

Chris Thomas
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Globalization and its Homogenizing Effect on Hindi as the Dominant Language of India

Hindi, while the official language of India, has seen its influence questioned by the spread of globalization and the necessitation of English throughout Indian society. How much sway does the official language currently hold in India compared to English? In this paper I will argue that Hindi's claim to being the dominant language of India has been in contention for some time, and the increasing reach of globalization has only exacerbated this trend.

Several scholars have written in general about the relationship between globalization and language. Monica Heller, Jonathan Friedman, and Stig Hjarvard all have published articles regarding the changing nature of language in a climate of increasing globalization. The importance of ethnolinguistic minorities in examining the impacts of globalization is a central theme around which Heller's article is based. This topic proves especially significant when one views English speakers in India as an ethnolinguistic minority. Friedman's article readily lends itself to a comparison of Indian political parties and the use of language as an alternative identification indicator. Examples of Hjarvard's medialects abound throughout India, the most prominent of which is Hinglish, a hybridization of Hindi and English easily found in Bollywood cinema. Other scholars have written about languages experiencing decline and efforts to revitalize them. Patrick Eisenlohr and Salikoko S. Mufwene both write about this phenomenon in the Annual Review of Anthropology. Eisenlohr in particular focuses on revitalization efforts in relation to indigenous languages in his article. Techniques described in his article are readily applicable when viewed through a Hindi/English context, with several striking examples

including Hindu nationalist movements in Mumbai and Gujarat to be found. Rajesh Pillania, Revathi Krishnaswamy, John Charles Hawley, Daya Kishan Thussu, David Schaefer and Kavita Karan have all written on globalization and its effects on Indian media. Pillania, Schaefer, and Karan's focus on Bollywood in their articles highlights the industry as a vehicle for a substantial portion of India's Hindi/English clash and the significant amount of Western influence experienced throughout Indian cinema.

Examining India's relationship with the English language and its reaction to globalization is important. The results of such an examination could be indicative of other similar situations around the globe. India has the second largest population in the world, along with the second highest number of English speakers. The experiences of the Indian people and the nation's major indigenous language (Hindi) in reference to the increasing spread of globalization could prove to be an important case study in predicting scenarios in various other regions across the world stage.

Hindi is currently both the official language of the Indian government as well as the first language of a majority of its people (41%). However, it is English that has enjoyed significantly greater growth throughout the subcontinent in recent years, with trends in the economic and education sectors prompting estimates of even greater increases in the future. This competition between the two languages is not new – it has been in play ever since the British began to colonize the subcontinent. However, it is the relatively recent events of globalization that have provided the tipping point in English's favor in this centuries long struggle.

Hindi's influence in India

1. History
- a. Legal

According to the Official Languages Act of 1963, Hindi is the “*Rajbhasha*”, or official language of India. However, the act also allows for the continued use of English in official business alongside Hindi. The Official Language Policy of the Union states that “Hindi in Devanagari script is the official language of the union...In addition to Hindi language English language may also be used for official purposes.”¹ This running dichotomy of dual official languages has been the norm in India ever since independence and the adoption of its constitution. A legacy of its colonial history as a member of the British Empire, the English language was allowed to be used to conduct official business alongside Hindi, a relationship which was expected to last 15 years, as enshrined in the constitution. However, successive attempts to enforce this expiration have failed due to significant concern among state governments without Hindi speaking majorities. As a result, this clause of the Official Languages Act, allowing for the dual use of Hindi and English in official capacities, has been renewed each year since it was passed in 1963.

An interesting article in The Times of India published in 2010 gives some credibility to the claim that Hindi is not the national language of India and India has no one national language at all. The article details a case in the state high court of Gujarat, in which the judge ruled against the plaintiffs, in light of the fact that they were unable to produce a single official document which explicitly stated that Hindi is the national language of India. While it remains unclear if Hindi is in fact the national language of India, there is no doubt that it is the official language of the government.

b. Media

Bollywood

¹ India. Department of Official Language. Department of Official Language. *Rajbhasha Vibhag*. Department of Official Language, 2011. Web. 2 Oct. 2013.

From Classics like Mughal-e-Azam and Mother India to recent works such as Lage Raho Munnabhai and 3 Idiots, Indian cinema has come a long way in the past 90 or so years. Bollywood films have been growing steadily more westernized, with on screen kissing scenes, sexual innuendo, exotic western locations, and most importantly an adoption of the use of Hinglish. Portraying the now oft used slang of today's urban, English educated Indian youth, Bollywood actors speak a mix of Hindi and English to each other. This dramatic change from the once purely Hindi (and Urdu) scripts of classical Bollywood cinema showcases the influence that globalization and western media have enjoyed throughout India.

c. Geography



Figure 1: Map detailing India's political boundaries United States of America. Central Intelligence Agency. *CIA World Factbook*. CIA, 11 Sept. 2013. Web. 2 Oct. 2013.

States and Regions

India shares its borders with Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Burma. The populations of these nations are separated not only by political borders, but along religious lines as well. The ethnic makeup of populations throughout India's border regions correspond to linguistic differences centering around religious ties. Those in India's Northwest are more likely to speak Urdu than their compatriots living in other regions. In a similar fashion, Northeastern Indian states experience much greater concentrations of speakers of languages in the Tibeto-Burman family, along with significantly lower rates of Hindi speakers than states located in India's central region.

2.

Demographics

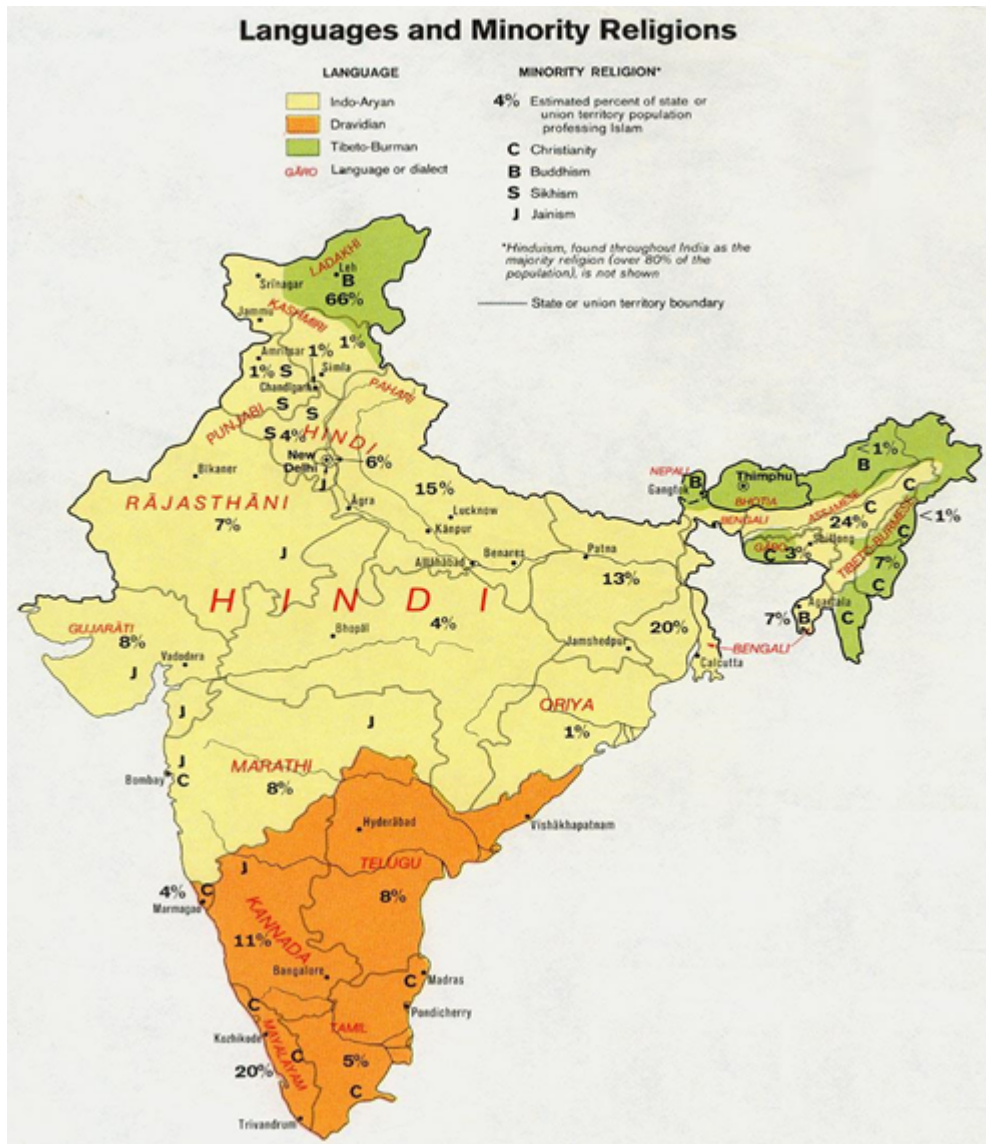


Figure 2: Map detailing India's linguistic families"University of Texas Libraries." *India Maps*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

a. Hindi Speakers

According to cia.gov "English enjoys the status of subsidiary official language but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication; Hindi is the

most widely spoken language and primary tongue of 41% of the people.”² Over 400 million Indian citizens identified themselves as Hindi speakers in the 2001 census.³ This is more than any other language spoken in the subcontinent. A significant population of Hindi speakers can be found in every region of the country, with the highest concentrations located in the nation’s central farming belt.

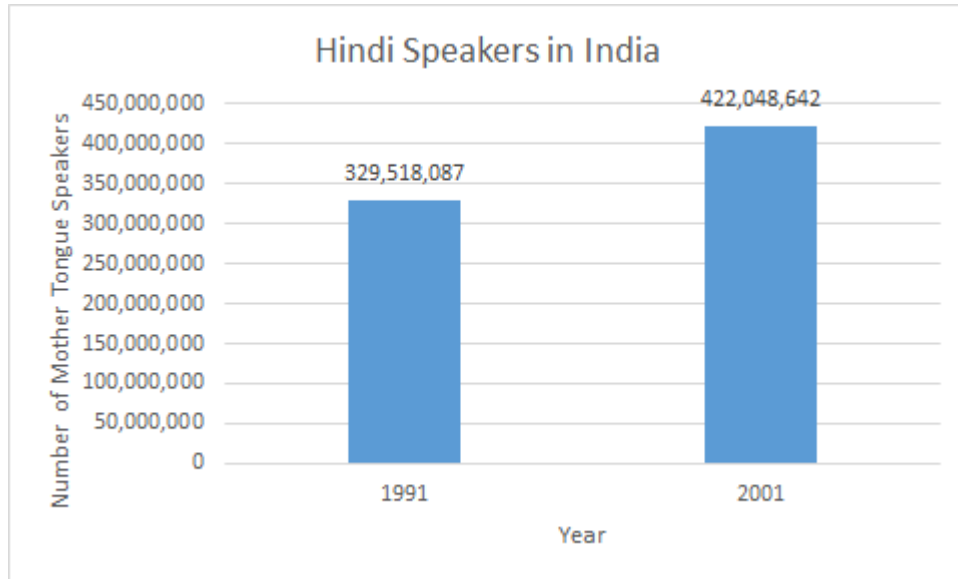


Figure 3: Chart detailing the increase in the number of Hindi Speakers in India. Data from the Census of India ("Census of India." *Census of India*. Government of India, 2001. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.)

b. Non-Hindi Speakers

English

India has the second largest number of English speakers in the world, after the United States. Around 10% of India’s population, or 125 million people are recognized as English

² United States of America. Central Intelligence Agency. *CIA World Factbook*. CIA, 11 Sept. 2013. Web. 2 Oct. 2013.

³ "Census of India." *Census of India*. Government of India, 2001. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

speakers. This number is projected to grow substantially – quadrupling in size in the next decade.⁴

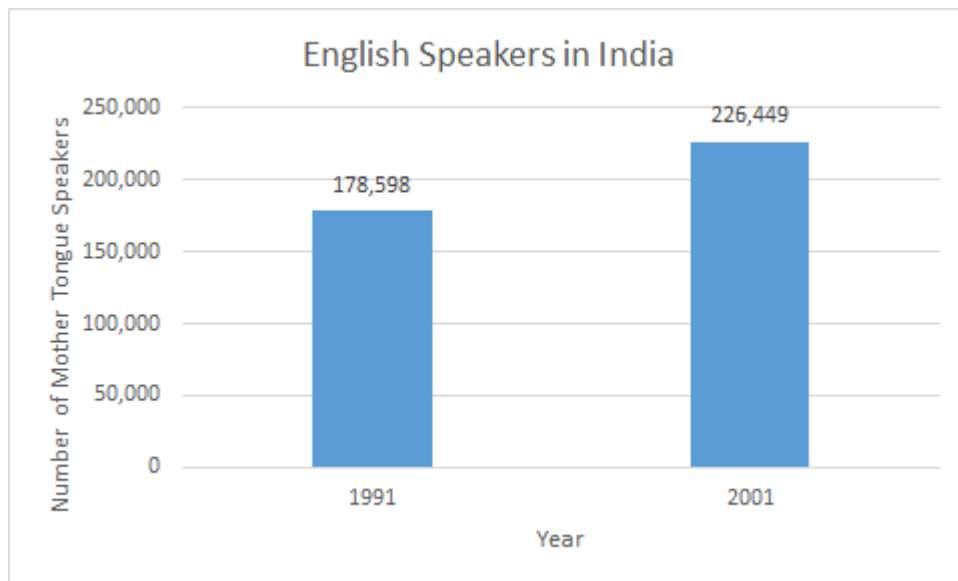


Figure 4: Chart detailing an increase in English speakers in India. Data from the Census of India ("**Census of India.**" *Census of India*. Government of India, 2001. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.)

Other official state languages

India is an exceedingly diverse nation, with over 325 officially recognized languages spoken throughout the subcontinent. Included in this number are the 22 official state languages: Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Sanskrit, Maithili, Bodo, Dogri, Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali, and Santhali.

⁴ Masani, Zareer. "English or Hinglish - Which Will India Choose?" *BBC News Magazine*. BBC News, 26 Nov. 2012. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

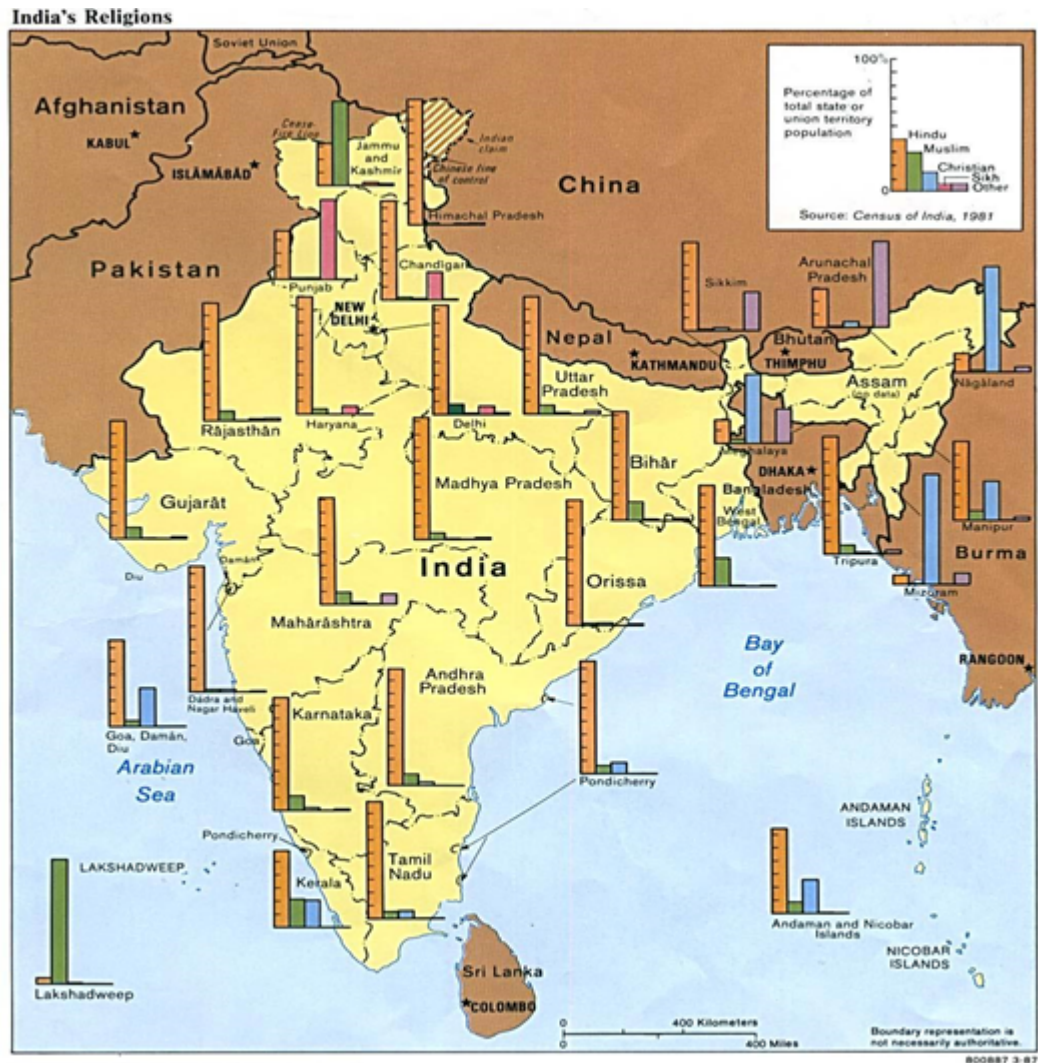


Figure 5: Map detailing India's religious makeup. From the Perry Casteneda Library at the University of Texas at Austin ("University of Texas Libraries." *India Maps*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.)

Religion

a. Hindi use in Hindu dominated areas

The vast majority of India's population identify themselves as Hindu (80.5%) and India has the largest Muslim minority in the world. Around 177,286,000 or 13.4% of the nation's total population identify themselves as Muslim. Other significant religious minorities include

Christians, which make up 2.3% of India's population and Sikhs who make up 1.9% of the total population.

Hindi use is concentrated throughout the central and northwestern regions of India, with a substantial minority of Hindi speakers in states without majority Hindu populations in these regions. Hindi is not significantly prevalent among most Southern states, where languages stemming from the Dravidian language family are in the majority. The Hindu religion and Hindi language share their roots in Sanskrit, an ancient vernacular belonging to the Indo-Aryan language family. The bulk of Hindu religious texts were written in Sanskrit, with many religious figures thought to converse in the language. Hindi was created with an eye to defining the Indian nation as Hindu, as during partition in 1947 India and Pakistan were formed largely along religious lines. This is especially prescient considering the religious diversity of India, with the largest concentrations of Hindi speakers found among regions that enjoy a Hindu majority among their populations.

1. History

Colonial legacy

The English East India Company first colonized India in the early 18th century. By the end of the century, the British crown had taken over. With official administration by the British royal government, standardization became the norm. Promotion of English culture and language was given special importance among colonial officials. As a member of the supreme council of India, eminent historian Thomas Macaulay was able to put into practice his *Minute on Education*, a piece of legislation that advocated the use of English as the primary mode of communication within the British empire. Dubbed Macaulayism by subsequent historians, the legislation also sought to divide the world into civilization and barbarism. According to Macaulay, English was

the hallmark of civilized society, one that must be shared with Britain's colonial subjects. Under Macaulayism, administrators were tasked with overhauling the education system in India, replacing Persian with English as the lingua franca.

English Influence in India

“Of all the legacies of the Raj, none is more important than the English language and the modern school system...In indigenising English, as so many people have done in so many nations across the world, we have made the language our own...Today, English in India is seen as just another Indian language.”⁵ (Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in address to Oxford University, 7/8/2005)

This quote by the current Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh, encapsulates the lasting impact that the British colonization of India had on the subcontinent, as well as the significant influence the English language continues to wield throughout the nation to this day.

2. Education

In recent years, India has experienced a rapid increase in the number of institutions of higher education as well as a significant rise in the number of enrollments. This great leap is to be expected with the tremendous increase in population that has occurred since independence. However, this increase can also be attributed to a substantial emphasis on higher education in government policy. Since independence, government policy in regards to the education sector has been focused on making the education system more equitable. The historical system inherited from the British fostered a culture of elitism, favoring a minority of wealthy intermediaries between colonial officials and their subjects. Along with the drive to remake the

⁵ "Address by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in Acceptance of Honorary Degree from Oxford University." *Prime Minister of India - Dr. Manmohan Singh*. Government of India, 8 July 2005. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

education system into one in which a majority of the population can partake in, the Indian government has increasingly pursued policies that encourage enrollment in institutions of higher education. This emphasis on tertiary education has led to a significant increase in both the number of students enrolling and the number of colleges and universities throughout the nation.

A significant minority, 6% of Indian youth study in English medium schools. Comparatively, an estimated 50% study in Hindi medium schools around India.⁶

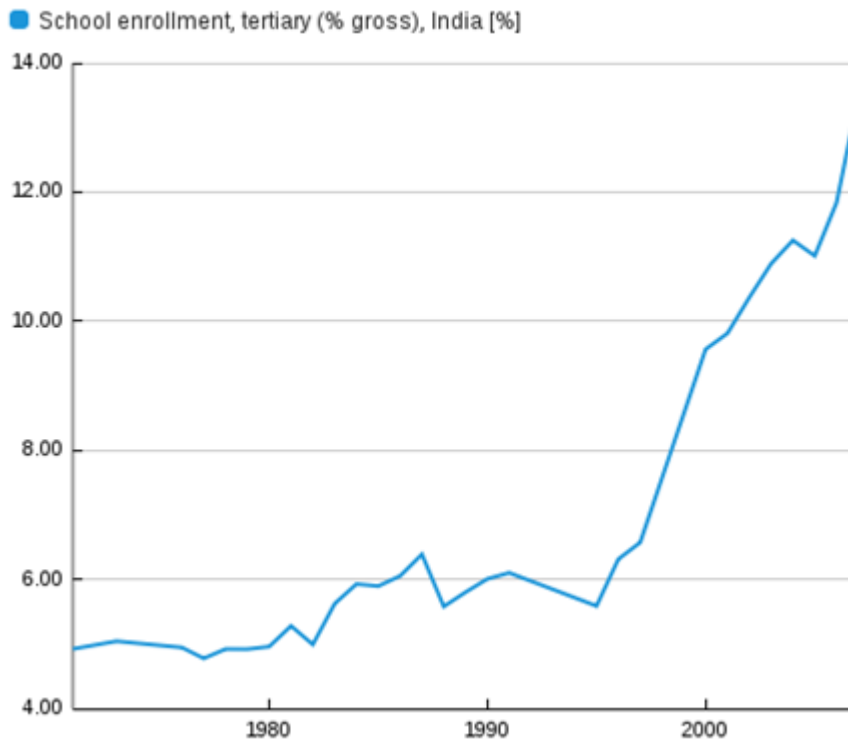


Figure 6: Chart detailing the increase in enrollments at institutions of higher learning in India over the past several decades. From Timetric.com ("**School Enrollment, Tertiary (% Gross), India | Timetric.com.**" *School Enrollment, Tertiary (% Gross), India | Timetric.com.* Timetric, n.d. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.)

⁶ Nagarajan, Rema. "August, English." *Times of India*. Times of India, 27 Mar. 2010. Web. 11 Nov. 2013

“In its size and diversity, India has the third largest higher education system in the world, next only to China and the United States.”⁷

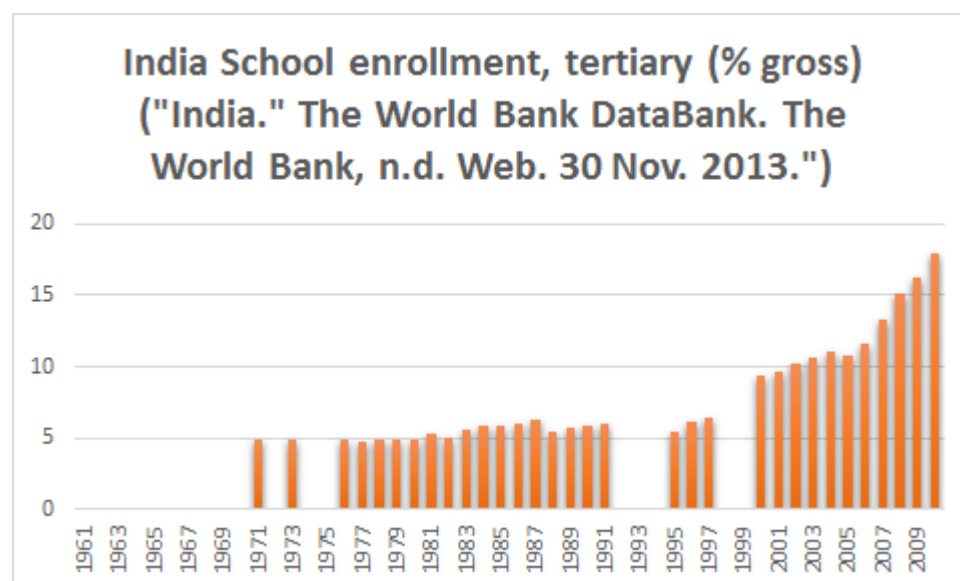
Table 1: Growth in Indian Institutions of Higher Education from 1970 - 2005

Years	Colleges for General Education	Colleges for Professional Education	Universities/Deemed Univ./Institutes of National Importance
1970-71	2285	992	82
1975-76	3667	3276**	101
1980-81	3421	3542**	110
1985-86	4067	1533**	126
1990-91	4862	886	184
1991-92	5058	950	196
1992-93	5334	989	207
1993-94	5639	1125	213
1994-95	6089	1230	219
1995-96	6569	1354	226
1996-97	6759	1770	228
1997-98	7199	2075	229
1998-99	7494	2113	237

⁷ "World DataBank." *The World Bank DataBank*. The World Bank, n.d. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

1999-00*	7782	2124	244
2000-01*	7929	2223	254
2001-02*	8737	2409	272
2002-03*	9166	2610	304
2003-04*	9427	2751	304
2004-05*	10377	3201	364

** Includes institutions for Post-Matric courses.



3. Media

Stig Hjarvard's assertion of media as an integral part of globalization and the spread of the English language through media is readily applicable in examining the effect of media in regards to the utilization of both English and Hindi in India. "The media both are vehicles of Anglo-Saxon culture and contribute to the anglicization of global culture. The media are more than a neutral channel through which Anglo-American culture spreads; by virtue of their institutional structure and a strong dominance of English-speaking actors in the software industry

in a broader sense (i.e., computers, television, music, etc.) they actively contribute to cementing the paramouncy of English over other languages...any analysis of an increasingly mediated society's use of language must also take into account the linguistic variants that arise out of specific media."⁸ In this excerpt, Hjarvard stresses the transformative power of an English language dominated media, particularly with regards to languages that lack a substantive international reach. While Hindi does enjoy a strong international audience as a result of India's extensive diaspora and the success of the Bollywood film industry, Hjarvard's claims of significant English influence on local culture and language still ring true. When viewed within the wider context of globalization, Hjarvard's argument concerning the creation of medialects in response to this foreign influence becomes all the more relevant. Indian's strident use of "Hinglish", a hybridization of Hindi and English, is a prime example of influence that media has wielded throughout the nation's cultural scene. Bollywood films in particular make use of Hinglish, employing a mixture of both languages in it's character's dialogues in order to appeal to an increasingly English-literate youth market. A growing number of Bollywood films in recent years have been found to include English words in their titles as well. According to a study by Zee Research Group (ZRG), over half of Bollywood movies released over the last two years have included English words in their titles. "In 2011, 73 out of 131 movies released used English words in Hindi movies."⁹ Actors in Bollywood films are often heard employing the linguistic technique "code switching", effortlessly switching back and forth between Hindi and English within a single conversation.

⁸ Hjarvard, Stig. "The Globalization of Language. How the Media Contribute to the Spread of English and the Emergence of Medialects." *Nordicom Review* 1-2 (2004): 75-97. Print.

⁹ Sharma, Pankaj. "Is Hindi Losing out to English in Bollywood?" *Zee News*. Diligent Media Corporation, 12 Oct. 2012. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

The changing composition of languages used in Bollywood films provides fodder for Hjarvard's argument for the creation of medialects. However, Bollywood is experiencing not only a linguistic change but a cultural transformation as well. In the past decade, filmmakers have proven themselves to be more open to exploring dramatic and substantive storylines that closely resemble film genres popularized by Hollywood. Films sans the ubiquitous dance numbers and tearful family reunions of classical Hindi-centric media have cropped up, heralding the dawn of an era in which Bollywood films are more readily available to and understood by an international audience. This trend runs in line with Hjarvard's claim of cultural change brought about by English dominated media, and is indicative of the broader implications inherent in the spread of globalization.

The importance of the changes brought about in the Indian film industry in examining the multi-faceted impacts of globalization cannot be overstated. David Schaefer and Kavita Karan attempt to explain the significance of this aspect of the wider globalization phenomenon in their article *Bollywood Cinema at the Crossroads: Tracking the Dimensions of Globalization in Postcolonial Popular Hindi Cinema*. "Given the centrality of film within global mediascapes, it would be logical to expect forces of globalization to influence discourses produced within cinematic public spheres--particularly in profoundly multicultural societies like India--as filmmakers draw upon prevailing cultural moods to attract the largest possible audiences. Typical research narratives assert that, beginning with economic liberalization in the 1990s, the rapid diffusion of satellite, cable television, videocassette, VCD, and DVD distribution by the end of the century prompted Indian filmmakers to change their production styles, deliberately infusing movies with globalized messages designed for both international and domestic audiences, particularly targeting young viewers enamored with Western lifestyles. According to

these narratives, this ‘opening up’ prompted Indian filmmakers to promote non-Indian desires and interests, nudging the content of popular films toward a global orientation, as evidenced by popular Non-resident Indian (NRI) films like *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*, and *Kal Ho Na Ho*.¹⁰ The films cited by Schaefer and Karan provide striking examples of the interplay between Indian and Western cultural themes within Bollywood productions. All possess titles absent of English, yet the characters in each of the films engage in code switching behaviors, utilizing the Hinglish slang familiar with modern India’s urban youth, as well as members of the country’s extensive diaspora. Schaefer and Karan emphasize that these films are particularly popular among India’s NRI community, in part because they incorporate themes traditionally associated with a more Western style of filmmaking. NRI audiences are able to relate to classical Indian cultural themes and Hindi language, as well as the Western locations and cultural difficulties experienced by living in a foreign country. Schaefer and Karan’s emphasis on Indian filmmakers pandering to audiences enamored with a Western lifestyle is particularly significant. When looking at the transformative aspects of globalization in the context of film, it is important to recognize the causative relationship between filmmakers and audiences. Bollywood has experienced such a shift not only because of increasing international influence experienced by filmmakers and brought about by globalization, but also through the varied tastes of its audiences, particularly those in India’s growing diaspora and the international market. While the linguistic changes occurring in Bollywood are particularly indicative of the effects of globalization, the economic aspects of such changes also remain significant.

¹⁰ Schaefer, David J., and Kavita Karan. "Bollywood cinema at the crossroads: tracking the dimensions of globalization in postcolonial popular Hindi cinema." *Mass Communication and Society* 14.6 (2011): 700-719.

In addition to the changing linguistic landscape in Indian media, international partnerships and the increase in export markets account for a significant departure from traditional Indian cinema, a transformation fostered by globalization. "Indian movie exports have grown for around 60% recently. The USA and Canada are two major export destinations accounting for 30 percent followed by the UK with 25% and Mauritius and Dubai with 10% each....With the international audience, there is notable acceptance of Indian movie themes combined with some of the cross-over movies made by international production houses. On January 24, 2005 Percept Picture Company joined hands with Michael Douglas' production company Further Films and Sahara One to co-produce the \$50 million *Racing the Monsoon*."¹¹ Rajesh Pillania's article *The Globalization of Indian Hindi Movie Industry* focuses on the increasing economic, technological and cultural ties binding Bollywood with the international market. He also emphasizes the importance of India's extensive diaspora in maintaining the popularity of Indian films abroad. In an attempt to increase market share and appeal to the Indian diaspora as well as international audiences, Bollywood filmmakers have begun to include linguistic and cultural traits that may be more familiar to Western filmgoers. These changes affect the character dialogue, set location, and even composition of Indian films and are greatly influenced by Hollywood-Bollywood co-production partnerships. The changes wrought by globalization in the Indian film industry paint a picture of the larger implications of the globalization phenomenon, yet they only represent one aspect of media that has been affected. India's news media presents a clearer picture of the domestic ramifications globalization has had in determining the status of India's languages.

National news

¹¹ Pillania, Rajesh K. "The Globalization of Indian Hindi Movie Industry." *Ideas*. Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis, 2008. Web. 18 Sept. 2013.

According to the non-profit organization Audit Bureau of Circulations, Hindi publications were the most widely circulated in India in the year 2012, with 17,306,552 average certified copies.¹² English publications were the next most prevalent, with 12,342,160 average certified copies. This is up from 10,743,681 average certified copies in 2011. This represents a significant increase from 2005, when English publications only totaled 6,263,491 throughout the country. The Times of India, an English language newspaper, is the most widely circulated in the country, with 3.146 million copies. This trend of increasing English language circulation is indicative of an increasingly English literate public in the subcontinent. English language publications occupy a significant portion of the Indian newspaper market, yet still remain short of matching the influence wielded by publications in Hindi.

When looking at readership, Hindi language newspapers clearly win out. According to the Indian Readership Survey, Hindi dailies such as *Dainik Jagran*, *Dainik Bhaskar* and *Hindustan* account for 5 out of the top 10 newspapers in terms of readership. *The Times of India* is the only English language newspaper to break the top 10 category, coming in 6th place with an average daily readership of 7.615 million.¹³ When looking at daily readership, English language newspapers do not yet seriously rival their Hindi language counterparts. However, the data shows a significant increase in English language readership over the past couple of years, an increase that is far greater than the corresponding figures for Hindi language dailies.

4. Globalization

In his article *Globalizing Languages: Ideologies and Realities of the Contemporary Global System*, Jonathan Friedman writes that the current globalization phenomenon is indicative

¹² "Circulation Figures of Member Publications." *Audit Bureau of Circulations of India*. Audit Bureau of Circulations, June 2012. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

¹³ "Indian Readership Survey." *Media Research Users Council*. Media Research Users Council, n.d. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

of a decentralization of the state, coupled with an increase in the prevalence of identification based on alternatives to the traditional nationalistic model. Among these alternative identifiers are those centered around linguistic ties. “Globalization is best understood as a phase of decentralization of wealth and power in the world arena that is a hallmark of a decline in economic hegemony, a phase accompanied by enormous dislocations and migrations of people, by class polarization and cultural fragmentation, and by the rise of new powerful regions. The current period of globalization is also characterized by a decline in the capacity of states to nationalize, and, consequently, by the upsurge of a series of alternative identifications, such as those based on indigenesness, regional location, and immigrant status.”¹⁴ This claim is highly applicable to the increasing importance of English in India and the relationship that the English language has with the dominant language on the subcontinent, Hindi. Hindu political groups and far-right nationalists often emphasize their use of Hindi as a claim to legitimacy. Yet they also emphasize, with equal importance, their belonging to a local community. The advent of globalization and the subsequent rise of importance enjoyed by English have proved threatening to these groups in recent years, as evidenced by the steady stream of electoral defeats in high ranking political offices throughout the Indian government. The Congress party has dominated elections since 2004, when it took over power from the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Congress Party continues to enjoy political success, with both current Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pranab Mukherjee in office.

In his article, *Language Revitalization and New Technologies: Cultures of Electronic Mediation and the Refiguring of Communities* Patrick Eisenlohr explores the new technologies

¹⁴ Friedman, Jonathan. “Globalizing Languages: Ideologies and Realities of the Contemporary Global System” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 105, No. 4, Special Issue: Language Politics and Practices (Dec., 2003), pp. 744-752

available for facilitating and disseminating discourse on the topic of language revitalization. He examines contemporary methods for bringing back lesser-known languages and the effects of modern technology on them. He posits that “New technologies are treated as part of cultures of electronic mediation, connecting sociocultural valuations to mediated discourse. Their use often has important political implications, given that projects of language revitalization are often linked to claims of ethnolinguistic recognition” (Eisenlohr, 1). He argues that new technologies for revitalizing and sustaining endangered languages are of great import to the political and cultural arenas, not only because they involve the use of language to promote ethnolinguistic identity but also because they provide a means for “new cultural objects to be stored, displayed and circulated”.¹⁵ Eisenlohr’s work is of particular importance when it comes to discussing the use of indigenous language use in Indian politics. Politicians, especially right-wing leaders, in India have been known to use indigenous language decline and subsequent revitalization efforts as a rallying position for their supporters. Bal Thackeray formed his political party Shiv Sena with rhetoric espousing the grave threats that the Marathi language faced following the rise of English and Hindi within the state of Maharashtra and advocating policies aimed at revitalizing Marathi. In recent years, Raj Thackeray, nephew of Bal Thackeray, has used his own political party, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) to provoke anti-immigrant sentiment and continue to push for legislation aimed at increasing the use of Marathi throughout Maharashtra. In particular, Thackeray has advocated for the use of Marathi on shop signs (in place of English),

¹⁵ Eisenlohr, Patrick. “Language Revitalization and New Technologies: Cultures of Electronic Mediation and the Refiguring of Communities” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 33, (2004), pp. 21-45

and the use of the term “Mumbai” to describe Maharashtra’s capital city (also known as Bombay).¹⁶

Monica Heller writes in her article *Globalization, the New Economy, and the Commodification of Language and Identity* that the trends inherent in the modern phenomenon of globalization affect members of ethnolinguistic minorities far greater than members of the ethnolinguistic majority of a country. “First, without an actual investment in a state, ethnolinguistic minorities feel first, and possibly hardest, the attack on the nation-State that new circumstances represent. This is partly because the opposition to their statehood from centralized states is suddenly weakened, but also, at the same time, their own attempts at reproducing similar states becomes less likely. Second, at the same time, by virtue of their minority status, they possess multilingual repertoires whose value and role are directly implicated in globalization. Third, globalization has opened up spaces for local organization, precisely the area where ethnolinguistic minorities can best hope to exercise some control.”¹⁷ In this excerpt, Heller speaks to the multifaceted impact that globalization has had on the ethnolinguistic minority community. While in this paper she is writing specifically about the experiences of the francophone community in Canada, her claims can be applied to look at globalization’s effects on English speakers throughout the Indian subcontinent. In particular, Heller’s comment about the multilingual repertoires employed by ethnolinguistic minorities rings especially true in the Indian English speaking context. The advent of globalization has led to a significant increase in the number of Indians speaking English, especially in the education sector. This is not to say that members of the Hindi speaking majority have switched to using the English language as their

¹⁶ "Make Marathi Compulsory in Schools: Raj Thackeray." *The Times of India*. Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd., 14 July 2008. Web. 11 Dec. 2013.

¹⁷ Heller, Monica. "Globalization, the New Economy, and the Commodification of Language and Identity." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7.4 (2003): 473-92. Print.

primary vehicle of communication. Rather, it is that the prevalence of globalization has further elevated the already heightened importance of English, even as a second language.

a. Increased demand for globalized workers

The stock of foreign direct investment (FDI) in India is currently approximately \$220 billion, or 12% of GDP, with multinational corporations such as Nokia, Sony, Nestle, Unilever and GlaxoSmithKline investing heavily in the country. “Unlike FDI in China, which has been directed at building factories for export, investment in India is aimed at the domestic market-only 12% of the firm’s sales were foreign.”¹⁸ As it is intended for domestic consumption, the bulk of foreign investment in India requires significant cultural, as well as linguistic training in order to effectively integrate into the nation’s business market. Inroads made by multinational corporations in recent years have brought India unprecedented contact with international markets, a trend that is only projected to increase in the near future. With such integration expected to grow, the need for an educated workforce with command over a lingua franca (English) in which to effectively facilitate communication among all parties is of paramount importance.

b. Tech/IT - Bangalore

At the forefront of India’s connections to international markets, the IT industry remains a major attractor of foreign investment in the country. The city of Bangalore (Bengaluru) in Southern India is often seen as the hub of the Indian information technology industry, topping the nation in areas of engineering research and development. “As many as 25 more global companies have established R&D centers in India since the beginning of 2012. This takes the total number of MNC R&D centers in India to about 1,031....These MNC captive centers in India, combined with Indian providers of engineering R&D outsourcing, account for about 23%

¹⁸ "The Rewards of Royalty; Foreign Companies in India." *The Economist (US)* 26 Jan. 2013: n. pag. *The Economist*. The Economist, 26 Jan. 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

of the overall global engineering R&D outsourcing market. This makes India by far the largest provider of such outsourcing services.”¹⁹ Inherent in Bangalore’s propensity to appeal to foreign multinational companies is its people’s knowledge of a common language that is able to bind together migrants from all over the subcontinent, allowing them to communicate effectively not just among themselves, but also with foreign professionals. Hindi may be the dominant language of India, counting nearly half (40%) of its population among its speakers. However, its influence is concentrated in the north central region, where most of its speakers reside. Hindi holds a far less substantial foothold in the South, whose states play host to a diverse array of languages, all of which can trace their roots to the Dravidian language family, which is distinctly separate from the Indo-Aryan origins of Hindi. In this void, English emerges as the lingua franca, uniting local Bangalore residents, migrants, and foreigners alike as a common mode of communication.

The Future

Hindi has long been the official language of India, yet it is experiencing a steady decline in influence among the Indian people. With the advent of India’s membership in an increasingly interconnected and globalizing world, the need for an English educated population has only grown, while Hindi’s relevance has gradually decreased. When viewed in the context of globalization, the English language has had a profoundly homogenizing effect on India’s dominant language, Hindi. English has enjoyed increasing influence within India’s film and news media, prompting Bollywood filmmakers to employ Western affiliated linguistic and cultural plot devices and has driven sales of the country’s English language dailies. Globalization has also facilitated the spread of English throughout India’s economic and business sector, leading to a substantial proliferation of English-medium schools and subsequent drive towards

¹⁹ John, Sujit. "25 Global Companies Set up R&D Centres in India in Last 18 Months." *Times of India*. The Times Group, 21 Sept. 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

higher education throughout the subcontinent, as employers search for English educated workers. The spread of English has affected Indian politics as well, with some nationalist and right-wing parties claiming the displacement of local languages as proof of their legitimacy. Integration into the international community has marginalized nationalist parties and their supporters as more moderate, English educated politicians enjoy continued electoral support. Migration within India also plays a role in determining each language's importance. Rural to urban migration has increased exponentially ever since independence in 1947. With the congregation of multitudes of people from villages spread throughout the nation, a consistent vehicle of communication has become necessary. As numerous studies have observed, English is a far more efficient lingua franca, in that it enjoys significant knowledge among people in all regions of India. While Hindi may enjoy a far greater number of speakers than English, its scope is largely limited to the country's central farming belt. In the plethora of diverse languages scattered throughout the subcontinent, English has emerged as the only significant competitor to Hindi for the title of dominant language. With 40 percent of the population counted as speakers, Hindi has numbers on its side. However, in the context of globalization, English has enjoyed far greater increases. With estimates projecting that these trends will continue, English seems poised to take over the position of India's dominant language in the not too distant future. English has not yet come to dominate India as its preferred language of communication, but it has surely muted the influence enjoyed by Hindi throughout the subcontinent, a phenomenon only possible through globalization.

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