

Phonological and Grammatical Deviations in English Used by RK Narayan in His Novels

Poonam Dahiya

Mewar University , Chittorgarh ,Rajasthan

ABSTRACT:

The History of English language in India is as old as the beginning of the process of the establishment of the British Empire. Indian English, as we prefer to call it today is the result of the beginning and growth of bilingualism in Indian sub continent along with the beginning of colonization of the country by the British. The early serious efforts of contacts with the South Asia were started in the sixteenth Century. On December 31, 1600, Queen Elizabeth I granted a charter to a few merchants of the city of London giving them a monopoly of trade with India and the East. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the area was under the political domination of the British. Along with the British people, English language also started taking root. On the basis of a large number of surveys, the three distinct groups have been identified to introduce and spread bilingualism in India. The first group to have worked in the first phase comprises of the efforts of the missionaries who went to South Asia essentially for proselytizing purposes. The second included the efforts of a small group of Lankans and Indians who were fascinated by the progress of the west and desired to use the English Language as a vehicle for scientific and material progress. And finally it the was the political phase which firmly established English language in India and South Asia. Raja Ram Mohan Roy preferred English to Indian languages for academic, scientific and other international reasons. This strengthened Macaulay's hand. After 1965, East India Company become a political power in India. In 1787, the Court of Directors of the Company appreciated the efforts of Mr. Swartz to establish two schools in Tanjore and Marwar for children of soldiers. Thus, the bilingualism in India began to spread all around. In 1857, there universities were established in India, at Bombay Calcutta and Madras. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Punjab (Lahore) and Allahabad Universities were established. The number of colleges and universities began to grow after that and in the early twentieth century English was formally established as the official and academic language of India. It become the

prestigious language and completely replaced the Persian and Indian languages, then called the Vernaculars. In the second decade of the twentieth century, nationalist movement gained momentum and in spite of the anti-English feeling, English language became the medium of the movement. By 1928, a reasonably influential English press and taste for English publications had been created and English had been accepted as the language of the elite, of the administration and of the pan-Indian press.

English has become an integral part of Indian academic and literary life. For more than two hundred years English has been having deep roots in Indian history and has been, to a great extent, contextualized and Indianized in life as well as in literature which has been written in this language. However, being a foreign language and having entirely different socio-cultural environment, it cannot communicate some typically Indian sentiments, contexts and cultural implications which have their own originality and weight. And to express pure Indian sentiments, only Indian words, phrases, grammatical structures, proverbs and references from Indian languages are required. Hence, for this purpose, several deviations like pluralisation, non-nativeness in grammar, vocabulary and rhetoric devices, Indianized use of functional words like articles, reduplication of words, yes/no confusions, phonological and morphological changes have been made by creative writers who write in English. And as it has been the quality of Indian culture that it absorbs, synthesises, assimilates and Indianizes every alien element coming in contact with it, the moment any new word, phrase or sentence is used in English, the process of nativization, localization and Indianization of it begins at once. According to RK Narayan:

The time has come for us to consider seriously the question of a Bharat brand of English. So far English has had a comparatively confined existence in our country chiefly in the halls of learning, justice, or administration. Now the time is ripe for it to come to the dusty street, market place and under the banyan tree.

(K. V Surendran 192)

When we make a survey of Indian writing in English, we find that the writers are candidly and abundantly making deviations from the standardized English spoken or written in native Britain. Among the writers from India, whether it be the poets like Sarojini Naidu, Toru Dutt, Rabindre Nath Tagore or Aurobindo Ghosh etc., prose writers like Pt. Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda or Radha Krishna etc., novelists like R.K. Narayan, Mul Raj Anand, Raja

Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Kamla Markandya, Anita Desai, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala or modern poets like Nissim Ezekiel, Jayant Mahapatra, Kamla Das, A.K. Ramanujan, P. Lal and so on; all have immensely contributed to the process of what we call Indianization of English. In this respect, R.K. Narayan has immensely contributed to the Indianization of English in his novels.

RK Narayan abundantly uses deviations to Indianize English at phonological level. At phonetic and phonological level, there may be two kinds of deviations – those of segmental phonemes and non-segmental phonemes. In the deviations of segmental phonemes, two kinds of generalizations – structural and systematic are applied in a syntagmatic and paradigmatic sense respectively. The second type of deviation is of non segmental phonemes pertaining to the use of stress, rhythm and intonation which hamper the intelligibility between a native and Indian speaker. The main reason for the deviations in stress is that Indian languages are syllable –timed languages while English is stress – timed language. Indian rhythm also differs because it is based on the arrangement of long and short syllables, unlike English which is based on the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllable.

In the use of grammatical deviations, RK Narayan adopts progressive form of the verbs in place of the simple present or simple past. A number of examples can be cited from his novels. A few examples are being given here:

This idea was beginning to take root in my mind.
 I am not denying it.
 I am paying for it.
 Business life is becoming difficult.
 Why are you still worrying about it?
 I was just wondering if the fruits were ripe enough for you.

RK Narayan uses pauses, breaks and jerks in the sentences to emphasize what he and his characters state. He occasionally varies the pitch using the same lexeme in different situations. The same notation of the lexeme has been used on different occasions, for example the words 'Oh' and 'Ah' have different expressions of surprise, happiness, irritation, indifference, agreement, disagreements, satire, etc. All his characters speak simple, fluent and lucid Indian variety of English with high usage of indigenous and regional words with no change in pronunciation. Although Narayan purposefully avoids the change of accent in his writing, he uses repetition of words as a prominent feature of providing stress to his essential dialogues that are important for readers' understanding. In addition, repetition also provides a slight tonal quality to

the sentences. He beautifully mixes the rising and falling intonations in the text generating the differences in the audibility. This conveys the emotional fluctuations of the characters. To express hatred, anger, humiliation, criticism, frustration, irritation and emotional conflicts, Narayan adopts phonological deviation as a tool; he creates jerks in the sentences with high usage of dash signs '____', ALL CAPS, Bold, Italics as tools, overlapping of pronouns and half/ incomplete words. This deliberate deviation produces a significant effect in the minds of readers.

English was adopted in multilingual society in India which was not only straight but complex by various speakers across the country. The use of English phrases and grammar were imitated as the speaker's 1st language. Indian speaker began to use idioms in English, which were quite particular in their nature. In transaction of literary words, phrases were taken from native language. In standard British English, there was common grammar for proficient speakers whereas Indian English speakers spoke English with an accent that was quite close to the Standard English which was more with the 'native tinted' accent of the English speech. Indian English has few vowel sounds as compare to the consonants which are spoken by native speakers like Hindi. Here, vowel phoneme system has some similarities.

This is the reason that all the novels of RK Narayan are over flooded with the characters, which not only in their names but also in their speech are purely Indian. Moreover, so many prominent persons like Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Nehru etc. from amongst the freedom fighters, stalwarts like Akbar, Baber etc. from the history of India and gods and goddesses like Vishnu, Sita, Ram, Shiva etc. from the Hindu mythology have frequently been referred to and woven into the very texture of the novels. Geographically too, the novels are set in Indian villages, towns and cities and the rivers like Ganga, Yamuna Cavery etc. mountain peaks like Kailas and Himalayan range and prime cities like Benaras, Madaras, Bombay etc. are repeatedly mentioned in these novels and provide Indian colours to them.

For Example names of characters: Raju, Velan, Rosie, Devi, Meena, Lalitha, Buddha, Devaka, Gaffur, Parvathi, Lalitha, Marco, Joseph, Nalini, Chandran, Ramu, Seenu, Raghvachar, Gajapathi, Aziz, Mohan, Veeraswami, Malathi, Lakshmi, Vishnu, Mohideen, D. D.W. Krishna Iyer, Krishna Iyengar, Krishan Rao, Krishna Mudalar etc are abundantly used by the novelist.

Names of places such as Kabir Street, Market Road, Madras, Nallore, Malgudi, Poona, - Bangalore, Trunk Road, Lawley Extension, North Street, Mill Street, Trichiopoly, Coimbatore, Egmore Station, Malaya, Mint Street, Bezwada, Kapalees warar Temple, Koopal (Village), Sainad, Maduram, Kalki, Christian College, Bihar, Shiva Temple, Chetty Street. Mangala, , Ganges (River), Madras Mail (Train), Illustrated Weekly (Magazine) Kailas (Mountain range). Places : Malgudi, Mempi Hills, Kabir lane, Trichy, Madras, Albert (Schools) Market Raod, Lawley Extension, Kulam Street, Sri Krishna Dispensary, Bombay, Anand Bhawan, Thrupathi Hills, Trunk Road, Mempi Forests have also been used by RK Narayan in his novels.

Miscellaneous names such as Sarayu (River) Himalayas (Mountain), Lord Krishna, Jamuna (River) Shiva, Daily Messenger (News Paper), , Sarayu (River), Ganapathi, Sastrigal, Dr. Kesavan, Raju, Appayi, Srouthigal, Kailas, Samari (River), Sirvaraman, Gopal Menon, Kutti, Madhav Rao, Mohan, Ramayanam (Epic), Nanjadhah, J.W. Prabhu, N.M. Rao, Kamala, Murugesam, Damodar get entry in his novels.

The following full length expression picked up from the novel *The Guide* by RK Narayan highlights the grammatical as well as phonological deviation from pure English language in its description of the house and shop opposite the railway station in Malgudi:

Ours was a small house opposite the Malagudi Station. The house had been built by my father with his own hands long before trains were thought of. He chose this spot because it was outside the town and he could have it cheap. He had dug the earth, kneaded the mud with water from the well, and built the walls, and roofed them with coconut thatch. He planted papaya trees around, which yielded fruit, which he cut up and sold in slices: a single fruit brought him eight annas if he carved it with dexterity. My father had a small shop built of deadwood planks and gunny sack: and all day he sat there selling peppermint, fruit, tobacco, betel leaf, parched gram (Which he measured out in tiny bamboo cylinders), and whatsoever else the wayfarers on the Trunk Road demanded. It was known as the "hut shop". A crowd of peasants and drivers of bullock-wagons were always gathered in front of his shop. A very busy man indeed. At midday he called me when he went in for his lunch and made a routine statement at the same hour. "Raju, rake my seat. Be sure to receive the money for whatever you give. don't eat off all that eating stuff, it's kept for sale: call me if you have doubts. (The Guide 10-11)

Instead of using simple present or simple past, present perfect or other structures used by a native speaker of English, 'ing' form has frequently been used by RK Narayan in his novels. A number of sentences may be quoted from his novels. A few examples are being given below:

'.....What was happening around me.'

'.....and all the time insulting our gods'

'I am admitting you, devils.....'

'She was always hoping that someday I would consent to marry the girl'

'No use expecting a man to be clear headed who is fresh from a train journey.'

'I am asking Gaffur to stop at my house.

'They are becoming rather stuck-up nowadays.

'I was becoming fear-ridden'

'What is troubling you?'

'I was hoping desperately.....'

'I was hoping you would have the sense.....'

'So this is what is keeping you busy.'

'As long as I am breathing.....'

'Our entertainments were beginning to grow'

'This idea was beginning to take root in my mind.;

'I am not denying it.' (The Guide 1979)

I was wondering.

What is ailing you?

What is agitating you

We are finding it so difficult

If we are always thinking of our profits.....

I'll be coming

They will be asking for my skin next.

What are you aiming at?

Are you asking when I am going to die?

I am not saying that.....

I am paying for it.

Business life is becoming difficult. (TheFinancial Expert 2002)

It was becoming increasingly clean.

Swaminathan was beginning to put on a sweet friendly look.

It was becoming unendurable.

His eyelids were becoming heavy.

He was becoming fussy.

I may get passing marks.

It is still paining here.

The longer he hesitated, the more violent the twist was becoming.

The more muddled he was becoming.

He was understanding its details. (Swami and Friends 1997)

Are you becoming a sanyasi?

Something was troubling him.

I am starting for madras.

I am not saying it.

I will be going now.

Why are you still worrying about it.

I am beginning to believe call our realism. (The Bachelor of Arts 2000)

I must be going.

Chandru was studying.....

Our friends will be coming.

Are you following your mother's example?

.....When joints are becoming still.

If you are not coming with me, I am going at once.

I can't be answering idiotic questions.

You are not having me and her at the same time

Ah! Mother, you are really becoming blind

I was just wondering if the fruits were ripe enough for you

People are once again becoming godly. (The Dark Room 1992)

It may be remarked that RK Narayan has used some words which have phonologically as well as grammatically deviations from English language with their typically Indian pronunciations and structures e.g. Ghats , Hari Kathas , Sastras ,Bhajans , Chakras , Sutras ,

Pheris, Rajas , Laddus ,Sanyasis , Yogis. In grammatical deviations, large number of sentences in which progressive form of the verbs instead of the simple present or simple past have been used making it an Indian feature. There are other kinds of sentences also which witness various deviations like clustering of preposition, unwanted use of apostrophe, non interrogative in the question tags, unnecessary additions or deletions etc. In the following sentences, continuous or progressive forms of verbs instead of simple present or simple past have been used:

'This idea was beginning to take root in may mind.'

'I am not denying it'. (The Guide 1979)

I am paying for it.

Business life is becoming difficult. (The Financial Expert 2002)

The more muddled he was becoming.

He was understanding its details. (Swami and Friends 1997)

Why are you still worrying about it.

I am beginning to believe call our realism. (The Bachelor of Arts 2000)

I was just wondering if the fruits were ripe enough for you.

People are once again becoming godly. (The Dark Room 1992)

To conclude we may quote Dr. Jaydeep Sarangi who writes:

R. K. Narayan believes in creative pattern of art rather on its suggestive appeal. He, like a natural observer, snaps a small group of men and their peculiarities and creates imaginary places like Malgudi, which is the Casterbridge of the novelist. The Guide guides us not only into the heart of a man having strangely comic encounters with himself but also into the soul of a country full of natural beauty, superstitious and prejudiced people and a host of tradition-bound life-ways. (Indian Breakfast Beyond the Border 3)

R. K. Narayan, in his novels, reflects Indianness both in theme and treatment. A common device that RK Narayan adopts for maintaining linguistic realism is the use of sprinklings of Hindi or/and South Indian expressions, mainly words, with or without translations. The interpersonal rhetoric of *The Guide* is marked by Indianism. The major thrust of RK Narayan has been to look at the use of English by non English speaking characters in a non- English-speaking world.

WORKS CITED

Narayan , R.K . *Swami and Friends*. Indian Thought Publication, Mysore. 1997.

.....*The Bachelor of Arts*. Indian Thought Publication, Mysore. 2000.

.....*The Dark Room*. Indian Thought Publication, Mysore. 1992.

.....*The Financial Expert*. Indian Thought Publication, Mysore. 2002.

.....*The Guide*. Indian Thought Publication Mysore. 1978.

Sarangji, Jaydeep. *Indian Breakfast Beyond the Boarder: A Study of Indianisation of English in Select Indian Novels in English*. Episteme: An Online Interdisciplinary, Multidisciplinary & Multi-cultural Journal, Bharat College of Commerce, Badlapur, MMR, India Volume 2, Issue 3 December 2013 BCC-ISSN-2278-8794

Surendran, K.V. *The God of Small Things: A Saga of Lost Dreams*. Atlantic Publishers, 2000.