

Bizarre Pronunciation Stages of Indian English language is a “grave” Concern: A learning of Khushwant Sing’s

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Abstract

The English language, a remnant of colonial history that has been a barrier to success for many Indians ever since the advent of the Bruisers, has claimed countless victims. Indian English Pronunciation ranges from almost native-level standard to the least intelligible variations, despite the fact that there are very few grammatical distinctions between them and other standard varieties. Despite this, "proper" language use is no longer associated with linguistic purity, and the many "English's" spoken throughout the globe are recognized as distinct dialects of English. If one considers the Indian context, one finds that this claim, although grammatically pleasing, is socially not so, since it has resulted in a psychological setback for many individuals, limiting their potential for advancement in a number of areas. In addition to real-world experience, Indian authors who write in English also draw on a wide range of literary topics that reflect this. Many works by postcolonial Indian authors written in English focus on depictions of characters with varying degrees of "English" competence; these depictions served to both mock and identify a group of individuals who, as a result of their social status, fell prey to parody and pastiche. These kinds of people are the protagonists of. This article examines the "English's" used by the characters in *A Bride for the Sahib* by Khushwant Singh and how the protagonist Mr. Sen.'s wife, Kalyani, suffers a "grave" tragedy due to her husband's incorrect pronunciation.

Keywords: English, lingo, proficiency levels, post-colonial literature, cline, parody, pastiche, hybridity.

Languages, like English, are not static entities but rather change and evolve in response to their social and cultural contexts. As a result, a single language might split into several dialects, each of which would represent the unique characteristics of its speakers. There are few better examples than English, which has become the official language of many countries and the second or even third language of many others. However, there is cause for worry about mutual intelligibility due to significant variations in the English spoken in different nations, particularly those that were previously British colonies. Numerous famous academics have attempted to make sense of the many varieties of English that are so different from their own. There is a difference between English and English's, as pointed out by Bill Ashcroft, et al.[2] in their book *The Empire Writes Back*.

Even though English became widely spoken over the world as a consequence of British empire, the English spoken in Jamaica is not the same as that used in Canada, New Zealand, or Kenya. Differentiating between English, the language of the former imperial centre, and the linguistic

code, English, which has been altered and subverted into various separate varieties across the globe, is necessary. To highlight the varied ways in which the language has been utilised by diverse linguistic groups in the post-colonial globe, we shall make a difference between English and English throughout our book. (8)

It has deeper meaning in the Indian culture. English, which first served as an imposer but later became a link language between colonisers and colonised, eventually became the dominant language in India and a symbol of prestige, becoming so ingrained in Indian culture that it would be impossible to eradicate. Kachru [3] puts it best:

The English language in India has naturally evolved regional, social, and occupational varieties due to the country's multilingual and multicultural environment. There is a substantial amount of creative work written in Indian English as well as a legal system register, commercial register, newspaper register, and a general record. (110)

Similarly, according to Allen H [1],

In India, speaking English is not seen as an advantage over speaking a native language. As an additional means of communication alongside the primary language, it has been designated as such. When English serves as a common language among people who speak quite different native tongues, as it does in India, it is considered a second language. (4)

However, the English spoken in India is far from perfect, and many people are misunderstood because of the language's poor pronunciation. Deviant Indian English (English) pronunciations are in no way comparable to a native country's accent. A dialect is a kind of linguistic diversity that exists within a larger group of speakers. A deviant use, on the other hand, arises from an individual's inability to grasp the conventions of a given language. While teaching grammar is prioritised in India, pronunciation is sometimes overlooked. As a result of her multicultural and multilingual upbringing, even her fellow Indians have difficulty deciphering her skewed English pronunciation, yet the opposite is true when it comes to writing. There are arguments in favour of ignoring this aspect of deviant pronunciation; however the author of this article argues that this is a mistake since it leads to societal issues and should be addressed. It's also a common thread in postcolonial Indian literature produced in English. With the assistance of the short narrative *Bride for the Sahib*, which depicts the tragic story of a woman who, although being educated and knowing English, had to dig her own "grave" due to her terrible pronunciation, this article analyses the Indian aberrant pronunciations and how they are a significant worry.

The *Sahibi bride* represents a linguistic and cultural synthesis of two distinct groups. A generation of educated Indians who lean toward Western cultural norms and actively want to erase their country's cultural traditions emerged as a direct consequence of British colonial control. The concept of the "white man's burden" was effective in making these people devalue their own culture and history. Significant repercussions have followed, with an impact felt across the country's social structure. They started taking pride "in a language that was not their own" and "in a culture that was not their own," as one author put it.

Therefore, the split produced two distinct groups: those who were exposed to and influenced by western education and ideals, and those whose cultural identity remained Indian but who had been subjugated by the colonialists' cultural imperialism. While the former group easily felt a sense of belonging to the foreign culture, the second group struggled to accept the values of their host nation and adopt them into their own. That language, of all things, should play such a significant part in establishing social stratification, is astounding. Unfortunately, individuals are further separated, particularly in the academic circle, in the context of job development and higher education, due to the sub-varieties of English spoken in India. One of these vocabularies,

with a level of competency near to the native variety, belongs in the top layer, while the other, with too much mother tongue influence and poor performance owing to a lack of education and training, belongs in the bottom layer. Mr. Sen and his wife, Kalyani, whose characters represent both extremes, demonstrate a wide range of English skill and use a wide variety of "English" codes. The author is aided in creating the desired effect, in which Mrs. Sen is satirised and Mr. Sen is pastiche.

Mr. Sen, the Indian who went to school in Britain, is a shining example of western principles and has a flawless British accent. His new wife, despite her education (she has an MA in English Literature), embodies the stereotypical "ordinary" Indian girl, whereas he is a "wog" (westernised oriental gentleman). They are at opposite ends of a spectrum that spans from the most literate to the least literate varieties of Indian English. The other characters likewise reflect a range of expertise, since they lie along the curve of varying degrees of difficulty. If we analysed how they used language, we could see clearly how their ability levels vary.

At the beginning of the narrative, the supervisor of the clerical staff addresses Mr. Sen and his new wife, saying, "Saar...where come to wheesh your excellent shelph long lithe and happiness." This is an effective depiction of the story's underlying theme of representation. This turned out to be a contradictory remark, since Mr. Sen is doomed to a sad and disappointing existence in which his command of the English language is vital. The superintendent's "Suddenly, Saar" in answer to Mr. Sen's question echoes the story's subject of a naive and complacent approach to language. These are only two instances of the common Bengali speaking style that gives English the impression of being a "exotic" variety spoken by a foreign people. Author explains why the Bengali people spoke in such a peculiar manner: "The Bengalis had their own execrable accent: they added an airy 'h' wherever they could after a 'b' or 'w' or an's. The word "virgin" sounded like a vharjeen, a tropical plant; "will" was a "wheel;" and "simple" was a "simple" (8)

The director, a south Indian, also says "harse" when referring to the horse. It's an out-of-the-ordinary use of Tamil-English, right up there with 'yate' for 'eight' and 'yugg' for 'egg.' The Director has a similar problem pronouncing words that start with "m." Mr. Sen jokes that the Director once told his personal assistant, "I want Yum YumYumeer, Yumpee," which translates to "I want M Ameer, M P."

The denouement of the novel, although crucial, is ultimately disappointing because of Mrs. Sen's inability to communicate effectively in English with her husband. Mrs. Sen wanted to know whether her husband preferred to sit inside or outdoors for eating supper. Despite its innocuousness, her 'execrable' Bengali accent made her question seem like she was asking whether I wanted to defecate inside or outside. Mr. Sen, upon learning that his wife's first form of contact with him was an invitation to defecate through the "deenerees on the table," felt rather anxious about the reaction of his English colleagues, had they been there.

In the novel, this misuse in English usage is not merely a different usage of a linguistic code, but a disgusting and humiliating attitude which never can accord with a proper and equal connection in marriage. As evidence, consider Mr. Sen, who, upon reading his wife's final letter to him, wore a cryptic, sardonic grin that gradually replaced his initial shock at his wife's untimely demise.

On the table beside the bed was an empty tumbler and two envelopes. Both were written in Bengali, one with her mother's name and one with his. As he read the English address, "To, Mr. Sen Esq.," a spooky grin formed on his face (33)

Adding the comma after "To" and using both "Mr" at the beginning of the name and "Esq." at the end are again a reflection of poor proficiency level which made Mr. Sen smile. The English

thus brought Mrs. Sen and Mr. Sen a terrible life after their marriage and an undesirable and pathetic death for Mrs. Sen who represented the poor proficiency level. Indeed, a language also serves as a conduit for cultural transmission. It is evident from what Mr. Sen has become and what Mrs. Sen who struggled between the coloniser's and the colonised culture. This problem of hybridist still exists as Mr. Sen thought if his wife were of a western make up then, "They would have kissed a hundred times between the wedding and the wedding night; they would have walked hand-in-hand through the forest and made love beside the river; they would have lain in each other's arms and sipped their Scotch. They would have nibbled at knick-knacks in between bouts of love; and they would have made love into the early hours of the morning." Unfortunately, Mrs. Sen's culture was different which believed in caressing the feet of the husband with respect. They were always at an emotional impasse because she could never improve herself to comprehend her husband and thus behave appropriately, and he could never improve to accept her. The story's climax, when "Sen laid his palm on her forehead," bridges the distance between them. The first time he ever physically touched his wife was at this wedding. And she was dead". (33)

Appropriation takes many forms, and the English used in India is a good example of how a language spontaneously evolves to meet the requirements of its speakers. Appropriation is not an issue in and of it, and may be a significant good development for a language. There are numerous examples of code switching and mixing throughout the narrative. "Mez par-on the table", "Hey spittoon lao", "sahib", "Arey" etc are incorporated inside English utterances. Untranslated words, fusion of syntactic structures, the creation of new words, and the use of neologisms and clagues all serve as indicators of varying degrees of appropriation. Untranslated terms include "Sahib," "Memsahib," and "chota hazri." Calques include expressions like "Much water had flowed down the Ganges" and "Heavens won't fall down." "Salaaming" is an instance of syntactic fusion.

The word "appropriation" plays a crucial role in the process of learning a new language. Although the degree to which it has been fully absorbed into Indian culture has always been up for debate, English has nevertheless become a de facto Indian language. Nevertheless English has become part and parcel of Indian consciousness both physically and mentally and we should find ways to adept. We've made significant progress in this regard. Almost a century has passed since Rajarao [4prophetic]'s remark in Kanthapura's prologue:

It is the language of our intellectual make-up-like Sanskrit or Persian was before –but not of our emotional make-up. We are all intuitively multilingual, many of us writing in our native tongue and English. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can't just refer to ourselves as Indians when we write. We've come to see the vast world as an integral part of who we are. Thus, it is imperative that we use a form of communication that will eventually prove to be as unique and colourful as the Irish or the American. The passage of time alone is sufficient to prove its worth (Rao vii)

To conclude, *Bride for the Sahib* displays the difficulty in the process of the appropriation of English language and the social aftermath due to poor proficiency levels. Khushwant Singh has an excellent use of postcolonial stylistics to show the problems in the concatenation of two cultures, two languages and so bringing out the difficulties through varied degrees of English ability.

Although the variants have been ingrained in Indian English, it is impossible to ignore the fact that they render the language unclear not only to a native speaker but also to his fellow men. This issue continues to have far-reaching consequences in the country. Such discrepancies or

deviations or 'errors' may not indicate the distinctiveness of a culture or community and rather show ignorance and lack of understanding of how the language is typically used.

It's a well-established fact that different groups of native English speakers have somewhat different patterns of accent and pronunciation. It's not due to illiteracy or a lack of intelligence; it's a dialectic trait. In addition, students who take the IELTS, TOEFL, or another international English proficiency test suffer a psychological setback because of their poor pronunciation. Many Indians after reaching their countries of destinations also experience trouble in getting accustomed and their lifestyles get more onerous owing to low proficiency in pronunciation levels.

References

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