

CHAPTER 7

GLOBAL ENGLISH

English developed from the speech of the Anglo-Saxon into a single, standard, 'Queen's English'. Standard British English speech came to be known as RP or 'Received pronunciation'. Along its way to becoming a standard language for England, English borrowed freely from languages that its speakers came in contact with through trade, spread of learning, new foreign invasions and so on. At first, the new words came mainly from European languages:

- **Latin**- adapt, crisis, exist, fact, skeleton, temperature, vacuum, virus...
- **Spanish** – apricot, banana, guitar, mosquito, Negro, potato, tobacco ...
- **Italian** – balcony, ballet, design, giraffe. Lottery, opera, rocket, violin...
- **French** – anatomy, chocolate, detail, invite, muscle, passport, tomato

This borrowing habit of English has made it 'the most gloriously impure language'.

By the 18th century, England had become a very powerful nation. It was said that *the sun never sets in the British Empire* because more than half the world, from Australia through Asia and Africa to parts of America (both north and south) were all under British rule. As the British empire grew, so did the language, English. It absorbed words and phrases from the languages of all the countries that were colonized by the British. Thus

Afrikaans : trek

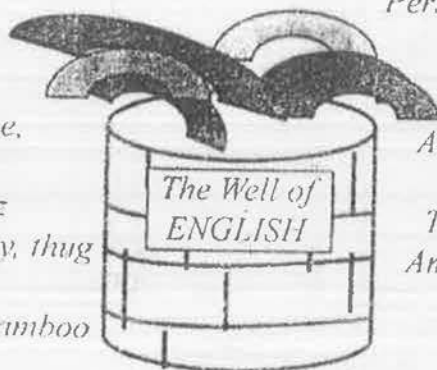
Duten : cruise, ease,

Turkish : coffee, fez

Hindi : guru blighty, thug

Swahili : safari

Malay : ketchup, bamboo



*Persian : bazaar, caravan,
Kimet, sofa,*

*Arabic : harem, Sultan,
hashish, algebra,*

*Tamil: caurry, pariah,
American Indian: moose
moccasin, squaw*

words began pouring into the English language from all directions, giving it a more and more global shape.

There were two main effects of this worldwide spread of English

- New *national varieties* of English, like *American English*, *Australian English*, *Canadian English*, etc., came into being.
- ‘*New Englishes*’ (i.e., new varieties of English) developed in countries where English was not a mother tongue, e.g. Indian English, Nigerian English, etc.

NEW NATIONAL VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

As soon as English began to spread across the world, it began to change. The first changes were seen in the different ways in which English began to be used in America. After America became free of British rule, the Americans were eager to show their distinct identity as a free country and began to call their variety of English *American English*. Today, *American English*, like British English, is recognised as a ‘world language’, though there are many differences between them. Some of these differences are shown below:

BRITISH ENGLISH	AMERICAN ENGLISH
WORDS Ground floor Rubbish Petrol Trousers	WORDS First floor Garbage Gas Pants
GRAMMAR Have you got....? Really good It's quarter to seven	GRAMMAR I have you gotten...? Real good It's quarter of seven
SPELLING Cheque Defence colour	SPELLING Check Defense Color

THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ENGLISHES

The second effect of the spread of English was the development of ‘new Englishes’ like Indian English, Nigerian English, etc.

Like American English, these varieties differ in some respects from standard British English. However, they are closer to British English than to American English. Indian English, for example, has developed a distinct set of words and sentence patterns that do not exist in British English. Some examples are given in the table below:

INDIAN ENGLISH

WORDS

Family member: a member of the family

Match box: a box of matches

Chalk piece: a piece of chalk

Moneybag: purse

Key bunch: a bunch of keys

Bandh: labour strike

Godown: warehouse

Lakh: a hundred thousand

Stir: agitation

Backward class: deprived group

Himalayan blunder: grave mistake

Military hotel: non-vegetarian hotel

Pin-drop silence: dead silence

Platform: pavement or sidewalk

GRAMMAR

I *am owning* two houses (own)

She *is knowing* the answer (knows)

Pay *attention on* (Pay attention to)

Who you have come to see? (Who have you.....?)

What this is made of? (What is ...?)

You like coffee, *isn't it?* (..... don't you?)

They are late, *isn't it?* (..... aren't they?)

Nissim Ezekiel, a famous writer of English poetry has given us a satirised version of Indian English in the poem *Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.*

GOODBYE PARTY FOR MISS PUSHPA T.S.

Friends,
our dear sister
is departing for foreign
in two three days,
and
we are meeting today
to wish her bon voyage.

You are all knowing friends,
what sweetness is in *Miss Pushpa*.
I don't mean only external sweetness
but internal sweetness.

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling
even for no reason
but simply because she is feeling.

Miss Pushpa is coming
from very high family.
Her father was renowned advocate
In Bulsar or Surat,
I am not remembering which place....

Exercises

1. Write T for true and F for false statements:

- There is no difference between American English and British English.
- Indian English is closer to American English.
- Indian English has developed a distinct set of words and sentence patterns that do not exist in British English.

2. Answer these questions very briefly:

- Which speech came to be known as 'Received Pronunciation'?
- What has made English 'the most gloriously, impure language'?
- Name two effects of the worldwide spread of English.

