Decoding Bollywood: why Hindi–English code-switching and standard English outrank Indian English

CLAIRE COWIE 🆔
University of Edinburgh

LALITA MURTY
University of York

BECK SINAR
University of York

Bollywood films, the highly commercial films by Indian producers for Indian audiences, have always been Hindi-dominant, and despite the increased incorporation of English over time, the speech of urban elite main characters remains Hindi matrix. This is at odds with the code-switching patterns of urban elites in other Indian media, such as chat shows, and spoken conversation, where switching among such speakers is often English dominant. Young urban elites may use English in isolation; their Bollywood equivalents sometimes do so also, but always with standard syntax. In this article we show how for Bollywood films, English without code-switching typically occurs in the speech of anglicised minorities such as Goan Catholics; furthermore, their English is indexed by the morphosyntactic features of Indian English. This contrasts with usage outside film, where Indian English features have been shown to be broadly distributed. This conservatism of Bollywood speech reflects conflicting attitudes towards an endonormative variety of English within India.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, World Englishes, telecinematic language, morphosyntax, indexicality

1   Introduction

In the well-known Bollywood film *Dear Zindagi* 'Dear Life' (2016), Kaira, the main character, gives up her job suddenly and moves to Goa to be with her parents. Her boss

and her colleague travel to Goa to ask her why she made this decision. She says to her colleagues, all English-educated professionals:

(1)   <u>Sirf</u> difficult option, option <u>nahi hotā hai,</u> <u>hum</u> easy option <u>bhī</u> choose <u>kar sakte hẽ nā,</u>
      <u>kyonki</u> easy option easy option <u>hotā hai.</u>[1]
      'A difficult option is not the only option, we can also choose an easy option can't we?
      Why? Because an easy option is an easy option.'

(2)   You know what, forget it, <u>tumhārī […] choti samajh se thodi bāhar hai,</u> it's a very deep
      thought.
      'You know what, forget it, it's a very deep thought which is beyond your limited
      understanding.'

The clauses in (1) are Hindi matrix with English insertions, which is the most common kind of clause in Bollywood films, the commercial Hindi films which became prominent from the 1990s. Entire clauses in English that alternate with the Hindi matrix clauses, such as in (2), are also present in Bollywood films. These alternating English clauses tend to be quite formulaic, and less frequent than the Hindi matrix clauses. Hindi matrix clauses with English insertions,[2] as in (1), have remained the most common kind of clause even as the overall use of English in Bollywood films increased. This can be shown for films from the mid 1990s up to more recent films such as *Dear Zindagi* (Kothari 2011; Si 2011; Dwyer 2014).

The Hindi dominance of Bollywood films has been maintained despite increased access to English Medium Instruction among their key audiences, the new middle class emerging from economic change in India from the 1990s (Kothari 2011; Dwyer 2014). Speakers of the emerging middle class will commonly code-switch, except in situations where the choice of Hindi is not available. The often wealthy characters of Bollywood films are thus shown with these middle-class speech patterns (Gera Roy 2013). Hindi-only is unusual for Bollywood protagonists and restricted to use with elders and religious or political figures. The only time the urban elites of Bollywood films are depicted using English without code-switching (CS) is in formal contexts such as business meetings, and interactions with foreigners or non-Hindi speakers from other parts of India. In these contexts, the English is standard.

In reality, some urban elites have been Anglophone for generations (Chand 2011) and in other urban elite families, the younger generation is English-dominant (Klingler 2017). There is thus a mismatch between the speech of urban elites shown in Bollywood films and their real-world speech, which can involve English dominant

---

[1] Transliteration: long vowels are indicated with a macron over the vowel; nasalised vowels are indicated with a tilde over the vowel. Formatting: underlining is used to mark Hindi, English is in plain text and emphasis (usually of dialect features) is marked with bold.

[2] We use 'code-switching' (CS) in the sense of spontaneous juxtaposition of two languages rather than the wider range of contact phenomena implied by 'code-mixing' (Muysken 1995; Auer 1998); Our use of the terms 'insertion' and 'alternation' broadly corresponds to intrasentential and intersentential code-switching. For this article we assume the existence of two codes (Hindi and English) either of which can act as a matrix language (Myers-Scotton 1993) or governing language (Muysken 1995).

CS, and even English without CS. These registers are observable in some independent films such as *Delhi Belly* (2011), which are aimed at urban elite audiences; and also in 'crossover films' (Gera Roy 2013) such as *Monsoon Wedding* (2001) – films set in India but made by directors from the South Asian diaspora.

Our focus in this article is on morphosyntactic features associated with the emerging colloquial variety, Indian English (IndE), and their deployment in Indian cinema. Examples (3)–(4) show (in bold) the omission of the non-specific indefinite article, a well-known feature of IndE: in (3) from *Delhi Belly* this feature indexes lower-middle-class status, and in (4) from *Love Per Square Foot* (2018) the feature indexes a member of a Catholic minority in Mumbai. We do not have examples of this feature indexing urban elite characters.

(3)   Delhi landlord's son: We are all very sorry that _ **bullet** hit your bum.

(4)   Blossom: And that BMC keeps sending _ **eviction notice.**

It is not the case that certain features of IndE neatly map on to certain identities. Rather, there is a complex selection of features to represent characters, identities and film genres. IndE morphosyntax does not appear within Hindi-dominant CS, rarely appears within English dominant CS and mostly appears in English scenes without CS (we refer to this as 'English-only'). The deployment of IndE features differs according to register (Hindi-dominant CS, English dominant CS, or English-only) and film genre (Bollywood, crossover, independent). We will argue that the lack of IndE in the speech of urban elite characters of Bollywood films and the presence of IndE in (3)–(4) are due to abstraction from, or stylisation of, complex variation in IndE morphosyntax.

In reality, CS is present in all speakers on a continuum of Hindi or English dominance (Gera Roy 2013; Orsini 2015); also in reality, all IndE morphosyntactic features are on a 'usage cline' (Sharma 2023). We are interested in the indexicality (Silverstein 2003) of IndE features in Indian cinema, and the mechanics of how these features are selected and combined in characters and film genres. Although phonological features and lexis are also key to indexing identity in the films examined here, our analysis in this article is restricted to morphosyntactic features.

Given that the representation of IndE across speech registers and genres of film is not well understood, we have undertaken an exploratory and qualitative study, rather than compile a film corpus of film dialogue (see, e.g., the corpus of song lyrics in Werner & Ledermann 2024). Instead, we have carried out in-depth screening of a relatively large set of films encompassing different genres, noting the presence or absence of a set of IndE features (see Appendix), setting the stage for further studies with targeted films and targeted variables.

In section 2 we identify relevant features of spoken IndE and their distribution. In section 3 we review tools for the analysis of dialects in pop culture. Research on Hindi and English in Indian cinema is reviewed in section 4. In section 5, we offer original analysis of IndE features in Indian cinema dialogue, showing how these are

embedded in a range of registers (Hindi-dominant CS, English dominant CS, English-only) across a range of film genres. In section 6 we reflect on how indexing operates in Indian cinema, and on implications for the study of attitudes towards IndE.

2   Features of Indian English and their distribution

The set of morphosyntactic features identified in spoken IndE that we refer to in this article is based on Sharma (2005a, 2005b, 2023), Lange (2009, 2012) and Sailaja (2009, 2011). Sharma (2023) presents data from twenty-four bilinguals with a range of English dominance (based on education and usage); Lange's (2012) data comes from the spoken subcorpus of ICE-India consisting of English-medium educated university graduates (i.e. relatively acrolectal data); Sailaja (2009) is a textbook overview of IndE features. All three authors are concerned with pan-regional features, produced by speakers from a range of L1 backgrounds. We believe this gives us a fairly comprehensive overview of spoken IndE features (see Appendix). Of the nine features analysed in Sharma (2023), acrolectal or 'dialect' features cluster on one end of the usage cline in a focused manner, and basilectal or 'learner' features occur more diffusely at the other end. Sailaja (2009) characterises features as standard or non-standard (in theory on a cline); but some 'non-standard' features are used by speakers of the standard in informal situations; she labels some features as stigmatised.

Sharma (2023) argues that IndE is an emerging dialect with limited endonormative stabilisation that should be placed between stages 3 and 4 of Schneider's dynamic model (Schneider 2003, 2007). This relatively low acceptability chimes with Sailaja's comments on attitudes towards IndE morphosyntax:

> While an Indian accent is acceptable, 'poor grammar' is quite unacceptable in most situations. Even those who argue for Indian English as a dialect in its own right will accept lexis and accents that are Indian but rarely grammar or syntax.
>
> (Sailaja 2009: 40)

In this sense, IndE contrasts with Singlish or Colloquial Singapore English. Singlish by definition is not the standard variety in Singapore, but it enjoys high acceptability as the informal national variety (Wee 2018). In India it is 'Hinglish', a cline of CS that is Hindi-dominant on one end and English dominant on the other (Gera Roy 2013: 22), which profiles similarly to Singlish in terms of attitudes (Suraiya 2024). 'Hinglish' has been hailed as 'the language of a new enterprising and confident India' (Orsini 2015: 7). This is well illustrated by the popularity of both Singlish and 'Hinglish' (rather than IndE) in advertising (Rubdy 2018; Wee 2018: 118–40).

Dialect development of IndE among Anglo-Indian speakers, who have British ancestry and shifted to English in the nineteenth century, is better regarded as stage 5 in the dynamic model (Sharma 2023: 25). Unfortunately, there is little detailed linguistic research on the development of IndE in this group, historically or present-day. Coelho (1997) found that lack of inversion in questions (see Appendix) was more frequent in the English of Anglo-Indian speakers in Perambur, Tamil Nadu, and she

proposes that this feature either originated in the Anglo-Indian community or developed in parallel to IndE. Although Anglo-Indian English may have had a founder effect on broader IndE (Sharma 2023: 25), such features are evidently no longer restricted to Anglo-Indian English (Sailaja 2009).

While it has been frequently observed that the Hindi-dominant CS of Bollywood movies is the speech of the new middle class, it is harder to make a direct connection between IndE as a dialect and the speech of film audiences. There is much to suggest that Sharma's acrolectal or 'dialect' IndE features, which correlate with English education, have been around longer than Hindi-dominant CS, and are likely to be present in pre-1990s Anglophone elites (see, e.g., Sridhar 1993). It is unclear to what extent they are present in post-1990s urban middle classes, or urban elites.

3   The construction of dialect in film

The process of selectively using features to stand for the dialect of a region or ethnic group has long been described in work on literary dialect (e.g. Beal 2009; Cooper 2013). These mediatised varieties have also been explored in film (e.g. Bucholtz & Lopez 2011), songs (e.g. Werner & Ledermann 2024) and social media (e.g. Ilbury 2023). In all these cases, whether the aim is authenticity or parody, audience recognition depends on a delicate balance of realism and abstraction. The selection of features to represent a dialect in film, as in other media, is part of the process of enregisterment (Agha 2003; Johnstone 2009). In songs, features associated with a regional variety can become enregistered for a music genre, for instance Southern American English (SAE) in the case of country music (Werner & Ledermann 2024). In that study, certain features of SAE emerged as core indices of the genre, and other features were infrequent or absent. Core indices such as negative concord, which are part of a broader overlapping set of vernacular universals, increasingly index the genre of 'country' rather than more obscure SAE constructions.

We pay attention here to the features of IndE in film and what they index (Silverstein 2003), compared to their distribution outside cinema. At the same time, we note that for the representation of a dialect in pop culture, exact features or the exact combination of features is not essential for audience recognition or appreciation of authenticity. The acceptance of a mediatised dialect as authentic depends upon the community of creators (writers, directors, producers), the performers, media setting and audience (Moody 2021; Werner & Ledermann 2024: 2).

In another postcolonial context with an emerging dialect, the representation of Singlish has gone from humorous stereotyping in Singaporean theatre, film and TV, to realist depictions in independent cinema (for local and international audiences), to stylised but audience-relatable Singlish in more commercial films (Wee 2018: 118–40). In this commodification of Singlish, the creator can be integral to the product, or detached from it. A ratified (often native) creator and/or performer of Singlish lends authenticity to the product. In Indian cinema, different processes of commodification

are observable for Hindi-dominant CS, English-dominant CS, English-only without IndE and English-only with IndE.

The performance of English in the expanding circle is still largely tied to exonormative, native-speaker standards (Moody 2021). In the pop culture of the outer circle, however, artists aim for an endonormative variety, such as Singlish (sometimes multiple endonormative varieties, e.g. ethnic Singlishes), which can be authenticated by local audiences. These are sharply contrasted with standard English (local and global), as well as other standard languages, for example Mandarin, in the political agendas of the artists, who are implicitly resisting all of these standards. Here, too, we are concerned with the authenticity of IndE, or versions of IndE, in relation to standard English and to standard Hindi.

4   Hindi and English in Bollywood and other Indian cinema

4.1   Bollywood: post-1990s mainstream Hindi cinema

Indian cinema is often synonymous with Bollywood. Here we use 'Bollywood' to apply to commercial mainstream Hindi cinema subsequent to economic reform in India from 1991 (Dwyer 2014). Unlike earlier Hindi epics, such as *Mother India* (1957), or the socially realist 'parallel cinema' of the 1970s, or later regional cinema with its state-level preoccupations, Bollywood films are melodramas about the private sphere, heteronormative romance, the family structure and affluent lifestyles (Dwyer 2014: 20, 22, 28). These films are consumed by a new middle class which is educated, working in the private sector, often well travelled, but conservative rather than cosmopolitan, 'enjoying Bollywood rather than Hollywood' (2014: 13–17). Although the way that singing and dancing is integrated in the films has changed somewhat from the 'Hindi masala' films of the 1970s and 1980s (Dudrah 2012; Gera Roy 2013: 22), there is always some acknowledgement of this musical tradition. The genre is defined by its stars (the three Khans: Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan and Salman Khan) and directors, notably Aditya Chopra and Karan Johar (Gera Roy 2013: 22; Dwyer 2014: 22).

The new generation of Hindi films rapidly became commercially self-supporting with revenues from urban Indian and South Asian audiences in the diaspora (Dwyer 2014: 25). The relatively upmarket lifestyles of the South Asian diaspora figure prominently in films such as *Kal hō nā hō* 'Tomorrow may not come' (2003) and *Anjānā Anjānī* 'Strangers' (2010) (Dudrah 2012). The new middle class 'feels good about itself and about India and celebrates the global visibility of India and Indians' (Dwyer 2014: 17, 22; see also Kothari 2011: 113; Dennison & Dwyer 2021). The films are not explicitly ideological, but from the 2000s their popularity has coincided with the rise of neo-conservatism and the period of Hindutva government (Dwyer 2014: 15; D'Souza 2019).

Bollywood films are dominantly Hindi, despite the focus of the new 'desi', or non-Anglophone middle class, on acquiring English, often through private education

(Dwyer 2014: 16–17). English may be the metalanguage of the film industry, but English 'has encroached little into the films themselves, although there are key stock phrases, such as saying *I love you*' (Dwyer 2014: 27). Gera Roy (2013: 22, 34) provides an example (see (5), from everyday speech observed by journalist Gurcharan Das) of Hindi-dominant CS from the 'upwardly mobile lower middle class'.

(5) Newsboy: M͠ɛ̃ āj busy hū̃, kal bill dūngā definitely.
    'I am a little tied up now. I will bring you the invoice tomorrow'

The Hindi matrix and English insertions of example (5) closely resemble the structure of examples (1) and (2), and the character of the conversations of Geet, the convent-educated Punjabi girl, and Aditya, the heir to a Mumbai corporate dynasty (see (6)), from *Jab We Met* 'When we met' (2007), quoted in Sailaja (2011).

(6) Geet: Tumne pehle kabhi aise lake mɛ̃ jump kiyā hai?
    'Have you ever jumped into a lake like this?'

Kothari says of *Jab We Met* that while there are unmistakable signs of affluence in the film, 'the train [journey], youth and Hinglish constitute a sense of being ordinary, everyday, and natural in a youthful way' (2011: 126).

Taking a quantitative approach, Si (2011) analyses CS in five classic Bollywood films spanning the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. The proportion of English to Hindi increases over this time, but most sharply after 1990. After 2000, alternation between Hindi matrix clauses and English matrix clauses increases, although English matrix clauses never outnumber Hindi matrix clauses. Even more recent Bollywood films, such as *Monica O my Darling* (2022), are Hindi-dominant, and the urban elite characters have Hindi-dominant CS. Bollywood films in Hindi that deliver a critique of the struggles of learning English seem to be on the rise (e.g. *English Vinglish* 'English, whatever' 2012; *Half Girlfriend* 2017; *Hindi Medium* 2017; *Angrezi Medium* 'English medium' 2020).

In real life, urban elites from cities such as Delhi and Mumbai typically have English-medium education and use English professionally. Many are English-dominant – for multiple generations in the case of old Anglophone families (Chand 2011), and in the younger generation for those whose wealth is post-1990s. In metro families with parents from different language backgrounds, English is more likely to be the dominant language (Pai 2018).

The English-dominant CS of older generations of elites made its way into gossip columns in the 1970s and subsequently became a literary register canonised in writers such as Salman Rushdie. This English 'peppered with strong doses of Hindi and other languages' also figured prominently on the new TV channels of the 1990s: Star, Sony and Zee TV (Butcher 2003; Gera Roy 2013: 24–7).

In one of the few studies of Hindi–English CS in spoken conversation, Klingler (2017) captures several generations of Delhi-based Hindi–English upper-middle-class bilinguals in informal family settings. The older speakers exhibit Hindi-dominant CS,

shown in (7), with 68 per cent of their clauses being Hindi-matrix compared to 32 per cent English matrix. In contrast, younger speakers produce 75 per cent English-matrix clauses (8) and 25 per cent Hindi-matrix clauses (Klingler 2017: 44-5). This suggests that young urban elites are likely to have English-dominant CS.

(7)   VKD: lēkin kal ek discussion ye bhi ho rahā thā ki laḍkiyõ kē liyē, jō hamārā time thā, wō phir bhī broad-minded thā.
'But yesterday we also had this discussion, that for girls, in our time, it was actually more broad-minded'

(8)   S: Ya, right, sahī bōl rahī hō tūm. Hã, he keeps forgetting the things, no?
'Ya, right, what you are saying is right. Yes, he keeps forgetting the things, no?'

We should emphasise that Klingler's (2017) younger speakers are balanced bilinguals, proficient in Hindi, and that these developments are not necessarily linked to Hindi loss, which has been reported for some urban elites (Chand 2011). Although broad generalisations can be made, Si & Ellison (2023) show, in a study of chat show interviews with Bollywood stars, that variability in the CS patterns of this group are highly complex and cannot be accounted for entirely by age or proficiency in either language.

4.2   'Hatke' or independent films

There are signs that the landscape of commercial Indian cinema is changing, with the emergence of *hatke* 'off-beat' films (Dwyer 2014: 35). The audiences of this genre include the new middle class, but are niche rather than mainstream, and distribution is through urban multiplexes, which offer viewers more variety. The leading director is Anurag Kashyap (Dwyer 2014: 21–3), well known for his film *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012) about the coal mafia of Dhanbad, and the Netflix crime series *Sacred Games* (2018). The latter highlights the overlap in audience between *hatke* and streaming (Bose 2020). *Hatke* is known for being more realistic and less of a star vehicle. Because the protagonists in these dramas are not urban elites, there is more Hindi and less CS.

In the same way that realist *hatke* shows Hindi without CS, it can also show more English, in films or TV shows where urban elites use English-dominant CS or English-only. Good examples are the Aamir Khan productions *Dhobi Ghat* 'Washerman's Ghat' (2011), a gritty film about life across social divides in Mumbai, and *Delhi Belly*, an uproarious comedy about three struggling Delhi roommates (a journalist, a photographer and a cartoonist), who unwittingly get sucked into the business of gangsters. Both outperformed expectations at the box office. The much talked-about TV series *Made in Heaven* (2019–), streaming on Amazon Prime, shows the younger generation of Delhi elites on the wedding circuit, and the upmarket wedding planners themselves, as English dominant, in contrast to their Hindi-speaking lower-middle-class staff.

4.3   Crossover films by diaspora directors

Gera Roy (2013) distinguishes between Bollywood and 'crossover' films, made by directors from the South Asian diaspora, which typically feature diaspora characters returning to India (in a kind of reversal of Bollywood films set in the diaspora). Her chief exemplar is Mira Nair's *Monsoon Wedding*, also differentiated from Bollywood by Si (2011: 392) as an 'art house' film. Other examples include Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) and Nagesh Kukunoor's *Hyderabad Blues* (1998) (the latter not as well known outside India). These films are targeted at the 'anglicised upper middle class or upper-class urban elite' and are also associated with niche viewing at multiplex cinemas (Gera Roy 2013: 27–30). The 'Hinglish' of these crossover films is CS with an English base, distinct, according to Gera Roy, from the 'Hindi base of the average Hindi film'. They do not address the imagined audience of the Hindi film, thus excluding these viewers. Crossover films are further distinct from Bollywood films in the way that they tackle hard-hitting themes, and in their depiction of vernacular-using lower classes. The address to an English-speaking elite means that these films also appeal to a cosmopolitan global audience.

In the upper-middle-class Delhi family of *Monsoon Wedding*, the bride's parents use English-dominant CS, as in (9), but the younger Delhi generation use English-only with each other rather than CS. Si (2011: 397) finds that *Monsoon Wedding* has less than 20 per cent turns exclusively in Hindi, but this does not take into account the differences among generations.

(9)   Lalit: Nothing. I know very well what you're doing. Open up. I have to get ready.
      Pimmi: Just a minute. <u>Kyã hai</u>? (what is it?)

In addition to crossover films, Gera Roy (2013: 22) identifies a set of films she calls 'Indian English' films (although this label refers to the medium rather than the dialect). This is a small collection of films made in India in different periods by urban elites for urban elites. They include Aparna Sen's *36 Chowringhee Lane* (1981) about Anglo-Indians in Calcutta, which we discuss in section 5.3; Dev Benegal's *English August: An Indian Story* (1988), now sadly unobtainable; Pradeep Krishen's *Massey Sahib* (1985) and *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* (1989). The characters in *Massey Sahib* (set in 1929) mostly have colonial British English, but the protagonist is 'pidgin-speaking'. Krishen's more contemporary *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* is set in a school of architecture and introduces 'a new college slang' (Gera Roy 2013: 28). Gera Roy also lists *Boom* (2003) by Kaizad Gustad, which, as a comedy with gangsters, is in some ways a precursor to *Delhi Belly* (section 4.2). We treat these later films in Roy's group as English-only *hatke* or independent cinema.

5   Indexicalities of Indian English

In the following analysis, we will consider the deployment of IndE features according to character, register (Hindi CS, English CS, English-only) and genre of film

(Bollywood, crossover, *hatke*/independent). Our sampling of films is largely guided by the literature reviewed in section 4, with some of our own additions to bring the viewing up to date. In the Filmography we provide five lists: (i) twenty-five Bollywood films between 1990 and 2014, mostly from Dwyer (2014) and Si (2010); (ii) a further nine Bollywood films between 2014 and 2024; (iii) twelve English-only *hatke* or independent films/series; (iv) six films featuring anglicised minorities, mostly from D'Souza (2019); and (v) films that are not sampled but which we have mentioned in this article to provide background. We examine the use of IndE features to index English learners (section 5.1), urban elites (section 5.2) and anglicised minorities (section 5.3). It is in the indexing of this last category that we find the most elaborate use of IndE features.

5.1　　*Hindi-medium educated speakers and English learners*

Characters from socioeconomic backgrounds with less English education are not shown in Bollywood films with Hindi-dominant CS. Rather, their speech is entirely Hindi (often a regional dialect) except for long-established English loanwords (e.g. *station*, *light*). Certain contexts can require such characters to use English, such as addressing a foreigner and English classroom settings. In the film *Phas Gaye re Obama* 'Obama, we are trapped' (2010), an Indian settled in the US returns to famously underdeveloped or 'backward' Bihar and is kidnapped in a case of mistaken identity. In (10) the minister of animal welfare of the state assists the representative of an American company to inaugurate a new bridge.

(10)　　Minister: No no scissor. Use knife
　　　　American: Yeah, but what's the knife for? What's the goat for?
　　　　Minister: Bali (sacrifice)
　　　　American: Meaning?
　　　　Minister: Meaning cut, **blood fall. Good for _ bridge. Bridge _ safe**. But it is small cut small cut.

　　This speech of the minister is highly basilectal and shows a number of learner features (see Appendix), such as omission of tense marking (*blood fall*) and copula deletion (*bridge _ safe*), as well as more acrolectal features such as definite article omission (*good for _ bridge*). In (11), from the same film, a local teacher offering English language coaching classes to village youth tells students off for not getting down to work.

(11)　　Teacher: Hello. You long hair. And lanky fellow. Stand where you are sitting. Teacher enter, no notice? Full insulting? You mother's-father's manners, this? Speak in English. **This _ English coaching**. Not a local language.
　　　　Student: Sorry, sir.
　　　　Teacher: Sorry ka baby. You together thinking hmmm **English speaking _ like rice plate eating**. No. Never. Not. **English speaking _not a children's play**…… Again

time. Careful. Again time this behaviour. So touch to my finger print your cheek. So big cheek. Red red cheek. Understand?

Among other basilectal features, such as subject deletion, object deletion, deletion of prepositions, lack of agreement and stative use of the progressive -*ing*, in (11) there are a number of missing copulas (emboldened) with V-*ing*. There is extensive direct translation from Hindi. This is clearly a satire of rural characters for a mesolectal Bollywood audience: the minister has very little English and even the English teacher has low proficiency. Although crossover films such as *Monsoon Wedding* are noted for their realistic representations of vernacular speakers, this kind of satire of basilectal English is not absent from those films. There is no English in the parallel romance of wedding planner Dubey and the domestic worker Alice. However, Dubey does have some English exchanges with father of the bride Lalit, as in (12), which shows overextension of -*ing*:

(12)   Dubey: Waterproofing **meaning** more money.

Yũ hōtā tō kyā hōtā 'If only' (2006) is a Hindi film directed by Naseeruddin Shah (see section 6) with four interwoven stories of Indians caught up in 9/11. The speech of Patel (13), a broker managing a dance company that is a front for illegal immigration to the USA, aims for realism rather than satire. It shows similar basilectal features to the satire in (10)–(11), plus the more acrolectal indefinite article omission (in bold) and similar direct translation from Hindi.

(13)   Patel (to visa officer): **We have _ show** next Sunday. Every year go and come, go and come back, check my passport. I'm giving you my tongue sir and in India daughter and tongue given, given.

In *hatke* productions like *Delhi Belly* and shows such as *Made in Heaven*, there is less interest in satire of English basilect. Instead, there is a subtler exploration of other urban characters with less English education than the protagonists, who are shown to use acrolectal or 'dialect' features of IndE, as in the Delhi landlord's indefinite article omission in (3). The speaker in (3) is immediately corrected by his father (14), enregistering this form as Delhi middle class rather than upper middle class.

(14)   Father: Actually, betā [child], it should be 'a' bullet hit your bum. We are all very sorry 'a' bullet hit your bum.

5.2   *Urban elites and Indian English*

The highly formulaic English phrases in the English alternations of classic 1990s and early 2000s Bollywood Hindi-dominant CS (see example (2)) do not tend to show IndE morphosyntax, not even the more acrolectal 'dialect' features. The English

phrases seldom co-occur with discourse markers such as *no/na* tags (unlike Klingler's younger speakers in (8)). In rare English-only scenes where urban elites address non-Hindi speakers, the English is standard.

However, the English-dominant CS of crossover films, like the exchange (15) between the parents of the bride in *Monsoon Wedding*, features discourse markers such as invariant tag *no/na*. There are no such markers in the younger generation of Delhiites (the bride and her cousin).

(15)   Pimmi: We can't look bad in front of our in-laws.
       Lalit: We'll look good with you smoking in front of them **na.**

Gera Roy describes the language of another crossover film from the same period, *Hyderabad Blues*, as 'Indian English … peppered with Telugu and Hyderabadi Urdu'. The film 'struck a chord in a wide variety of young educated Indians despite its pronounced Hyderabadi milieu' (2013: 29). In fact, the grammar of young urban elites in the film is standard and marked only by extensive use of the vocative *yaar* (16), a feature associated with the 18–25 age group (Lange 2009: 219). The users of this term in the film (16) are childhood friends of Varun, who has returned to India in his twenties after twelve years in the US.

(16)   Friend 1: Come on **yaar,** let me buy you a bottle of beer.
       Friend 2: She's damn short **yaar**….. you've become too serious for me **yaar.**

These discourse markers (*no* and *yaar*) are also what indexes young urban elites in *hatke/*independent films. This is true of earlier independent English films like *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* and later ones like *Dhobi Ghat.* Although the language of *Delhi Belly* has been described as typical college student 'Hinglish' (Orsini 2015: 17), the college graduates of this popular film do not use these discourse markers. *No/na,* however, appears in the speech of the Hindi-medium Delhi landlords (17) from section 5.1.

(17)   Landlord: The rent is due next week. It is just that it was late last month … and it was late a month before that also **na**.

In (18), Annie of *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*, an architecture student, is talking about his ideas for the environment:

(18)   Annie: The soil is bloody fertile, <u>hai</u> **na**? So all you have to do **na,** is to attach two watering cans.
       Friend (in exasperation): **Yaar,** Annie, how long do you plan to hang around here?

In (19) from *Dhobi Ghat* Shai (main character) uses *no/na* with her friend Pesi (Parsi male).

(19)   Shai: Pesi, come **na,** let's go there (pointing to a cafe opposite)

Pesi: To that Madrāsi joint? (South Indian food)
Shai: Ya
Pesi: Pure veg. No thanks
Shai: Oh who's going there for food?
Pesi: I am **na** b̄ābā. I can't be […] on an empty stomach. Come **na,** I'll find you a nice party boy

The urban elites of *Dhobi Ghat* do not have any other features of IndE. There is a single use of the general extender *or what*, in the idiomatic expression *mad or what* in this exchange (20) between Imran (main character, an artist) and Vatsala, his agent. She comes to visit him in his flat.

(20)   Vatsala: Huh should have known, holed up at home watching porn huh?
        Imran: **Mad or what?**

The fixed expression *mad or what* is not discussed in the literature on IndE, although it is considered a calque of the Hindi *pāgal hai kyā* and enregistered in popular media as an IndE feature (Kapadia 2007). The general extender *or what* is enregistered in popular media as 'Bandra' (an area of Mumbai discussed in section 5.3) (Sharma 2023:26). The indexing of urban elites through *na/no* and *yaar* continues in the recent Amazon series *Made in Heaven*, as shown in (21)–(23). Tara and Karan are the owners of an upmarket wedding planning business:

(21)   Karan (to event organiser): Just cancel this **na.**

(22)   Tara (to bride): He's hurt **na** b̄ābā, he needs to calm down.

(23)   Karan (to bride):   OK from now on you'll never lie to him **yaar**.
                                        (Season 1, episode 2)

Tara and Karan do not have acrolectal features of IndE other than discourse markers. Some of these can be found in the speech of their Delhi clientele, as in this use of non-restrictive *only* (24) by the father of a bride whose future in-laws discover that she has an unlucky horoscope. As we have seen in the English-only *hatke* films, there is a subtle marking of differences among urban elites with variables such as non-restrictive *only* that demands further investigation.

(24)   Bride's father: I wish you people hadn't found her birth certificate **only.**
                                        (Season 1, episode 6)

There are some indications that English-only (i.e. not CS) discourse is becoming more common in the represented speech of urban elites in the most recent Bollywood films, which are still very much Hindi films with Hindi-dominant CS. In *Monica, O My Darling* (2022), Nikki (the daughter of a CEO) addresses her fiancée and father's employee Jay in

English. Her speech is informal, but it does not feature IndE, not even the discourse markers *na/no* and *yaar*, as illustrated in (25).

(25)   Nikki: Sorry, sorry, my cousin Vinny, I need to take this call [whispers to Jay: she's found out her fiancée's cheating on her] Hello, babe, no crying, stop it, no crying. Daddy knows people. We'll kill him.

The same can be said of the informal speech of Kavi in *Tu Hai Mera Sunday* 'You are my Sunday' (2016), when she tells her friend Arjun how her father cared for her when she was ill with pneumonia as a child (26).

(26)   Kavi: Everybody had given up. But, dad, not a chance. Appa (dad) called up doctors from Delhi. Chennai. Ayurveda, homoeopathy, everything, And he just never left my side. I think he almost lost his job for it. Yeah, but he made sure that I got OK.

5.3   Anglicised minorities

Although the term 'Anglo-Indian' is sometimes used to encompass Goan Christians with Portuguese ancestry and (Christian) Anglo-Indians with British ancestry, it is usually the former who are the Christian characters in 1970s Hindi films such as *Bobby* (1973), *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977), *Akhiyon ke Jharokhon Se* 'Through the eyelashes' (1978) and *Albert Pinto ko Gussa Kyon Ātā Hai* 'Why is Albert Pinto so angry?' (1980). The Christian characters speak standard Hindi, although the older generation are shown speaking non-standard Hindi (D'Souza 2019). Indeed, *Bobby* (set in Mumbai) is about the relationship between a Christian girl and Hindu boy, eventually accepted by their families, reflecting the integration of Christians into the mainstream. Any English used by Christian and other minority characters is standard, consisting mainly of greetings and formulaic expressions like *That's true*, *What do you mean?*, *He's absolutely right. Amar Akbar Anthony*, starring Amitabh Bachchan as the adopted son of a Catholic priest, is famous for the song 'My name is Anthony Gonzalves', known for its comic use of overly formal English (Viswamohan 2011). While the component of English in the actual dialogues of Christians and anglicised minorities in these early films is in fact negligible (Kothari 2011: 116), they are nevertheless strongly associated with English and its Western signifiers of romance on the one hand, and distanced elitism on the other.

Most of the characters in D'Souza's (2019) analysis of Christians in Bollywood films between 2004 and 2014 are shown speaking Hindi, for example the school principal in *Grand Masti* (2013). Even Veronica from *Cocktail* (2012), a wealthy single woman living a hedonistic life in London, uses the Hindi-dominant CS of Bollywood urban elites with other Hindi speakers. Despite their usage, characters may be stereotyped as English dominant: all have English first names and Portuguese last names; Christian women are stereotyped as sexually assertive in provocative dress; men are emasculated; and families are small and nuclear compared to the extended Hindu family. In parallel with a rise in Hindu nationalism over that decade, Christians

are contrasted with Hindus as westernised others, and Indian values are aligned with Hindu values (D'Souza 2019).

The only English-language film with Anglo-Indian characters listed by Gera Roy (2013) is Aparna Sen's *36 Chowringhee Lane*, about an isolated schoolteacher remaining in Calcutta in the 1980s after community migrations to Canada or Australia. Although our viewing sample consists of films after 1990, we have included this particular film to assess its influence on later films with Anglo-Indian characters. Violet Stoneham has the RP-like accent long associated with schoolteachers from an Anglo-Indian background. Violet and her niece Rosemary use English exclusively, and their English is not only marked by discourse marker *no/na* (see (27)) but also topicalisation, as in (27), and non-restrictive *only*, as in (28).

(27)   Violet Stoneham: She was your best friend **no**? He was in the mounted police **no? So proud of him** we were.

(28)   Has the school reopened? Violet: Yes today **only**.

There is also extensive use of the general extender *and all*, mainly in Rosemary's speech (29). However, it can also be heard in the speech of Violet, as in (30), and other teachers, as in (31). Violet frequently uses *you all* as a second-person plural, as illustrated in (32).

(29)   Rosemary: You don't know how much influence his father has. He knows all the big shots in all the big companies **and all**.

(30)   Violet: Great works of literature being written in my house **and all**.

(31)   Teacher: It used to be such fun all the kids preparing skits and songs **and all**.

(32)   Violet: **You all** have been waiting long **no**?

It is likely that general extender *and all*, and second-person plural *you all* have origins in the Anglo-Indian community. This is hard to verify as the expression has spread beyond that community, yet not to the extent that it is documented as IndE.

The second film that we know of where Christian characters speak entirely in English is *Finding Fanny* (2014), set in the fictional Goan village of Pocolim. *Finding Fanny* drew attention because of its exclusive use of English, following director Homi Adajania's Hindi-language Bollywood hit, *Cocktail*. Adajania was apparently warned that if he made a 'Hinglish' film, only ten people would see it (Dedhia 2012), but *Finding Fanny* outperformed expectations at the box office. Stars like Deepika Padukone of Adajania's *Cocktail* make *Finding Fanny* a Bollywood film (both are included in D'Souza's (2019) corpus of Bollywood films with Christian characters), but its format and aesthetics are distinct from Bollywood. *Finding Fanny* has been explicitly linked to *Delhi Belly* (also commercially successful) as a rare English-language film, in the

Bollywood era, with stars who 'don't sound rigid' (Desai 2014). It should be noted however that both films have Hindi versions, which, unlike their original English versions, are currently accessible through streaming in India. *Finding Fanny* is also exceptional in its extensive use of IndE. D'Souza (2019: 4–5) observes that Angie, the young female lead, has a 'Catholic accent' and exhibits the speech of 'Konkani-speaking Roman Catholics from Goa and Mangaluru', a reference to language shift in Goa which is more advanced among Catholics (Botelho 2006: 391–2). D'Souza (2019) does not identify the phonological features of Angie's 'accent', but he does provide two examples of her 'unique syntax', the use of *or what* at the end of a sentence (see (33)), and discourse marker *no* (see (34)).

(33)   Angie: You've gone mad **or what** Savio!

(34)   Angie: That seems to have always been the problem **no** with you.

Finding Fanny shows a relatively wide range of IndE features overall. There are instances of definite article omission (35), non-restrictive *only* (36)–(37), as well as topicalisation (38)–(39), and lack of inversion in questions (40). These are used by Angie, as well as older residents of the village: Pedro, an artist, and Ferdie, the postmaster in search of his lost love Fanny.

(35)   Pedro: now _ **picture** is perfect.

(36)   Ferdie: No, no I, I think I'll wait **only**.

(37)   Angie: What you offered her was nice **only**.

(38)   Ferdie: For 46 years I thought she had rejected me. What life is this? **Full lie I've lived**.

(39)   Angie to Rosie: Up and down. **So much work you do**.

(40)   Angie: Then **why you told me**?

Features such as *na/no* (41), the Bandra-Mumbai *(mad) or what* (42)–(44), and address term *yaar* are restricted to younger characters Angie and Savio (45)–(46).

(41)   Angie: I'm hoping there'll be many more times … and I'm hoping it will
        get better also, **no**?

(42)   Savio: He's shouting. **Mad** he's become **or what**?

(43)   Savio: What man, now you're giving a speech **or what**?

(44)   Angie: **Mad or what**? Who would forget a personality like yours?

(45)   Angie: what am I thinking? What are you thinking **yaar**?

(46)   Savio: Aren't you fed up with this friends bullshit **yaar**?

Being Cyrus (2005), Adajania's first film, described as a 'one-of-a-kind Indian film made in English' (Ruhani 2013), is about a different anglicised minority. A Parsi family in Mumbai are targeted by a conman in pursuit of their valuable property. *Being Cyrus*, like *Finding Fanny*, has a star cast, notably Saif Ali Khan, as well as Dimple Kapadia and Naseeruddin Shah, who later appeared in *Finding Fanny*. In this sense the film is in the Bollywood system, but Khan himself described *Being Cyrus* as 'far removed from commercial stuff' (Ruhani 2013). Both the director and the star resisted a Hindi version of the film. Jain (2011: 388) hails *Being Cyrus* as the first English film about Parsis, meaningful as English is the mother tongue for many Parsis today. The Parsi households of Mumbai who historically spoke in a mix of English and Parsi Gujarati (Hansen 2003) have – especially in younger speakers – shifted to English, Hindi and standard Gujarati. To some extent, *Being Cyrus* plays into stereotypes of Parsis in that the two older men in the film are shown as emasculated and dominated by female characters (Sataravala 2023). Earlier films were often criticised for stereotyping the Parsi community through the use of a 'unique accent of Hindi speech' (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen 1999). The English of the Parsi characters in *Being Cyrus* is also primarily marked by discourse marker *no/na* (47), but there are some other features such as a lack of inversion in questions (48).

(47)   Farook: He should have some consideration **no**?

(48)   Dinshaw: **You are from where**?

Similar to *Finding Fanny* and the Goan Catholic community, there are no features here that are uniquely Parsi English. Saif himself (as the main character, a drifter and conman) does not produce any IndE features. Furthermore, he delivers extensive standard English voiceover, as does Angie in the later film *Finding Fanny*.

Love per Square Foot, about a Catholic mother and daughter in a crumbling residence in the historically Portuguese Bandra area of Mumbai, is much more overtly commercial. Although the premiere on Netflix implies a different distribution network (Bose 2020), director Anand Tiwari (who has a cameo as a priest in *Finding Fanny*) explicitly aimed for a Bollywood movie in style (Cowie 2022). Sanjay (from a Hindu family) and Karina (from a Catholic family) meet at the office and pretend to be married in order to apply for a competitive Mumbai housing scheme. The conversations between Sanjay and Karina show typical Bollywood Hindi-dominant CS (49).

(49)   Sanjay: tō tumhārā tō māmlā set hai phir. No home loan, no khānā banānā, no bartan dhōnā.
        'So you are all well set. No home loan, no cooking, no washing dishes'

Blossom, Karina's mother, lacks proficiency in Hindi, evident in her meeting with Sanjay's parents. The scenes with Karina and Blossom, and in some cases Karina's Christian fiancée Sam, are English-only, indexed with IndE. Actors apparently received extensive coaching on the 'Bandra-Goan accent' and immersed themselves in historical research on the community of Bandra (Cowie 2022). Karina was described by reviewers as a 'thoroughbred Bandra girl' who speaks 'urban Indian English sprinkled with a Marathi/Portuguese tinge' (Lapsia 2018). Bandra is a highly enregistered variety, although the only morphosyntactic features associated with Bandra features in popular media are general extender *or what* and the address term *man/men* (Sharma 2023: 26).

The features used by Angie in *Finding Fanny* are also in Karina's speech, namely sentence-final *no/na* (50)-(51) topicalisation (52) and general extender *or what* (53). There is just a single instance of *man/men* (54).

(50)　Karina: Live with Uncle Willy **na**.

(51)　Karina: You wanted a decent boy **no**? Sanjay is a decent boy. He sees the world as I do.

(52)　Karina: **So many times** he's asked you to come.

(53)　Karina: What do you think I'm a dog **or what**? Handing over my leash to someone else.

(54)　Karina: Mario! It's 8 o'clock in the morning **man**!

Like Karina, Sam has a relatively narrow range of IndE features. He also uses *na/no* (55) and has the dialect feature non-restrictive *only* (56).

(55)　Sam: Karina you know we can't do it before marriage. And I gave you your own space **na**? I gave you Kar-Sam.

(56)　Sam: I wanted to do all that **only** Aunty… will you marry me Karina, after three months?

Blossom has a wider range of IndE features. In addition to frequent *na/no* (57)–(58), and general extender *or what* (59)–(60) there is lack of inversion in questions (61); non-restrictive *only* (62); definite article omission and non-specific indefinite article omission (63). Blossom does not have the Bandra-Mumbai feature *man/men* like Karina. She does have the same general extender *and all* as Violet Stoneham, the Anglo-Indian schoolteacher from Calcutta (64).

(57)　Blossom: I'll get some chicken patties, He eats **no**?

(58)　Blossom: It's one thing to fall in love with them but another thing to live with them **no**?

(59)　Blossom: Do you want to kill me **or what**?

(60)   Blossom: You brought a Pandit also. You all want a Hindu wedding **or what**?

(61)   Blossom: **What I will say** to father Lori?

(62)   Blossom: One day they 'll come crashing down in the middle of it **only**.

(63)   Blossom: And that **BMC** keeps sending _ **eviction notice**.

(64)   Blossom: I slogged all day and night so you could go to school **and all**.

All of these features thus work together to index Blossom's Catholic identity, an identity resisted by her daughter, who wants to embrace a modern urban lifestyle.

6   Discussion

Our starting point was that post-1990s Bollywood films continued the Hindi dominance of earlier films, but incorporated English into a Hindi-dominant CS register, despite the growing English dominance of young urban elites outside film. We saw in section 5.1. that Bollywood may be changing its representation of this group, as the boundaries between Bollywood and independent films become blurred. Some conversations between young urban elites in films that are on this boundary, such as *Tu Hai Mera Sunday*, are not Hindi-dominant CS, or even English-dominant CS, but entirely in English. However, this English does not contain even acrolectal features of IndE.

There is no question that the commercial pressure is for Hindi dominance, and that this is the largest audience. The Hindi-dominant CS used by urban elites in the most commercial films aligns closest with the language of aspiring middle-class audiences and strengthens their connection to the characters in the film. The popularity of Hindi versions of rare English language films confirms this. This is not only a question of the English proficiency of audiences. There are ideological reasons for this too: to be a successful Indian character one must show Hindu values and practices and that includes using Hindi (Dwyer 2014; D'Souza 2019). When urban elite characters use English on screen (rather than CS), to preserve their status, this English must be highly standard, free of the stigma of even acrolectal features of IndE. The elevation of Hindi-dominant CS over English marked by IndE shows that CS is not necessarily lower in status than discourse that is not mixed.

The situation is markedly different to Singapore where Singlish has the same functions as Hindi-dominant CS in independent and commercial films (Wee 2018). The Indian mediascape is perhaps closer to Nollywood, where more commercial Nigerian films show urban elites using standard English, and Yoruba–English CS, but not Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE). NPE however can be found along with CS in independent films (Afolayan 2014). The absence of IndE in urban elite characters in

commercial films starkly demonstrates the limits of endonormative stabilisation in India (Schneider 2003, 2007).

We might expect the small number of independent films made in English to show urban elites using the dialect features of IndE, but this practice is quite limited, apart from discourse markers *no* and *yaar*. This is true of the older independent films, which overlap with crossover films, and of the newer productions.

In contrast, the 'dialect' features of IndE are used to index minority groups. Until recently these characters would have been shown speaking Hindi in Bollywood films. Their real-life trajectories involve an early shift to English, then integration with Hindi and regional languages, then later shift to English (Coelho 1997). Films showing minorities in English thus have the complex task of reconstructing a dialect that no longer exists, and which is not well recorded. The films therefore draw on a strong historic association in the popular imagination between non-standard syntax and minority communities.

Older Catholic characters like Blossom are shown with the full range of IndE dialect features; younger Catholic characters like Angie and Karina have a smaller set of IndE dialect features. The representation of Blossom reflects two of the trends that have been noted for media stylisations: (i) drawing on a wider range of vernacular features to index a narrow variety (in this case the imagined Mumbai Catholic variety) and (ii) 'genre-fitting', where performers overuse features associated with the target variety (Werner & Ledermann 2024: 3). In both scenarios, IndE dialect features work together with salient markers of more regionally specific or ethnically specific varieties, such as *or what* and *men/man* to index Mumbai, and possibly general extender *and all* to index an anglicised minority. Like the independent films and crossover films, the representation of minorities in later Bollywood relies heavily on the tag *no/na* as a marker of authenticity.

Although directors like Tiwari (*Love per Square Foot)* set out to extensively research historical dialect (Cowie 2022), their creation of an authentic product draws on their own status as a ratified speaker (Wee 2018). The early appreciation of *Being Cyrus* emerged from director Homi Adajania's own Mumbai Parsi background. The authenticity of *Being Cyrus* then transferred to *Finding Fanny*, even though the two communities are distinct. The films have the same scriptwriter, Kersi Khambatta, and the same veteran acting duo, Naseeruddin Shah and Dimple Kapadia. Shah and Kapadia bring extensive credentials in playing English-speaking characters in independent and crossover films, and this performance identity (Moody 2021) in itself lends authenticity to their performances. Although better known for Hindi cinema, Ratna Pathak Shah was praised for her 'broken Hindi-speaking Catholic mom' role as Blossom in *Love per Square Foot.* She is married to Naseeruddin Shah and appeared in the English-language Merchant-Ivory production *The Perfect Murder* (1988).

This survey has highlighted the disjuncture between the sociolinguistic data on the distribution of IndE features in the population and the deployment of these features in film. We have demonstrated that further corpus study, particularly of English-only

films, targeting a small set of acrolectal features of IndE, is a worthwhile undertaking. This work would need to overcome the challenges of working with film scripts: where these are commercially available, they often do not resemble the dialogue of the film (Kothari 2011; Sailaja 2011) and automated transcription of this multilingual data is not yet reliable.

Admittedly, the samples of spoken data that sociolinguists have available to them are small, especially in the Indian context, and these would certainly benefit from expansion. Even as our knowledge of IndE improves, it seems likely that commercial Indian cinema and independent Indian cinema will continue to reflect a conservative view of the use of IndE features in English-using urban elites. The conservative view holds that IndE dialect features are retained in Anglophone minority groups rather than broadly distributed. Audience consumption of this view further entrenches resistance to endonormative stabilisation (Schneider 2003, 2007). On the basis of the films that we have surveyed here, it certainly does not seem that IndE morphosyntax is becoming more widely accepted.

Authors' addresses:

Linguistics and English Language,
School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences,
University of Edinburgh,
Dugald Stewart Building, 3a Charles Street,
Edinburgh EH8 9AD, United Kingdom
claire.cowie@ed.ac.uk

Norwegian Study Centre,
Quantum House,
University of York,
Heslington,
York YO10 5DD,
United Kingdom
lalita.murty@york.ac.uk
beck.sinar@york.ac.uk

References

Afolayan, Adeshina (ed.). 2014. *Auteuring Nollywood: Critical perspectives on the figurine*. Ibafdan: University Press PLC.

Agha, Asif. 2003. The social life of cultural value. *Language & Communication* 23(3), 231–73. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0271-5309(03)00012-0

Auer, Peter. 1998. Introduction: Bilingual conversation revisited. In Peter Auer (ed.), *Code-switching in conversation*, 1–24. London: Routledge.

Beal, Joan. 2009. Enregisterment, commodification and historical context: 'Geordie' versus 'Sheffieldish'. *American Speech* 84(2), 138–56. https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2009-012

Bose, Nandana. 2020. 'Amazon Gives Us Wings': Streaming platforms and the Hindi film industry. *E-CineIndia*, July–September, 1–10. www.fipresci-india.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/11.-Nandana-Bose-Amazon-Gives-Us-Wings.pdf (accessed 14 March 2024).

Botelho, Afonso M. 2006. Multilingualism, education policy and inequality of educational opportunities: The Goan case. S*ociological Bulletin* 55(3), 383–405.

Bucholtz, Mary & Qiuana Lopez. 2011. Performing blackness, forming whiteness: Linguistic minstrelsy in Hollywood film. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15(5), 680–706. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2011.00513.x

Butcher, Melissa. 2003. *Transnational television, cultural identity and change: When STAR came to India*. New Delhi: Sage.

Chand, Vineeta. 2011. Elite positionings towards Hindi: Language policies, political stances and language competence in India. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15(1), 6–35. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2010.00465.x

Coelho, Gail M. 1997. Anglo-Indian English: A nativized variety of Indian English. *Language in Society* 26(4), 561–89. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500021059

Cooper, Paul. 2013. *Enregisterment in historical contexts: A framework*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield. https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/3974/

Cowie, Claire. 2022. Why you don't leave? Bandra English and its sources in *Love per Square Foot*. *Senses of Cinema*, I101. May 2022. www.sensesofcinema.com/2022/bollywood/why-you-dont-leave-bandra-english-and-its-sources-in-love-per-square-foot/ (accessed 27 September 2024).

Dedhia, Sonii. 2012. I was bullied into making *Cocktail*. Rediff.com. www.rediff.com/movies/slide-show/slide-show-1-interveiw-with-homi-adajania/20120710.htm (accessed 14 March 2024).

Dennison, Stephanie & Rachel Dwyer (eds.). 2021. *Cinema and soft power: Configuring the national and transnational in geo-politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Desai, Rahul. 2014. Film review: *Finding Fanny. Mumbai Mirror.* https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/entertainment/bollywood/Film-review-Finding-Fanny/articleshow/42319345.cms (accessed 4 April 2024).

D'Souza, Ryan A. 2019. *Representations of Indian Christians in Bollywood movies*. Tampa, FL: University of South Tampa. https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/etd/7772/

Dudrah, Rajinder K. 2012. *Bollywood travels: Culture, diaspora and border crossings in popular Hindi cinema*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Dwyer, Rachel. 2014. *Bollywood's India: Hindi cinema as a guide to contemporary India*. London: Reaktion Books.

Gera Roy, Anjali. 2013. The politics of Hinglish. In Lionel Wee, Robbie B. H. Goh & Lisa Lim (eds.), *The politics of English: South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific*, 21–36. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Hansen, Kathryn. 2003. Languages on stage: Linguistic pluralism and community formation in the nineteenth-century Parsi theatre. *Modern Asian Studies* 37(2), 381–405. www.jstor.org/stable/3876576

Ilbury, Christian. 2023. The recontextualisation of Multicultural London English: Stylising the 'Roadman'. *Language in Society* 53(3), 395–419. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404523000143

Jain, Pankaj. 2011. *Such a Long Journey*: Portrayal of the Parsi community in films. *Visual Anthropology* 24(4), 384–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2011.583573

Johnstone, Barbara. 2009. Pittsburghese shirts: Commodification and the enregisterment of an urban dialect. *American Speech* 84(2), 157–75. https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2009-013

Kapadia, Apu. 2007. Hinglisms. *Timepass Corporation.* https://homes.luddy.indiana.edu/kapadia/hinglisms.html (accessed 11 April 2024).

Klingler, Anita. 2017. Changes in code-switching patterns among Hindi–English bilinguals in northern India. *Lifespans and Styles* 3(1), 40–50. https://doi.org/10.2218/ls.v3i1.2017.1827

Kothari, Rita. 2011. English Aajkal: Hinglish in Hindi cinema. In Rita Khotari & Rupert Snell (eds.), *Chutnefying English: The phenomenon of Hinglish*, 112−27. New Delhi: Penguin.

Lange, Claudia. 2009. Where's the party yaar! In Thomas Hoffmann & Lucia Siebers (eds.), *World Englishes – problems, properties and prospects: Selected papers from the 13th IAWE conference* 40, 207–27. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/veaw.g40.14lan

Lange, Claudia. 2012. *The syntax of spoken Indian English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Lapsia, Tina. 2018. *Love per Square Foot* is a fresh look at Mumbai millennials, but fails to pack a punch. *Brown Girl Magazine*. https://browngirlmagazine.com/love-per-square-foot-review/ (accessed 2 May 2024).

Moody, Andrew. 2021. The authority and authenticity of performative Englishes in popular culture. *World Englishes* 40(3), 459–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12486

Muysken, Pieter. 1995. Code-switching and grammatical theory. In Lesley Milroy & Pieter Muysken (eds.), *One speaker, two languages: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on code-switching*, 177–98. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Myers-Scotton, Carol. 1993. *Duelling languages: Grammatical structure in codeswitching*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Orsini, Francesca. 2015. Dil maange more: Cultural contexts of Hinglish in contemporary India. *African Studies (Johannesburg)* 74(2), 199–220. https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2015.1045721

Pai, Sajith. 2018. Indo-Anglians: The newest and fastest-growing caste in India. *Scroll*, 2 February. https://scroll.in/magazine/867130/indo-anglians-the-newest-and-fastest-growing-caste-in-india (accessed 9 February 2024).

Rajadhyaksha, Ashish & Paul Willemen. 1999. *Encyclopedia of Indian cinema*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Rubdy, Rani. 2018. Code alternation and entextualization in bilingual advertising: The construction of glocal identities in India's Amul butter ads. In Sandhya Roa Mehta (ed.), *Language and literature in a glocal world*, 29–56. Singapore: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-8468-3_3

Ruhani, Fahim. 2013. *Being Cyrus* in Hindi: Never. *DNA India*. www.dnaindia.com/entertainment/report-being-cyrus-in-hindi-never-1078564 (accessed 18 April 2024).

Sailaja, Pingali. 2009. *Indian English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Sailaja, Pingali. 2011. Hinglish: Code-switching in Indian English. *English Language Teaching Journal* 65(4), 473–80. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccr047

Sataravala, Snober. 2023. Parsi identity: Myth and collective memories. *South Asia Research* 43(1), 34–48. https://doi.org/10.1177/02627280221120336

Schneider, Edgar W. 2003. The dynamics of New Englishes: From identity construction to dialect birth. *Language* 79(2), 233–81. https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2003.0136.

Schneider, Edward W. 2007. *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharma, Devyani. 2005a. Language transfer and discourse universals in Indian English article use. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 27(4), 535–66. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263105050242

Sharma, Devyani. 2005b. Dialect stabilization and speaker awareness in non-native varieties of English. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9(2), 194–224. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-6441.2005.00290.x

Sharma, Devyani. 2023. *From deficit to dialect: The evolution of English in India and Singapore*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Si, Aung. 2011. A diachronic investigation of Hindi-English code-switching, using Bollywood film scripts. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 15(4), 388–407. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006910379300

Si, Aung & T. Mark Ellison. 2023. Inter-individual differences in Hindi–English code-switching: A quantitative approach. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 27(3), 306–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069221085018

Silverstein, Michael. 2003. Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language and Communication* 23(3-4), 193–229. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0271-5309(03)00013-2

Sridhar, S. N. 1993. Toward a grammar of South Asian English: Syntactic markers of lectal range in an indigenized variety. In Robert Baumgartner (ed.), *English in South Asia: Structure, use and users*, 55–69. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Suraiya, Jug. 2024. Fusion India: In our speech, food, fashion, we mix and match to get the best of all possible worlds. *The Times of India*, 10 May. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-edit-page/fusion-india-in-our-speech-food-fashion-we-mix-and-match-to-get-the-best-of-all-possible-worlds/ (accessed 11 May 2024).

Viswamohan, Aysha I. 2011. English in film songs from India: An overview: Exploring the presence and functions of English lyrics in Bollywood and other Indian films. *English Today* 27(3) 21–4. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078411000332

Wee, Lionel. 2018. *The Singlish controversy: Language, culture and identity in a globalizing world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Werner, Valentin & Anna Ledermann. 2024. Styling authenticity in country music. *Languages* 9(5), 168. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages9050168

Filmography

Bollywood 1990–2014

Dil ('The heart'), dir. Indra Kumar, 1990

Dil ka kya kasoor ('What is the fault of the heart?'), dir. Lawrence d' Souza, 1992

Dilwaale Dulhaniya le jaayenge ('The brave hearted takes the bride'), dir. Aditya Chopra, 1995

Kuch kuch hota hai ('Something's happening'), dir. Haran Johar, 1998

Dil chahta hai ('The heart desires'), dir. Farhan Akhtar, 2001

Kal hō nā hō ('Tomorrow may not come'), dir. Nikhil Advani, 2003

Main hoon na ('I am here for you'), dir. Farah Khan, 2004

Hum tum ('I and you'), dir. Kunal Kohli, 2004

Bunty and Babli, dir. Shhad Ali Sehgal, 2005

Lage raho Munna Bhai ('Carry on Munna Bhai'), dir. Rajkumar Hirani, 2006

Rang de Basanti ('Colour it yellow'), dir. Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, 2006

Pyaar ke side effects ('The side effect of love'), dir. Saket Chowdhary, 2006*

Yun hota to kya hota ('What if?'), dir. Naseeruddin Shah, 2006*

Om shanti om ('Let there be peace'), dir. Farah Khan, 2007

Jab we met ('When we met'), dir. Imtiaz Ali, 2007

Rab ne bana di jodi ('A match made by God'), dir. Aditya Chopra, 2008

3 Idiots, dir. Rajkumar Horani, 2009

Paa ('Dad'), dir. Balki, 2009

Rocket Singh, dir. Shimit Amin, 2009

Band baaja baarat ('Bands, horns and revelry'), dir. Maneesh Sharma, 2010

Kartik calling Kartik, dir. Vijay Lalwani, 2010

Anjaana Anjaani ('Strangers'), dir. Siddharth Anand, 2010

Tanu weds Manu, dir. Aanand L. Rai, 2011

Student of the Year, dir. Karan Johar, 2012

Chennai Express, dir. Rohit Shetty, 2013
*authors' choice

Bollywood 2014–24

Queen, dir. Vikas Bahl, 2014
Piku, dir. Shoojit Sarcar, 2015
Dear Zindagi ('Dear life'), dir. Gauri Shinde, 2016
Pink, dir. Aniruddh Roy Chowdhury, 2016
Tu hai mera Sunday ('You are my Sunday'), dir. Milind Dhaimade, 2016
Love per Square Foot, dir. Anand Tiwari, 2018
Thappad ('The slap'), dir. Anubhav Sinha, 2020
Monica o My Darling, dir. Vasan Balan, 2022
Murder Mubarak ('Congratulations for the murder'), dir. Homi Adjania, 2024

Anglicised minorities

36 Chowringhee Lane, dir. Aparna Sen, 1981
Socha na tha ('I didn't imagine so'), dir. Imtiaz Ali, 2005
Being Cyrus, dir. Homi Adajania, 2006*
Ajab prem ki gazab kahani ('Strange love'), dir. Rajkuma Snatoshi, 2009
Cocktail, dir. Homi Adajania, 2012
Finding Fanny, dir. Homi Adajania, 2014

Crossover and English-only *hatke*

Heat and Dust, dir. James Ivory, 1983
Massey Sahib, dir. Pradip Kishen, 1985
Salaam Bombay!, dir. Mira Nair, 1988
In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones, dir. Pradip Kishen, 1989
Hyderabad Blues, dir. Nagesh Kukunoor, 1998
1947*: Earth*, dir. Deepa Mehta, 1998
Monsoon Wedding, dir. Mira Nair, 2001
Mitr My Friend, dir. Revathy, 2002
Mr and Mrs Iyer, dir. Aparna Sen, 2002
Delhi Belly, dir. Abhinay Deo, 2011
Dhobi Ghat ('Washerman's area), dir. Kiran Rao, 2011*
Made in Heaven (web series), dir. Nitya Mehra; Zoya Akhtar; Reema Kagti; Prashant Nair; Alankrita Shrivastava; Neeraj Ghaywan, 2019

Background

Mother India, dir. Mehboob Khan, 1957
Amar Akbar, Anthony, dir. Manmohan Desai, 1977
Ankhiyon ke jharokhon se ('Through the eyelashes'), dir. Hiren Nag, 1978
Albert Pinto ko guss kyon aaya? ('Why is Albert Pinto so angry?'), dir. Saeed Akhtar Mirza, 1980
English August, dir. Dev Benegal, 1994
Boom, dir. Kaizad Gustad, 2003
Gangs of Wasseypur, dir. Anurag Kashyap, 2012
Grand Masti, dir. Indra Kumar, 2013

English Vinglish ('English whatever'), dir. Gauri Shinde, 2017
Hindi Medium, dir. Saket Chowdhury, 2017
Half Girlfriend, dir. Mohit Suri, 2017
Sacred Games (web series), dir. Vikram Motwane and Anurag Kashyap, 2018
Angrezi Medium ('English medium'), dir. Homi Adjania, 2020

Appendix: Spoken Indian English morphosyntactic features

Feature	Sharma	Lange	Sailaja
Copula omission	Yes: Learner feature	NA	NA
Past tense omission	Yes: Learner feature	NA	Yes: Non-standard
Absence of subject–verb agreement	Yes: Learner feature	NA	Yes: Non-standard, informal speech of standard speakers
Definite article omission	Yes: Dialect feature	NA	Yes: Non-standard, informal speech of standard speakers
Omission of specific indefinite articles	Yes: Dialect feature	NA	Yes: Non-standard, informal speech of standard speakers
Omission of non-specific indefinite articles	Yes: Dialect feature	NA	NA
Stative uses of progressive *-ing*	Yes: Dialect feature	NA	Yes: Non-standard
Only for non-restrictive focus	Yes: Dialect feature	Yes	Yes: Non-standard, stigmatised
Extended use of the modal *would*	Yes: Dialect feature	NA	Yes: Standard
Transitive verb used intransitively	NA	NA	Yes: Informal speech of standard speakers
Lack of subj–aux inversion in questions	NA	NA	Yes: Non-standard
Frequent/unconstrained topicalisation	NA	Yes	Yes: Informal speech of standard speakers
Frequent left dislocation	NA	Yes	NA
Pluperfect as perfect	NA	NA	Yes
Non-initial existential *there*	NA	Yes	NA
Interactive invariant tag *isn't it*	NA	Yes	Yes: Non-standard
Interactive invariant tag *na/no*	NA	Yes	Yes: Non-standard, stigmatised
Vocative *yaar* 'mate'	NA	Yes	NA