

Hinglish

Hinglish, a portmanteau of Hindi and English,^[1] is the macaronic hybrid use of English and South Asian languages from across the Indian subcontinent, involving code-switching between these languages whereby they are freely interchanged within a sentence or between sentences.^[2]

The word *Hinglish* was first recorded in 1967.^[3] Other colloquial portmanteau words for Hindi-influenced English include: *Hindish* (recorded from 1972), *Hindlish* (1985), *Henglish* (1993) and *Hinlish* (2013).^[3]

While the name is based on the Hindi language, it does not refer exclusively to Hindi, but "is used in India, with English words blending with Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi and Hindi, and also in British Asian families to enliven standard English".^{[2][4]} Sometimes, though rarely, *Hinglish* is used to refer to Hindi written in English script and mixing with English words or phrases.^[7] (<https://m.jagran.com/himachal-pradesh/mandi-hinglish-is-taking-place-in-hindi-and-english-18693872.html>)

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History and evolution

Hindi has an approximately ten-century history. In this period, it has accommodated several linguistic influences. Contact with Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Turkic languages has led to historical 'mixes' or fusions, e.g., Hindustani, Rekhta. Linguistic fusions were celebrated by Bhakti poets, in approximately the 15th-17th centuries as 'khichdi boli' – or amalgamated speech.^[5]

At the turn of the 18th century, with the rising dominion of the East India Company, also called 'Company Raj' (literally, 'Company Rule'), the languages of India were brought into contact with the foreign element of English. In colonized India, English became a symbol of authority and a powerful hegemonic tool to propagate British culture, including Christianity.^[6] The political ascendancy of the British reflected into social and professional roles; this meant that the legal system as well as the studies in medicine and science were conducted in English.

This led to an interest in the promotion of English into the society of Indian natives. Educated Indians, or 'brown sahibs', wished to participate in academia and pursue professional careers. Raja Rammohan Roy, a social and education reformer, advocated that English be taught to Indians by certain British gentlemen for the benefit and instruction of the native Indians.^[7] Charles Grant, the president of the East India Company's board of control, championed the cause of English education

as a 'cure for darkness' where 'darkness' was 'Hindoo ignorance'. The Charter Act was passed in 1813. This legalized missionary work by the Company, including the introduction of English education.^[8] By the beginning of the twentieth century, English had become the unifying language in the Indian struggle for independence against the British.

Meanwhile, English was on its way to becoming the first global lingua franca. By the end of the twentieth century, it had special status in seventy countries, including India.^[9] Worldwide, English began to represent modernization and internationalization, with more and more jobs requiring basic fluency in it.^[10] In India especially, the language came to acquire a social prestige, 'a class apart of education', which prompted native Indian or South Asian speakers to turn bilingual, speaking their mother tongue at home or in a local context, but English in academic or work environments.^[11]

The contact of 'South Asian' languages, which is a category that refers inclusively to Hindi and Indian languages, with English, led to the emergence of the linguistic phenomenon now known as Hinglish. Many common Indic words such as 'pyjamas', 'karma', 'guru' and 'yoga' were incorporated into English usage, and vice versa ('road', 'sweater', and 'plate'). This is in parallel with several other similar hybrids around the world, like Spanglish (Spanish + English) and Taglish (Tagalog + English).

In recent years, due to an increase in literacy and connectivity, the interchange of languages has reached new heights, especially due to increasing online immersion. English is the most widely used language on the internet, and this is a further impetus to the use of Hinglish online by native Hindi speakers, especially among the youth. Google's Gboard mobile keyboard app gives an option of Hinglish as a typing language where one can type Hindi sentence in English script and suggestions will be of Hindi language word in anglo script.

While Hinglish has arisen from the presence of English in India, it is not merely Hindi and English spoken side by side, but a language type in itself, like all linguistic fusions (see Multiple language mixing, Bhatia, Tej K. 1987. English in Advertising: multiple mixing and media, *World Englishes* 6.1: 33-48). . Aside from the borrowing of vocabulary, there is the phenomenon of switching between languages, called code switching and Code-mixing, direct translations, adapting certain words, and infusing the flavours of each language into each other.^{[12][13]}

The Indian English variety, or simply Hinglish, is the Indian adaption of English in a very endocentric manner, which is why it is popular among the youth. Like other dynamic language mixes, Hinglish is now thought to 'have a life of its own'.^[14]

Computational analysis

With its widespread use in social media such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter, the analysis of Hinglish using computers has become important in a number of natural language processing applications like machine translation (MT) and speech-to-speech translation.^{[15][16]}

Alongside Hinglish, Benglish is a term that has been used in academic papers to describe a mixture of Bangla (Bengali language) and English in academic papers, for example Benglish verbs are described as a particular type of complex predicate, which consists of an English word and a Bengali verb e.g. /EksiDenT kOra/ 'to have an accident', /in kOra/ 'to get/come/put in' or /kOnfuz kOra/ 'to confuse'.^{[17][18][19]}

Dictionary

A dictionary using the term Hinglish in its title has been published. In fact, it covers a number of words from Indian languages that are commonly used in urban Britain.^[20]

Users

Hinglish is more commonly heard in urban and semi-urban centers of the Hindi-speaking states of India^[21] and is spoken even by the Indian diaspora.^[22] Research into the linguistic dynamics of India shows that while the use of English is definitely on the rise, there are more people fluent in Hinglish than in pure English.^[23] David Crystal, a British linguist at the University of Wales, projected in 2004 that at about 350 million, the world's Hinglish speakers may soon outnumber native English speakers.^[24]

See also

- Kanglish
- Code-mixing
- Code-switching
- Creole languages
- Franglais
- Hobson-Jobson
- Indian English
- Madras Tamil
- Manglish
- Portuñol
- Romanagari
- Singlish
- Spanglish
- Svorsk
- Taglish
- Urglish

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External links

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