls from 1000 robotic femtosecond bladeless laser-assisted cataract procedures- John S Jarstad, University of Missouri