



## Essential and Features of Indian English

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### Abstract:

*As we know 21<sup>st</sup> century is the Education and Knowledge century. A North Carolina state university sponsored study speaking about the importance of communication skills in work place found out that: "Communication skills were considered more important than either technical knowledge...or computer skills."*

*In any industry almost no exception is made in any job category about the need for good communication skills. The importance of communication skills has spread through the society not as a requirement, but as a necessity. The most surprising aspect is that none of us are taught any kind of communication skills anytime either in school or college. Sometimes we take the most important things in life for granted and do not realize its importance until it is too late. Hence now in professional college we have to learn how to develop our communication skills through various LSRW skills which include listening English News, participating in Group Discussions, Presentation Skills, Role Plays, JAM, reading Comprehension, writing Essays, various types of Letters, Reports etc. All these activities definitely improve our communication skills.*

*Language remains potentially a communicative medium capable of expressing ideas and concepts as well as moods, feelings and attitudes. Language is learnt through use, through practice. As we know 'the more one is exposed to the use of language, the better one learns'. English is a means not only for international commerce; it has become increasingly essential for inter-state commerce and communication. In India, people going from North to South for education or business mostly communicate in English, which has become a link language. Keeping this in mind, the Parliament has also recognized English as an official language in addition to Hindi. All the facts of history and developments in present day India underline the continued importance of learning English. We must make the best use of English to develop ourselves culturally and materially so that we can compete with the best in the world of mind and matter. English language is our window to the world. Properly used, technology will help students acquire the skills they need to survive in a complex, highly technological knowledge-based economy world. Thus, English has become a major international language for worldwide communication. Proficiency in English is a mandatory requirement for any professional working in a global business environment.*

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### 1. Introduction

A language is a systematic means of communication by the use of sounds or conventional symbols. It is the code we all use to express ourselves and communicate to others. It is a

communication by word of mouth. It is the mental faculty or power of vocal communication. It is a system for communicating ideas and feelings using sounds, gestures, signs or marks. Any means of communicating ideas, specifically, human speech, the expression of ideas by the voice and sounds articulated by the organs of the throat and mouth is a language. This is a system for communication. A language is the written and spoken methods of combining words to create meaning used by a particular group of people.

Language, so far as we know, is something specific to humans, that is to say it is the basic capacity that distinguishes humans from all other living beings. Language therefore remains potentially a communicative medium capable of expressing ideas and concepts as well as moods, feelings and attitudes.

### **3. Essential of English**

A set of linguists who based their assumptions of language on psychology made claims that language is nothing but ‘habit formation’. According to them, language is learnt through use, through practice. In their view, ‘the more one is exposed to the use of language, the better one learns’.

Written languages use symbols (characters) to build words. The entire set of words is the language’s vocabulary. The ways in which the words can be meaningfully combined is defined by the language’s syntax and grammar. The actual meaning of words and combinations of words is defined by the language’s semantics.

The latest and the most advanced discoveries and inventions in science and technology are being made in the universities located in the United States of America where English language is the means of scientific discourse.

The historical circumstances of India (having been ruled by the British for over two centuries) have given the Indians an easy access to mastering English language, and innumerable opportunities for advancement in the field of science and technology. Many Indians have become so skilled in English language and have won many international awards for creative and comparative literatures during the last few years. Sometime ago, an Indian author, Arundhati Roy, won the prestigious booker prize for her book “The God of Small Things”. Her book sold lakhs of copies all over the globe.

Over the years, English language has become one of our principal assets in getting a global leadership for books written by Indian authors and for films made by Indians in English language. A famous Indian movie maker Shekhar Kapoor’s film “Elizabeth” has got several nominations for Oscar Awards. It does not require any further argument to establish the advantage English language has brought to us at the international level.

English language comes to our aid in our commercial transactions throughout the globe. English is the language of the latest business management in the world and Indian proficiency in English has brought laurels to many Indian business managers. English is a means not only for international commerce; it has become increasingly essential for inter-state commerce and communication.

In India, people going from North to South for education or business mostly communicate in English, which has become a link language. Keeping this in mind, the Parliament has also recognized English as an official language in addition to Hindi. All the facts of history and developments in present day India underline the continued importance of learning English in addition to vernaculars.

Some of the states of India are witnessing popular increase in public demand for teaching of English language from the primary classes. Realizing the importance, recently, the Minister of Indian Railways, Laloo Prasad Yadav, demands teaching of English language in schools. The great demand for admission in English medium schools throughout the country is a testimony to the attraction of English to the people of India. Many of the leaders, who denounce English, send their own children to English medium schools. Many of the schools in the country have English as the sole or additional medium of instruction.

A language attracts people because of the wealth of literature and knowledge enshrined in it. English poses no danger to Indian languages. The Indian languages are vibrant and are developing by the contributions of great minds using them as their vehicle of expression. English is available to us as a historical heritage in addition to our own language. We must make the best use of English to develop ourselves culturally and materially so that we can compete with the best in the world of mind and matter. English language is our window to the world.

English language is one tool to establish our viewpoint. We can learn from others experience. We can check the theories of foreigners against our experience. We can reject the untenable and accept the tenable. We can also propagate our theories among the international audience and readers.

We can make use of English to promote our worldview and spiritual heritage throughout the globe. Swami Vivekananda established the greatness of Indian view of religion at the world conference of religions in Chicago in 1893. He addressed the gathering in impressive English. Many spiritual gurus have since converted thousands of English people to our spirituality by expressing their thought and ideas in masterful English. English has thus become an effective means of promoting Indian view of life, and strengthening our cultural identity in the world.

When William Caxton set up his printing press in London (1477) the new hybrid language (vernacular English mixed with courtly French and scholarly Latin) became increasingly standardized, and by 1611, when the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible was published, the educated English of London had become the core of what is now called Standard English. By the time of Johnson's dictionary (1755) and the American Declaration of Independence (1776), English was international and recognizable as the language we use today. The Orthography of English was more or less established by 1650 and, in England in particular, a form of standard educated speech, known as Received Pronunciation (RP) spread from the major public schools in the 19th century. This accent was adopted in the early 20th century by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for its announcers and readers, and is variously known as RP, BBC English, Oxford English, and the King's or Queen's English. Generally, Standard English today does not depend on accent but rather on shared educational experience, mainly of the printed language. Present-day English is an immensely varied

language, having absorbed material from many other tongues. It is spoken by more than 300 million native speakers, and between 400 and 800 million foreign users. It is the official language of air transport and shipping; the leading language of science, technology, computers, and commerce; and a major medium of education, publishing, and international negotiation. For this reason, scholars frequently refer to its latest phase as World English.

### 3. Features of Indian English

English has a special status in India. Apart from having a place in the public institutions of the country, in parliament, the law courts, broadcasting, the press and the education system English has spread in our daily life. English plays a key role in professional relationships between foreign and Indian companies. English permeated symbolizes in Indian minds better education, better culture and higher intellect. Actually 4% of Indian use English. Thus India ranks third in the world after USA and the UK to use English as spoken language. Indian English comprises several dialects or varieties of English spoken primarily in India. This dialect evolved due to British colonial rule of India for nearly two hundred years. English is the co-official language of India, which has the world's largest English-speaking population.

After Hindi English is the most commonly spoken language in India. But usually Indians mingle English with Indian languages. Stylistic influence of Indian local languages is a particular feature of Indian literature in English. Indian English speakers often mix Hindi and other languages with English. Indians will often ask, "what is your good name?" which is translation of Hindi "Apka Shubh naam kya hai?" Shubh means auspicious or good, and it is basically used as a polite way of asking someone's name. Similarly Indians say "Today morning" (aaj Subha) or "Yesterday night" (kal raat) to mean this morning last night. Indians use shut up (chup bhait) which is generally used more causally in Hindi but it is offending term in America. Indians commonly use "you people" when they want to address more than one person. It is a simple translation of "aap log" or "tum log" but they do not realize that it carries with it racial connotation. Some expressions such as "general mai" (in general) and "ek minute" (one minute) are prevalent in Indian English.

Variations in the pronunciation of several phonemes are affected by the regional tongues. Several idiomatic forms crossing over from Indian literary and vernacular language also have made their way into the English used by the masses. Given India's diversity, however, there is indeed a general homogeneity in syntax and vocabulary that can be found among speakers across South Asia. In upper-class families, English is typically very close to Received Pronunciation, while still retaining hints of a uniquely Indian flavour. The form of English that Indians are taught in schools is essentially British English, Indian English had established itself as an audibly distinct dialect with its own quirks and specific phrases. However, due to the growing influence of American culture in recent decades, American English has begun challenging traditional British English as the model for English in the Indian subcontinent. The American English is spreading among Indian youth. American English spellings are also widely prevalent in scientific and technical publications while British English spellings are used in other media. British English or American English is the more practical dialect for emigrating Indians to adopt. It must be stressed, however, that British English retains its hold on the majority of Indians, particularly those of the older generation and the younger generation in smaller cities and towns. The distinct evolution of regional variations in contemporary usage has led to terms such as

Hinglish (Hindi + English), Tanglish (Tamil + English) and Minglish (Marathi + English). Indian accents vary greatly from those leaning more towards a purist British to those leaning more towards a more 'vernacular' (Indian language).

1. Use of *yaar*, *machaa*, *abey*, *arey* in an English conversation between Indians, mainly by people of native Hindi-speaking origin; 'da', 'machaa' is more frequently used in the South.
2. The progressive tense in stative verbs: I understand it. She knows the answer. An influence of traditional Hindi grammar, it is more common in northern states.
3. Use of "off it" and "on it" instead of "switch it off" and "switch it on."
4. Use of "current went" and "current came" for "The power went out" and "The power came back".
5. Use of word "wallah" to denote occupation or 'doing of/involvement in doing' something, as in "The taxi-wallah overcharged me.",
6. Use of "Can you drop me?" and "We will drop her first" instead of "Can you drop me off?" and "We will drop her off first"
7. "Out of station" to mean "out of town". This phrase has its origins in the posting of army officers to particular 'stations' during the days of the East India Company.
8. "Tell me": used when answering the phone, meaning "How can I help you?"
9. "Order for food" instead of "order food", as in "Let's order for sandwiches".  
Titles (of respect; formal)
10. Referring to elders, strangers or anyone meriting respect as "'jee'/'ji'" (suffix) as in "Please call a taxi for Gupta-ji" (North, West and East India).
11. Use of prefixes "Shree"/"Shri" (Mr) or "Shreemati"/"Shrimati" (Ms/Mrs): Shri Ravi Shankar or Shreemati Das Gupta.
12. As with Shree/Shreemati, use of suffixes "Saahib/Sāhab" (Mr) and "Begum" (Mrs)(Urdu) as in "Welcome to India, Smith-saahib." or "Begum Sahib would like some tea."
13. Use of "Mr" and "Mrs" as common nouns. For example, "Jyoti's Mr stopped by yesterday" or "My Mrs is not feeling well".
14. Use of "Ms" with first name. For example, Swathi Ashok Kumar might be addressed as "Ms Swathi" instead of "Ms Kumar". This is logical and perhaps the only possible correct usage in South India, especially in Tamil Nadu, where most people don't use a surname.
15. Use of the English words 'uncle' and 'aunty' as suffixes when addressing people such as distant relatives, neighbours, acquaintances, even total strangers (like shopkeepers) who are significantly older than oneself. E.g., "Hello, Swathi aunty!" In fact, in Indian culture, children or teenagers addressing their friend's parents as Mr Patel or Mrs Patel (etc.) is considered unacceptable, perhaps even offensive—a substitution of Sir/Ma'am is also not suitable except for teachers. On the contrary, if a person is really one's uncle or aunt, he/she will usually not be addressed as "uncle"/"auntie", but with the name of the relation in the vernacular Indian language, even while conversing in English. It is interesting to observe that calling one's friends' parents auntie and uncle was also very common in Great Britain in the 1960s and 70s but has is much rarer today. For example, if a woman is one's mother's sister, she would not be addressed (by a Hindi speaker) as "auntie" but as *Mausi* (Hindi).
16. Use of Respected Sir while starting a formal letter instead of Dear Sir. Again, such letters are ended with non-standard greetings, such as "Yours respectfully", or "Yours obediently", rather than the standard "Yours sincerely/faithfully/truly".

17. Use of "Baba" (father) while referring to an elderly male, such as "No Baba, just try and understand, I cannot come today".
18. Use of interjections Arey! and acchha! to express a wide range of emotions, usually positive though occasionally not, as in "Arey! What a good job you did!", "Accha, so that's your plan." or "Arey, what bad luck, yaar!"
19. Use of the word "chal" (Hindi for the verb "walk") to mean the interjection "Ok", as in "Chal, I gotta go now" at the end of a phone call
20. Use of T-K in place of O.K. when answering a question, as in "Would you like to come to the movie?" -- "T-K, I'll meet you there later." ("theek hai", literally "fine is", meaning "okay")
21. Use of oof! to show distress or frustration, as in "Oof! The baby's crying again!"
22. Use of "Wah" to express admiration, especially in musical settings, as in "Wah! Wah! You play the sitar so well!"
23. "Paining" used when "hurting" would be more common in Standard American and British: "My head is paining." These are some of the special features of Indian English which are accepted in India.

#### 4. Conclusion

If we see Educational field, we will find much of the syllabus is written in English. Children are taught and encouraged to learn English on starting levels. And accordingly, as they promote to the next levels they study almost all the subjects in English. We see the Internet and find more than 90% of websites written and created in English. And even when you see some sites in other languages, they also give you the option to translate in English. All the research and studies you find will be written and typed in English. All the information regarding each and everything contains English Language. There is another factor that make English very important in this world is it is the easiest language of the world to learn. Many people think that it is very difficult and confusing. But I suggest them to start and learn only for a week and they will feel easy with English. With good understanding and communication in English, we can travel around the globe. We get assistance and help in English in every part of world. You can test it by on line travel. Better you visit some offices, companies, governmental organizations, and other departments, and you will see the importance of English as they hire the professional staff after getting know that whether the people they are hiring are good at English or not. This is the company's will that their staffs are not even well educated but also good English speaker, writer and Reader. Those who are still unaware about the importance of English. They should start learning English as a time will come when everything would be understood, spoken and written in English. Better watch some media and get the scope of English.

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