

A Brief History of Study of English in India



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ABSTRACT

English in India is a dominant sign of people's ambitions for eminence in education and is widely spoken language by most of the people. It is referred as a global language and second most spoken language throughout the globe. English act as a distinct language in India because of being a diversified and ethnic country and it is widely used as second language in means of communication. English is not a direct language however, it is a dialect between English and Hindi in India. The study of English from Pre-Independence era to Post-Independence era in India is briefed here. "Indian English" is the result of language contact, which means it is "a product of contact between English and Indian mother tongues", which contributed to the development of the present-day "Indian English" because of the assortment of the linguistic facets and diverse social backdrops.

Keywords : Deliberation, Linguistic, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Instrumental, Panchdhatu, Canonical, Dailect, Flourishment

"Indian English" is a language which includes many dailects and is used in India. But it is not a native language. Like other variations of the English language, "Indian English" is the result of language contact. According to Schneider, it is "natural to expect that differences in extralinguistic backgrounds have resulted in the far-reaching differences between the individual varieties that we find today in their respective forms and functions." (Schneider 2007).

Language plays a role like a system and English has been an associated language. In fact, English is very important language which is used the most after Hindi language in Inida. English represents in Indians' minds, better education, better culture and higher intellect among the class of people. Indians who know English often combine it with Indian languages in their dialogue. It is also usual among Indians to suddenly move to speak fluent English in the middle

of their conversations. English also serves as the communicator among Indians who speak different languages. English is very important in some systems – legal, financial, educational and business.

'English Study' is an interesting topic of deliberation in India in 17th Century with the invent of East India Company. Initially, Britishers tried to learn Indian languages for proper communication byt when they dominated in political power, they created British India Provinces. Especially in the last decade of twentieth century many books were written on English Studies which revealed styles and shrtcomings as well of English studies in India like *The Lie of the Land: English Literary Studies in India* by Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan, *Teaching Literature in the Nineties* by Susie Tharu and *The Teaching of English Literature in India* by Sudhakar Marathe. There were many conferences organized to study and understand English Studies in India which were focused on the

form of English Studies in India in Pre-Independence and Post-Independence era and its consequences along with improvements in the area.

Linguistic Aspects and their development:

To understand the **phonology** of “Indian English” it is essential to distinguish between the “Indian English” pronunciation and the Received Pronunciation. The explanation for this phenomenon is that the dental sound is present in Indian languages and therefore it is easier in terms of enunciation for speakers. Besides the consonants, there are differences in the vowels. Indian English differs in its **Morphology** when Compared to Standard British English, i.e. the internal structure of words. The two most striking ones will be given in the following passage. After having a glimpse on the morphology, it is important to take a look at **syntax**, which deals with the construction of verbs and smaller phrases within sentences, especially, the “Indian English” syntax and the syntactic differences between Standard British English and “Indian English”.

Study of English in pre-Independence Period:

Study of English in Pre-Independence period was influenced and dominated by the study of classical literature and canonical texts. The period was marked with domination of Missionaries Institutions and their own trends of English Study. Milton’s *paradise Lost*, Homer’s *Iliad*, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*, Addison’s *Essays* can be seen the trend of English Study.

The English Christian missionaries came into India during 1813 and focused for building schools at primary level and middle level for Indian people in which the language of instruction was preferred local language. Gradually, the missionaries built high schools. The language for teaching in these schools was English which entertained the Indians who wanted to study in English and wanted acquire

knowledge of English. By the 1830s the Indian middle classe people started increasing their demands in various activities and fields. They felt due the prevailing conditions that English was the language required for a secure future in a government job, therefore many means of English education were started. The state was set for the first ‘big moment’ in the imperial history of English language teaching.

The British rulers began building their universities in India from 1857 onwards. English became the first language in Indian education. The ‘modern’ leaders of that period in India also supported English language and claimed it to be the main key towards success as it was mostly widespread till the period because of rulers. Indians who knew good English were seen as the new elite of India. According to the British laws the language of instruction at university level was English and therefore schools that emphasized English were favored by ambitious Indians.

Meanwhile some movements were started by great figures in India like Raja Ram Mohan Roy to introduce western scientific education through English Study. Many Indian students found poetry, drama and other writings difficult to understand and they started seeking admission in Universities and Colleges for understanding the system of English Study which continued till the independence.

Study of English in post-Independence Period

After Independence, Indian Government decided the policy towards English language and many forms of English Studies were focused by Institutions like poetry, prose, drama, fiction and essays. English Study in the post-independence period has been broadly determined and accepted on the reviews and recommendations of different Commissions and Committees. These Commissions and Committees were appointed time to time for review of the trend and teaching in English in India as it were the legacy obtained by Britishers during Colonization and it was

essential to set its tone as per the need and condition of the country. Few of them were the Review Committee for English in Indian Universities, the Study Group, the Curriculum Development Center for English etc. these Committees studied the usage of English Study and were meant to suggest about British-Literature.

Some of the innovative papers were suggested are New Literatures in English, colonial and post-colonial studies, popular literature, Creative Writing and translation and translation theories. One of the important contributions of these Committees was to widen the perspective in Indian English Study which was coveted over decades that the English Study was supposed to study only literary studies. Thus, the recommendations of the Commissions and Committees have been very instrumental in the development of English Studies in India. In post-Independence period, it was aimed that study in English should do an attempt to decolonize and for this "Panchdhatu" model was implemented for literary study in India. The five elements of this model were:

1. Literature in English from England
2. Literature in English from Elsewhere
3. Literature in English Translation
4. Literature in a Modern Indian Language
5. Literature in a Classical Language

A major and futile achievement may be seen with a place of prominence at all the level of education to both Indian writing in English and Indian literature in English translation. However, few modern literariness has pointed out that the complexities and contradictions are visible in Indian study of English which needs a lot of study and corrective measures so that study of English in India should be properly distributed in literature and language.

Till the period, most of the Nations have boarded upon a process of textbook contextualization when it comes to teaching English. The original pieces of writing by the native speakers of English are sought to be replaced by the writings of the nationals who are masters of English prose and poetry. In their creative writing, metaphors, idioms, and set phrases from the national languages, which imply local culture and religion, are more freely used. Translations from the local tales are more frequently substituted for tales from Europe. Furthermore, government-inspired documents on ideology become a vital part of the textbooks.

The recommendations of Commissions and Committees and the experts of English Study have impacted a lot the course of study of English in India through their futuristic vision and approach. Many suggestions were given to include Indian writing in English as a paper in the syllabus of English and was implemented well. Many Universities have included the paper related to the Indian context. This, the experts of English studies and pro-English scholars have undoubtedly contributed to the flourishing of English studies in India. Their contributions embarked a lot in the development and establishment of study of English in India and paved a way to the elevated and directional approach to the twenty first Century.

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