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Globalizzazione, internazionalizzazione, multiculturalità: quale formazione per le nuove generazioni?
Globalization, internationalization and multiculturalism: educational challenges and opportunities

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GLOBALIZZAZIONE, INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE, MULTICULTURALISMO. QUALE FORMAZIONE PER LE NUOVE GENERAZIONI?

Globalization, internationalization and multiculturalism. Educational challenges and opportunities

a cura di
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HINGLISH GOES GLOBAL:
INDIAN ENGLISHES IN DIAMESIC VARIATION

GIUSEPPE BALIRANO*

The present study aims to explore the heterogeneous nature of Indian society with its powerful linguistic and cultural diversity. In particular, the study argues that IndEs, or 'Indian English varieties', rather than being the result of an externally imposed model based on previous colonial arrangements, have been primarily shaped by the typically Indian capacity of networking and communicating through media, literature, trade and the resulting adoption of multiple identities. Although 'World Englishes' scholars around the globe have paid little attention to the linguistic and cultural diamesic accommodations, these factors have played a fundamental role in the formation of the linguistic and semiotic features of IndEs both in India and in international contexts. Additionally, this paper presents and examines some multimodal modes and resources employed by Indian English speakers in order to communicate with both their fellows and with the rest of the English-speaking world through different media. To this end, the study will investigate the most recent mediascapes that have helped IndEs go viral furthering the complex process of 'Indianization of English' via diamesic change strategies.

In the broad context of sociolinguistic research, the heterogeneous nature of Indian society with its powerful linguistic and cultural diversity requires particular attention. India's vivid linguistic diversity is not only marked by the huge amount of simultaneously spoken languages present in the Indian subcontinent, but it is even more tangible when considering how such languages are displayed and interact in public and virtual space. A perspective analysis of Mumbai's linguistic landscape, for instance, one which looks at the language utilized in public space, may showcase at a glance that English, especially in combination with Marathi and Hindi, is the most employed linguistic choice in the coolest Indian metropolitan city's public space. Thus, possible combinations of English, Marathi, and Hindi in the streets and other public areas tend to symbolize the contemporary linguistic repertoire displayed in Mumbai's public space[1]. In New Delhi, instead, apart from Hindi and English, the government acknowledges Urdu and Punjabi as second official languages, although several other languages can easily be encountered in the capital's significant linguistic landscape[2]. Therefore, despite the presence of several autochthonous languages, the ubiquitous presence of English in India plays an essential role among its multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multilingual population. Unquestionably, the linguistic relation between India and the English language, as known, is cemented in history.

In 17ᵗʰ century's India, aiming at exploring novel trade opportunities with distant places such as East and Southeast Asia, the British colonizers chartered the *Honourable East India Company.* As an unintentional but recurrent consequence of colonial practice, the British rulers knew that, together with their profitable trade, they were also exporting their own language. However, the typical colonial practice of disseminating the English language to educate or 'enlighten' the 'poor' natives – serving the ultimate goal of raising awareness of 'cultural diversity' – bumped into an inherent paradox in Southeast Asia: the Indian inhabitants were, in fact, part of one of the most linguistically and culturally rich and diversified areas in the world. Subsequently, the colonial enforcement of English in the Indian subcontinent – rather than being a key to open the doors of English liberal thought – has always been perceived as a manifest and distinct outcome of the British Raj, the British rule over India. Yet, what the British rulers would not expect as a result of their generous educational 'gift' was that the ensuing 'Indian English varieties' (IndEs)[3], an un-

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1. SHUKLA *et al.* 2018.

2. MEGANATHAN 2015.

3. Throughout the article, I will be using the noun phrase 'Indian English varieties' (or 'Indian Englishes') to refer to several regional realizations of English in the Indian subcontinent, not as 'standard' English alterations, but as *bona fide* fully-fledged language varieties (see BLOMMAERT 2018) spoken in India and across the Indian diasporic linguistic landscape. Indian English varieties belong to a 'network of varieties' stemming from the complex linguistic situation of the country including Malayali English, Maharashtrian English, Punjabi English, Bengali English, Hindi English, alongside several more obscure and less prestigious varieties such as Butler English (a.k.a. Bearer English), Babu English, and Bazaar English plus several other code-mixed varieties (SARANGI 2004; SCHNEIDER 2007).

foreseeable consequence of the prolonged imperialist trade and forced contact, although often deemed as a dividing force in the Indian society, would soon become the privileged tool to fight back some old colonial practices. IndEs, or English non-native varieties, were acquired more often at school or, more recently, from TV programs rather than through spontaneous communicative interactions.

IndEs are considerably different from other English varieties due to their typical multi-cultural word-choice systems, their extensive cross-cultural imagery and, more specifically, the several nuances of meaning derived from the hybridization between English and the several native languages and dialects spoken in the subcontinent. The spread of IndEs in the whole world marked the beginning of the linguistic and cultural process known as the 'Indianization of English'[4]. Braj Kachru (1983) is one of the very first linguists who has looked into the linguistic processes of 'Indianization of English' in detail. The Indian scholar claims that features of the English language spoken in India have been significantly affected by Indian socio-cultural rules through which linguistic symbols may relate to each other in order to convey meanings. From a linguistic viewpoint, the 'Indianization of English' mainly means the adaptations of existing features of the English language hybridized with the use of relocated linguistic native items which cannot be typically found in British English. Although it is evident that the 'Indianization of English' process began as a matter of convenience, it soon took on its own development by turning into an independent practice with other primary purposes. Today, together with several other international varieties of 'Englishes' or 'lishes'[5] scattered around the globe, both Standard Indian English (SIE) and Indian Vernacular English (VIE) have gradually attained wider recognition, equally in India and throughout several other English-speaking countries, as the result of a secondary unintentional consequence of colonial practices: the Indian diaspora.

A specific discussion on how the English language and the several Indian cultures and languages have been communicating and cross-fertilizing each other presenting a peculiar and novel take on reality has, so far, received surprisingly little attention. In particular, the typical power divide that British colonization has bolstered in India has often led to a discontinuous view of how IndEs can be used alternatively as a tool to sustain and enforce control, and as a form of counter-power. Indeed, the English language in India served two important functions:

1. First of all, it was a cunning stratagem for the ideological colonization of India. In other words, it served the purpose of facilitating the subjugation of India's several cultures by simply negating its plural identities in order to reinforce the British Raj;

2. Secondly, the spread of English worked as an anti-colonial, tactical and opportunistic response exploited to critically turn the gaze back upon the Empire. This resulted in Indianizing the English language via the spontaneous proliferation of so many hybridized IndEs.

Against this backdrop, the present study argues that IndEs, rather than being the result of an externally imposed model based on previous colonial arrangements, have been primarily shaped by the typically Indian capacity of networking and communicating through media, literature, trade and the resulting adoption of multiple identities. And although 'World Englishes' scholars around the globe have paid little attention to the linguistic and cultural diamesic accommodations, these factors have played a fundamental role in the formation of the linguistic and semiotic features of IndEs both in India and in international contexts. While it would be impossible to be exhaustive on such a vast subject in the space of an article, this study nonetheless seeks to sketch out the *diamesic* status of contemporary IndEs in order to start filling that scientific gap in linguistic research. In particular, this paper presents and examines some multimodal modes and resources employed by Indian English speakers in order to communicate with both their fellows and with the rest of the English-speaking world through different media. To this end, I will examine the most recent mediascapes that have helped IndEs go viral furthering the complex process of 'Indianization of English' via diamesic change strategies.

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC SITUATION OF INDES

Since the conceptualization of the world Englishes framework[6], the English spoken on the South-eastern subcontinent has been studied for its distinctive features typifying it as a standardized variety of English. This language variety, known as Standard Indian English (SIE), is clearly different from other international varieties of English. This is due to SIE distinctive features which are the result of the long period when the English language, spoken by the inhabitants of the *Jewel in the Crown*, was in constant contact with the several native languages. Today, although SIE has progressively become the self-consciously employed variety in formal domains by any educated Indian speaker, the same speaker may also adopt a secondary, less prestigious and very innovative variety, known as Vernacular Indian English (VIE), especially in the context of routine social interactions. Moreover, several vernacu-

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4. KACHRU 1983.

5. MCARTHUR 1998, p. 14; see also: MCARTHUR 1995.

6. KACHRU 1985.

lar Englishes are becoming the Indian English international variety spoken in the rest of the English-speaking world. The pre-modifying adjective 'vernacular' in the acronym VIE refers to a variety of English that has not been standardized yet and which does not have official status, such as Hinglish, Tanglish, Benglish and Urdish, among others[7]. These non-standard varieties have been identified by the mass media as varieties spoken by the liberal and post-modern Indian youths. They indicate current cultural trends in society, pointing to the growing importance of the English language in media discourse[8].

From a linguistic viewpoint, VIEs are commonly considered hybrid varieties of English based on a continuous code-switching system with other South Asian languages and/or dialects, and presenting a code-mixed lexicon with unpredictable phonetic rules[9]. VIEs are highly spread in Asia, but they can also be observed in the vast linguistic landscapes of the UK, English-speaking Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US, especially but not exclusively in Indian diasporic contexts. Mutual influences among varieties of standard and non-standard Indian English have always been a central concern in linguistic investigations on World Englishes and the most recent multi-cultural hybrid shift[10]. As Sharma (2017) points out:

> The diversity in types of English used in India, varying according to regional language, education, nativeness, and register, raises the question of whether a single entity – either "Indian English" or "standard Indian English" – exists at all, and if so, what its status is[11].

The variational diversity between the most prestigious SIE found in India and its vernacular variations proliferating both in India and in diaspora, will be conveniently addressed in this paper by adopting the umbrella and plural acronym *IndEs*. The plural is due to the fact that a multitude rather than a single or unique variety of SIE and, generally speaking, of any Indian English vernacular is purely spoken in India or diasporic contexts.

The historically complex sociolinguistic landscape of India, with a population of over a billion people, has recorded since early 1600 a gradual spread of bi- and multi-lingualism, alternating English with one, or more, of the so many native languages[12]. Although it was, as previously said, initially the East Indian Company which brought English to India through commercial expansion[13], the Christian proselytization practice constituted an effective apparatus to foster the linguistic nativization process of the entire Indian subcontinent. By early 1800s, a large number of Christian schools imparted their education in English, spreading the colonizers' language which was soon to be adopted in literary, scientific, and other academic fields. The arising local demand for English at all levels led the British politician Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay, member of the Supreme Council of India, to write his famous *Minute on Education* in 1835. The treatise presented *unquestionable* political reasons explaining why the British government should invest money on the provision of English language education in India. The *Minute* favored the use of English in all official and educational domains:

> We must at present do our best to form a class who may be *interpreters* between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population[14].

In his advocacy of English "tastes", "opinions", "morals" and "intellect" to be linguistically implanted in India, Macaulay supported the so-called 'downward filtration of education' practice[15], so that only the upper part of the Indian society would be granted training in English. The elite – or the "interpreters" in Macaulay's words – had in fact the educational task to pass on the rest of the population the long-sought "Western nomenclature". However, since the filtration approach could not immediately work as it would only create a selected educated class, the instruction of the 'native masses' was converted into a primary 'humanitarian' obligation of the British colonizers. They did believe that with the spread of an English education, the whole population of India would come to appreciate the British rule. Consequently, a new class of educated Indians emerged; they found little significance in life beyond the thought, language, and divinization of Britain[16]. The psychological effect of such a subjugated attitude, together with the marketable value the Indians tended to ascribe to English, significantly enthused the growth of English education all over the country. As a result, the ensuing variety of English spoken in India, which still today occupies Kachru's (1985) outer circle, was

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7. Krishnaswamy 2009; Sharma 2012.

8. Machin - Van Leeuwen 2007.

9. Sharma 2012; Schneider 2016; Lambert 2017; Saraceni 2020.

10. Fox - Khan - Torgersen 2011; Mair 2013.

11. Sharma 2017, p. 326.

12. Sharma 2012.

13. Duff 1837; Richter 1908; Law 1915; Bhatt 2000.

14. February 2nd, 1835; as cited in Fernando 1960, p. 83, emphasis added.

15. Fernando 1960.

16. Fernando 1960, p. 33.

universally called 'Indian English'[17].

India is, presently, the third largest English-speaking country (with its 60 million speakers) since even when the country had obtained its independence from Britain (1947), the English language remained there accomplishing three fundamental functions: administrative/regulatory, instrumental/educational, and imaginative/innovative. As a regulatory language, English was granted the status of official language of India being used in the drafting of the whole legal system, and it is mostly used as *lingua franca* in the Parliament. As an instrumental language, it is one of the three languages (namely, English, Hindi and the students' own mother tongue) employed in the educational system of India[18]. Besides, several Indian English newspapers – publishing exclusively in English – still record the highest circulation in terms of the total reading public. Likewise, the highest percentage of India's scientific and non-scientific journals are still printed in English[19]. Finally, the imaginative or innovative use of the English language is extensively testified by the vast literary production in English by Indian writers; Indian English writing has been now accepted as a part of Indian literary tradition. The long list of novelists includes names such as Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Tharoor, and Kiran Desai, just to name a few. Moreover, there is another linguistic and mediatic challenge which boosts an imaginative use of English: the massive market for Indian films and TV series all over the world. Moreover, the success of films, such as *The Namesake* (2006), *Meet the Patels* (2014), and *The Big Sick* (2017), and TV series, such as *Goodness Gracious Me* (1998–2001) or *The Kumars at No. 42* (2001–2006), highlights the existence of a considerable group of diasporic Indians speaking SIE or VIE who address both a pan-Indian and an international audience in their own Indian variety of English.

In India, despite continued pressure from nationalists, SIE remains at the heart of Indian society and, even if it is only a three per cent minority of the population that adopts the English language, it is still a quite significant minority since that little three per cent puts India among the top four countries in the world with the highest number of English language speakers. India is the third largest country in the world producing books in English after the US and the UK: the largest number of books published in India is exclusively in English[20]. SIE is widely used in the media, in Higher Education and government and, therefore, it remains a common means of communication, both among the ruling classes and among speakers of mutually unintelligible languages. Moreover, the transnational multimedia experience for Indian audiences has enhanced the use of the English language since the spread in the country of global media corporations such as the CNN and Satellite Television Asian Region (Star) TV, which have significantly transformed the broadcasting landscape. Satellite television, films, soap operas, TV series and the Internet, have been synchronically exposing Indian English-speakers to any current variety of English, and it is no surprise that some IndE varieties, such as Hinglish, seem to represent today the best way to propagate and reinforce the Indianization of English.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study combines two linguistic approaches which may be reciprocally beneficial to detect and investigate the linguistic mediascape of the complex phenomenon of diamesic variation in IndEs: the Linguistic Landscape method (LL) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). As a matter of fact, sociolinguistic and social semiotic studies in context may help decode complex but extremely interesting interactions among people, objects, and technologies.

LL is a relatively recent approach used for the analysis of multiple linguistic situations simultaneously documented in a given linguistic context, whereas several languages cohabit in larger geographic areas[21]. In particular, the LL concept of 'Superdiversity'[22], which deals with the slippery reality exemplified by rapid social change in the global city, is an essential tool for the analysis of IndEs which are being also extensively utilized in the global mediascape, such as the World Wide Web[23], a privileged locus for the investigation of superdiversity:

> In the anonymous and deterritorialised "spaces" opened up by the participatory digital media, nonstandard and vernacular linguistic resources assume enormous importance for linguistic self-styling. In the absence of other clues, people are intensely aware of them, and it would be surprising indeed if a more extended passive knowledge of variation in World Englishes were to remain the only sociolinguistic consequence of this new situation[24].

In this regard, this contribution seeks to record the diamesic change of IndEs by looking at the recent resources employed by Indian speakers when switching to IndE on the media. In order to do so,

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17. BALIRANO 2007.

18. BHATIA - RITCHIE 2006.

19. KACHRU 1986, pp. 35-36; BHATT 2000, p. 71.

20. SINGH 2010.

21. BLOMMAERT 2005, 2010, 2013; BLOMMAERT - MALY 2016.

22. VERTOVEC 2007; BLOMMAERT 2013.

23. BLOMMAERT 2018; BLOMMAERT - MALY 2019; MALY - BLOMMAERT 2019; BLOMMAERT - YING - KUNMING 2019.

24. MAIR 2013, p. 257.

existing research within LL studies will be merged with a broader multimodal perspective by adding to the existing literature on superdiversity the analysis of other non-exclusively linguistic resources codeployed in data coming not only from printed ads and billboards but also websites, social apps and TV series. These semiotic resources can help uncover rapid social changes in the study of World Englishes as part of the 'sociolinguistics of globalisation' defined by Jan Blommaert[25] as the "sociolinguistics of mobile resources and not of immobile languages".

Today's digital media have a strong potential to strengthen minority groups' participation to the globalized world, allowing them to bypass traditional media social framing while achieving a higher degree of visibility[26]. Trying to map the semiotic and linguistic strategies of online IndE digital netizens, the so-called new cyber-prosumers[27], is not an easy task. However, since the analysis of discourse as a social practice cannot treat the 'online' and the 'offline' as two separate and independent domains[28], my methodological tool aims for a socially committed, problem-oriented, textually-based, critical approach to look at an evolving linguistic and social change. If the media distribute discourses and provide them with subtexts, comments and subsequent interpretation, power is necessarily shaped and elaborated by means of a particular lexicon, recognizably regional or national or even super-national ways of communicating. Not only can IndE speakers be the object of media reporting, but they represent themselves through the media, thus reversing Macaulay's 'filtration approach'. By applying the above-mentioned research methods to the systematic analysis of diamesic change, the next two sections will try to introduce the concept of "creative diamesic change" in order to draw some theoretical implications on the usage and adaptation of IndEs in *PepsiCo* advertising campaigns in India by identifying their main semiotic strategies.

HINGLISH, THE MEDIA AND THE 'YOUNGISTAANI' GENERATION

In the second half of the 1980s, the spread of IndEs was a contributing factor to the expansion and marketization of Indian media, both inside and outside the South Asian borders. The liberalization of the Indian TV and movie industry together with the fast spread of the Internet transformed the nation's media landscape which adapted and indigenized global content to local formats and languages. Movies, TV programs and songs both in Hindi and several IndEs contributed to shaping the Indian 'self' from North to South and abroad, authorizing multiple interpretations of India[29]. The marketization process throughout the media quickly exported India's creative products to its diasporic contexts where enjoying Indian creativity soon became a rampant and general practice among the second and third generation Indians who had grown up alongside other cultures[30]. However, very soon, new social affordances of computer-mediated communication technology provided by web-based services had to play their part in the long process of Indianization of English: the so-called Social Networking Sites (SNSs) era was born.

Recent linguistic studies have revealed that South Asians are inclined to codeswitch from their native languages into English and vice versa[31], especially when engaging with SNSs such as Facebook or Instagram[32]. This phenomenon has also been recorded among the vast number of diasporic Indians residing in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States who seem to frequently combine Hindi and English in one of the most spoken IndEs in the world: Hinglish.

Generally employed in Bollywood films and by the advertising industry, Hinglish was first used in the 1970s thanks to the linguistic promotion boosted by the film-magazine *Stardust*. Initially, Hindi/English bilingual older speakers from elite contexts did not have a very high consideration of the new portmanteau lect, and it was only when urban youths began to value the use of Hinglish over monolingual Hindi or English[33] that the emerging IndE flourished. Although the creative and hybrid lect immediately entered the jargon of educated middle-class speakers, it was just when the novel *Midnight's Children* (1981) by Salman Rushdie exploited the stylistic nuances of a non-standard English register – a mixture of Hindi and Urdu with English – that Hinglish acquired literary dignity[34]. Nowadays, Hinglish operates as a proper *lingua franca* for the majority of young Indians to the point of having become increasingly popular with the urban middle class throughout India. The Indian English novelist Gurcharan Das (2010) aptly describes Hinglish as the new pan-Indian language, which is common to all Indian masses and classes, thus an acceptable way to communicating across the nation:

25. Blommaert 2010, p. 180.

26. Marzocchi - Bonewit 2015.

27. Ritzer - Jurgenson 2010.

28. KhosraviNik - Esposito 2018.

29. Goel 2018.

30. Therwath 2010.

31. Dąbrowska 2013; 2012; 2011; Wang - Joardar 2015.

32. Das and Gambäck 2013, p. 43.

33. Parshad et al. 2016, p. 376.

34. Roy 2013.

It is called 'Hinglish', but should in fact be called 'Inglish' because it is increasingly pan-India's street language. Mixing English with our mother tongues has been going on for generations, but what is different this time around is that 'Inglish' has become both the aspirational language of the lower and middle classes and the fashionable language of drawing rooms of the upper and upper middle classes. Similar attempts in the past were down-market and contemptuously put down by snobbish brown sahibs. But this time 'Inglish' is the stylish language of Bollywood, of FM radio and of national advertising. Advertisers, in particular, have been surprised by the terrific resonance of slogans such as, 'life ho to aise', 'Josh machine', and 'Dil mange more'. Radio Mirchi, to its delight, has found the same adoring response from its listeners to: 'ladki ko mari line, girlfriend boli, I'm fine!'[35].

It is estimated that the number of Hinglish speakers exceeds the one of English speakers worldwide[36]. David Crystal (2004) prophesied that the global popularity of Indian culture, embracing Bollywood (the Indian film industry cornucopia), would give a boost to Hinglish to become the most spoken language beyond the subcontinent. He claims that growing interest around the world in Asian culture, has helped Hinglish to go global, reaching important goals outside the subcontinent. The reason for such a fast spread was highlighted by Parshad *et al.* (2016) who have observed that in India some people necessitate to speak Hinglish since they are fluent neither in Hindi nor in English. Their study found that, out of 24 respondents who claimed to speak both Hindi and English, none of them could effectively speak monolingual Hindi: they were able to speak some Hindi mixed to English words, but could not complete a whole sentence without having to mix languages[37]. Although it is not a fully developed language, Hinglish – which blends not only Hindi and English lexicons but also complex sentence structures of the two languages – seems to be growing into a possible new hybridized variety. However, Hinglish has developed further over the years slowly incorporating Urdu, Punjabi, Tamil, and Bengali. Such a mix of Indian languages[38] and English is being used as a largely shared and ever-evolving new variety.

Indian commercial cinema, the Internet and SNSs have all played an influential role in the negotiation of national identity through the adoption of Hinglish. In the long history of Indian cinema, the hybridization of Hindi and English has been the result of several socio-political forces which influenced both languages by bringing new and fresh feelings to the nation. Nema and Chawla (2018) point out the interesting relationship between Bollywood and Hinglish defining it as a symbol of India's changing mood:

The changed mood of the nation was reflected through the changed stance of Bollywood towards English, which now attempted to fuse English and Hindi by bringing them out of their water-tight compartments. This merger created new social meanings, and Hinglish became a common space to be inhabited by both Hindi and English[39].

With English occupying a no longer foreign status, thanks to the massive presence of Hinglish on the Indian mediascape, the scenario changed also in Bollywood movies. The predominance of Hinglish in Indian cinema began with the arrival of songs like "Keh do na keh do na" (you are my Sonia), after which the invasion of Hinglish was quick and widespread making its way into the movies' titles, dialogues and lyrics. Today, Bollywood – apart from Hindi and Urdu – speaks a very colloquial lingo, an informal register in a liberal mix of Hindi and English. A whole gamut of neologisms mixing Hindi and English, which are nowadays used in urban India, London and New York, can, in fact, be traced back to commercial Indian movies which helped the number of Hinglish speakers increase all over the world. Consequently, the flow of Hinglish words gathered momentum. In *Namak Halal* (1982), a popular Bollywood movie, for instance, Arjun – played by the Indian movie leading actor during the 1970s and 1980s, Amitabh Bachchan –, introduced a lot of witty dialogues by code-mixing English and Hindi. One of Arjun's iconic lines from the film is, "I can talk English, I can walk English, I can laugh English because English is a very *phunny* language!" Moreover, Bollywood's highly creative conversations introduced expressions such as *first class* or *miss call* which immediately entered the Hinglish dictionary fostering diamesic change. In India, when something or someone is superior or outstanding, they may be described as *first-class*. From eating *vada pava* from a yummy street food vendor to watching a Bollywood movie to buying a designer saree, anything deemed extraordinary could be considered *first-class* in India. In Bollywood's movies, the very common Hinglish verb phrase *miss call* may be selected when a character is phoning a friend by simply ringing off quickly to hang up before he or she can answer back. "To miss call" is indeed a very popular verb used in sentences such as "I will miss call my friend" meaning that the person who has received a missed call knows that the caller only wanted to say that they care for them. Another frequent use derived from English is Hinglish very unpredictable word-formation system. The noun *tension*, for instance, can be used as a noun ("don't give me tension"), as a verb ("don't tension me"), and also as an adjective ("that was a very tension exam"). Moreover, Hinglish makes use of many neologisms such as the often abused expression *timepass*, meaning 'pastime'

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35. Das 2010, p. 112.

36. Crystal 2004.

37. Parshad *et al.* 2016, p. 380.

38. Roy 2013, p. 21.

39. Nema - Chawla 2018, p. 46.

or 'entertainment'[40]. When asking a college student in India: "What are you doing?" they are likely to reply "Kuch nahin, bas timepass" (= "Nothing, just timepass") in order to highlight a boring moment in their lives. There are over a dozen "timepass" Facebook groups that are followed by over 300,000 users who employ the Hinglish expression in their daily computer-mediated communication. *Timepass* (2014) and *Timepass 2* (2015) are legendary Bollywood movies which present a Hinglish title albeit being shot in Marathi Language. Hinglish titles in Bollywood films are frequently being adopted in order to expand the audience to English speaking countries. This trend can be seen as a tactic to attract diasporic audiences and generate curiosity, but it also reflects a change in the sensibilities of the Indian audiences. A lot of movies are titled with a colloquial wordplay in Hinglish; titles such as "Agent Vinod", "Always Kabhi Kabhi", "Bheja Fry", "Bhindi Baazaar Inc", "Chitkabrey - Shades of Grey", "Desi Boyz", "Ek Tha Tiger", "Kucch Luv Jaisaa", "Ladies v/s Ricky Bahl", "Gangs of Wasseypur", "Me Mamu & 7", "Mere Brother Ki Dulhan", "Once upon a time in Mumbaai", "Short Term Shaadi", or "Virus Diwan" are just a mere example. These titles also reflect the reason why English could not be seen as the language of the English colonizers anymore as it was being spoken by natives and diasporic subjects alike. Contemporary Bollywood is acclaiming Hinglish as a language that offers enough scope for neutrality that is much favored to create a differentiated audience put on a common level.

Hinglish is shaping new virtual communities which connect India with its diasporic subjects. The globalized use of Hinglish has an essential social function since – especially through Bollywood, satellite television, SNSs and the new media – it serves to immediately address specific audiences who tend to acquire conventional models and identities which can easily travel worldwide:

> Globalisation and the advent of satellite television has ensured that the migrant communities of South Asians in the Middle East, Europe and North America have become a new target as consumers or audiences. The language that seems to address this hitherto unexplored market is Hinglish, a language with which the migrants feel more at ease[41].

Undoubtedly, diasporic Hinglish is mostly the result of diamesic change. Media prosumers who use Hinglish outside India are able to negotiate their identities between their mother country's consumption views and global sentiments. In Raghuram's (2008) words, the images produced by the media, which adopt Hinglish as a *koinē dialektos*, work to craft an Indian subjectivity both in India and in diasporic contexts:

> Media images often form an important conduit for forging and expressing immigrants' bonds with places and communities which are no longer a part of their day-to-day experiences. At the same time, the media is also used by India to draw together its diaspora. […] The media does not simply represent a diaspora, but actively produces diasporic subjectivity both amongst the authors and within audiences[42].

In addition to the strengthening of important diasporic bonds, Hinglish media discourses encompass, both glocally and globally, speech communities who share discourses around which a vast 'imagined community'[43] is established. As a result, starting from the 1990s, many national and international companies began to adopt Hinglish for the first time, boosting language change via, what I would like to define here, 'creative diamesic variation'.

If diamesic variation refers to the type of language change depending on the medium of communication – for instance, the language used in writing a post on Facebook is different from the one used when writing an e-mail of complaint –, 'creative diamesic variation' takes place when the language used for creative purposes (e.g., a commercial or a billboard catchphrase) varies when a different medium is employed. Language, in fact, tends to adapt to the specific context it is situated into and because of the medium containing and displaying it; hence, the creative language of advertising, for instance, changes even when having to promote the very same concept or idea (or product) in monolingual contexts but across various media and cultures. The resulting creative diamesic variation, although through a different language or variety of the same language, may help foster cultural assimilation which occurs when two neighboring groups of people or territories influence each other way of understanding the world. Today, cultural assimilation can easily take place by means of the creative diamesic change produced by international media. Diamesic cultural assimilation happens when two or more cultures, or multilingual groups of people, influence one another by means of their exposure to the same media productions, although in a different variety of the same language or in a totally different language (maybe carried out with the help of subtitles), within dissimilar or culturally distant contexts. In our globalized world, diverse cultural and linguistic groups, albeit geographically distant, often watch the same TV programs or participate in the same fora, for instance. Reciprocal influence may derive from shared semiotic landscapes via the Internet (e.g., cross-cultural chats), web/TV series, films, SNSs, and/or advertising campaigns. The same multimodal resources used within shared and globalized

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40. Sedlatschek 2009, p. 81.

41. Thussu 2000, p. 74.

42. Raghuram 2008, p. 323.

43. Anderson 1983.

semiotic landscapes may shape differences in attitudes together with other factors, such as age, gender, level of education, income, place of residence (urban, suburban, rural), country of origin, political party, religion and *exposure to the media*. In my view, the following media case study, concerning the PepsiCo advertising campaigns in India, may serve to epitomize the phenomenon of creative diamesic change in relation to the IndEs used within different media.

PepsiCo's creative diamesic variation

It was the eve of liberalization when India opened its doors to a world of choices, and several international companies could not but ride the wave incorporating India in their global markets. In particular, the American soft drink company PepsiCo was the leader in this process having pioneered the Indian market since 1988. PepsiCo's initial Indian commercials, strongly and almost exclusively directed at the youth, employed famous Bollywood stars who played with Hinglish catchphrases such as "Yehi hai right choice, baby" (= this is the right choice, baby) and "Yeh dil maange more" (= the heart wants more). From TV commercials to city billboards, PesiCo adopted Hinglish to colonize both public and private space of India, transforming and hybridizing further its already complex linguistic landscape (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

Fig. 1. An example of Pepsi ad from 1998 where Hinglish is used.

Fig. 2. The 2008 billboard ad "Youngistaan ka Wow" by Pepsi.

Since then, both PepsiCo and Coca-Cola have always preferred to engage with receptive young Indian audiences through the use of Hinglish either via direct advertising messages or employing more ambiguous slogans and taglines.

In 2008, the Pepsi campaign significantly coined the new compound toponym 'Youngistaan' (see Fig. 2) which, aiming at underlining the fact that Pepsi is to be seen as the brand for the new generation, had to grow into a popular Hinglish catchphrase. According to the promotional slogan, 'Youngistaan' is not a real place[44] but rather a mental attitude: as the name immediately suggests 'Youngistaan' exemplifies a mental space for the young generation. Consequently, both 'Youngistaan' and 'Youngistaanis' have immediately become the portmanteau Hinglish terms through which the youths across the South Asian subcontinent are still named today.

Later on, PepsiCo, persisting with its focus on personal youth choices, launched another marketing digital campaign: "What's Your Way?". With social media as a core component and new engagement modules across print, TV, radio and digital media, the new campaign called attention to youth typical cooperative creativity. The Company tabled some relevant problems in the Youngistaanis' world via a highly multimodal campaign exemplifying the way the century-old multilingual Indian linguistic landscape based on monomodal written messages could be hybridized through the co-deployment of other meaning-making semiotic resources. It was an exclusive combination of digital affordances on the Internet through several SNSs together with the more traditional print and mobile marketing, television and radio commercials, on-ground activation and campus posters which began to shape multicultural and multilingual identities in both the public and private space of India. PepsiCo asked the youth to answer questions concerning a chancy dilemma so that the silliest answers representing the Youngistaani world would win a whole lot of goodies from the company. Overrun by the so many advertising inputs, both public and virtual space publicized the question "What's your way?": the youth were basically asked to respond, by calling or texting their responses, to the ways in which they would get out of a particular difficult situation. Their answers were then posted online, on the website Youngistaan.com, on Facebook, Orkut or Twitter, in order to gather votes. The best answers were printed on 'Pepsi My Cans' together with the winner's picture.

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44. The Persian suffix '-stan', similarly to the English suffix '-land', appears in toponyms such as 'rige<u>stân</u>' (=place of sand, desert); 'gole<u>stân</u>' (=place of flowers, garden); 'gur-e<u>stân</u>' (=graveyard, cemetery); and, above all, in the word 'Hindu<u>stân</u>' (=the land of the Indus river: India).

Further, during the course of the contest, one young-ster had the daily chance to be elected the 'Young-istaani of the Day' winning a month supply of free Pepsi and INR 5,000 in SMS talk time. In addition, participants could also gain 'What's Your Way?' ring-tones and free talk time. Finally, 'My Radio, My Way' was implemented in order to provide a mobile radio studio to university campuses from where students could play the music they liked.

In 2010, Pepsi new campaign, preserving the basic brand identity construed around the winning con-cept of 'youthfulness', took the term 'Youngistaan' a step forward by boosting language change via crea-tive diamesic variation. As a matter of fact, as part of their launch marketing campaign, Pepsi invited In-dian youngsters, from across 23 Indian cities, to share their own feelings through the creation of some origi-nal lyrics describing what the new Pepsi catchphrase, "Youngistaan ka WOW", may suggest to them. Con-sequently, the anthem "Youngistaan ka WOW", con-ceived by the youngsters participating in the contest, would epitomize the Pepsi brand as the representative of a common Indian youths' new identity. Being the result of a complex media operation, the campaign was launched as part of an extensive radio activation through which thousands of Youngistaanis not only could get credit for composing their anthem, but they could also watch it come alive by sharing the same platform with the popular musical duo, Vishal & Shekha. The PepsiCo India marketing vice President, Sandeep Singh Arora, summarized the Pepsi initia-tive by clearly insisting on the importance for Indian youths to speak their own language in order to display their identity; he aptly maintains that:

> the idea was to create a song to which youngsters can relate – a composition that speaks their language; lyrics that echo their identity; a song that makes them go *wow*; and all these within a span of one day. The anthem celebrates the auda-cious self-belief of the youth, who are go-getters, making things happen their way[45].

Although the Pepsi Campaign had succeeded in building a whole 'virtual' planet around an imagi-nary place, Youngistaan soon became a 'real' state of mind. The media played a fundamental role since the campaign included the creation of a whole micro web depicting Youngistaan together with other famous international brands such as Pizza Hut, PVR and MTV, all youth brands that co-operated to the success of Hinglish creative diamesic variation. The virtual Youngistaan offers mobile theme downloads, person-alized Youngistaan Pizza Hut cards with special dis-counts, Youngistaan tips for school and a gallery of Pepsi advertisements.

Fig. 3. Youngistaan Pizza Hut.

PepsiCo India has been able to amalgamate three major ingredients which succeeded in attracting the Youngistaanis' attention both in India and in its di-asporic contexts: Indian music, sports (cricket) and the cinema (Bollywood). Working with legendary artists and discovering and supporting emerging talents, in 2018, Pepsi introduced global pop group 'Now United' to India. The following year, the company continued to exploit the power of music to unite their prosumers under a unique group. Also, in one of its biggest col-laborations, Pepsi became a partner of the TV show *The Voice*, one of the most popular international music reality-shows. Moreover, PepsiCo has connected and engaged with their consumers through one of India's favorite sports: cricket. Pepsi symbols have taken their place in stadiums as well as on consumers' television screens during important series, bringing together two of India's most loved activities, music and cricket. Finally, Pepsi – as said – has always been associated with Bollywood films, another important passion of Youngistaanis.

Fig. 4. Pepsi for Cricket.

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45. As reported in Ghosal 2010.

Today, PepsiCo Foundation is trying the ecological turn by calling for climate action to safe water access in India. In line with Indian Government's Jal Jeevan Mission – aiming at providing functional household tap connections in every rural household by 2024 – PepsiCo have recently announced their commitment to invest 3 million dollars with WaterAid to positively impact 200,000 farmers and their families. As we can easily infer from the Company's website (https://urly.it/36-4k), diamesic change is now going towards a different stage. Thus, the use of Standard American English rather than colloquial Hinglish seems to be favored in the company's official online communication as we can read in the following website description for PepsiCo India:

> For years, we have been focused on finding ways to reduce our environmental footprint in water, packaging, waste, energy and agriculture-areas that are critical to our business and where we can make the biggest impact. We were one of the first global companies to publicly recognize water as a basic human right and were honored with the Stockholm International Water Institute's Industry Water Award for our water stewardship.
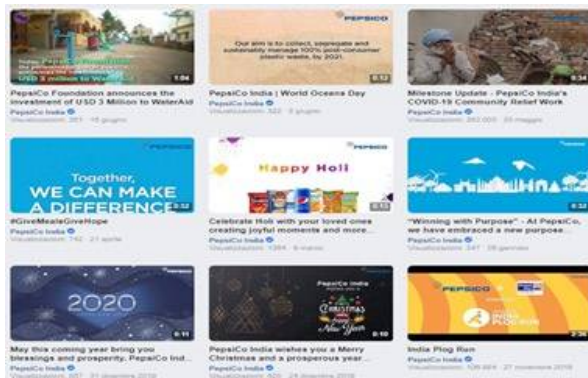

Fig. 5. PepsiCo's Facebook India.

PepsiCo sustain their commitment to helping Indian families to better their lives, so as an international prestigious corporate they claim it is the company's responsibility to continually improve all aspects of the world in creating and supporting models on sustainable development. Their official Twitter page presents a partnered initiative with @SeedsIndia to provide over 3.5 lakh meals, hygiene kits & community water filters to cyclone impacted communities in West Bengal. Nowadays, they invite Indian citizens to stay with them to join the fight against COVID-19 by bringing together some of the world's biggest stars to celebrate the heroic efforts of healthcare workers. As we can easily infer from their Indian Facebook page (see Fig. 5), the company is trying to create an inclusive organization which embraces diversity through which they could make a difference catering for the real needs of a diverse multicultural society. Christmas and Holi greetings have, in fact, a dedicated online space together with the company's investment plans in Standard American English.

Conclusions

This study began by drawing a novel perspective on Indian English preferring a plural acronym (IndEs) to identify, describe and characterize all the contemporary, both standard and vernacular, Indian English varieties spoken in India and in diasporic anglophone countries. In order to introduce the concept of diamesic variation in creative contexts, I presented the case study of PepsiCo and their strategic and creative employment of one of the best-known varieties of IndEs: Hinglish. Differently from Queen's English or RP, a pan Indian nonstandard variety of English, Hinglish is renowned for its innovative features which are capable of changing according to the users' needs and above all following and adapting to the media employed to communicate. The linguistic landscape of India, an already highly hybridized multicultural context, has been progressively populated by PepsiCo's Hinglish slogans which have contributed to bring diamesic change when SNSs and the new media reinforced the promotional messages created exclusively for Youngistaanis. In this age, India is experiencing and inventing new ways of digital communication and the present generation lives by the hashtags, likes and dislikes on their Facebook wall being always synchronized with what they deem being trending. In this scenario, Hinglish is a lect which best seems to offer people symbols of success, importance and advance becoming a driving force which has compelled most Indians to turn out to be competent speakers both online and in real life exchanges. Now, whether Hinglish is a mindset or a proper register is and remains still to be determined, what is certain though is that it has worked as a marker of identity for a long period boosting social change via diamesic variation thus participating in the process of ongoing democratization.

However, in the long process of Indianization of English, the English language in India is still generally regarded as a measure of one's achievements and success and, lately, PepsiCo addressing to nowadays grown-up professional Youngistaanis are gradually abandoning the glamor of Bollywood and its catchy phrases from Hinglish stepping back to Standard English, in the trajectory of American variety. However, not surprisingly, in diasporic contexts such us the UK, Hinglish is now a university subject as part of the Modern Business Language & Culture programme at Portsmouth College in Hampshire. The course was introduced in November 2017 for a selected group of students with the aim of raising awareness of the language and of the way it is employed in society and business in the UK and internationally. David Crystal's prophesy that Hinglish may even outnumber the number of English-speaking people across the globe has certainly come to pass.

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